



County of Los Angeles
Department of Human Resources
POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Subject: PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE IN THE WORKPLACE	Policy Number: 512	Pages: 3
	Effective Date: December 31, 2009	
	Approved By: 	

POLICY

This policy is intended to clarify County Code 5.72.010. County employees are required to wear clothing suitable to their occupations, as may be determined by their respective Department Heads. Employees shall furnish and maintain in suitable and appropriate condition such clothing and associated articles at their own expense except as otherwise expressly provided for by the Board of Supervisors. Employees should maintain a neat and professional appearance in the performance of their duties.

GUIDELINES

County departments provide a wide variety of programs and services and the professional image of our workforce is critical to fostering public confidence and providing "effective and caring service." Therefore, these guidelines on professional appearance are intended to:

- Foster respect and earn the confidence of our customers, the public, vendors and fellow employees.
- Promote a positive work environment and limit distractions.
- Ensure safety and security while working.

The County of Los Angeles respects the diversity of its residents and its workforce. This policy provides guidelines on dress and appearance appropriate to the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the service provided to the public, and/or other circumstances or business needs as defined by the Department Head.

Employees are expected to abide by the following standards:

- Employees shall present a neat, clean, and professional appearance in their performance of duties at all times based on the employee's assignment and/or work location.

- Employees must dress in a manner that will not hinder their ability to effectively complete their work assignments, including consideration of the communities served, customer expectations, business needs or standards of the department and the employee's safety.
- Employees are expected to practice personal hygiene that does not interfere with the public and/or co-workers in their work environment.
- Employees should be mindful of, and dress appropriately for, special events, meetings and appointments with customers.
- Official photo identification badges and uniforms (where applicable) should be worn in the performance of County business and in all County facilities in order to identify employees as legitimate County representatives.
- Employees shall abide by specific dress requirements intended to ensure job-related safety such as when operating equipment or machinery, working with potentially dangerous chemicals, or for public health consideration.

Except as noted or approved by the Department Head, employees may not wear the following:

- T-shirts or clothing articles that may create a hostile or abusive work environment, such as sexually suggestive cartoons, pictures, or words
- Denim pants or jean-style pants of any color (some exceptions may include assignments in the field)
- Pants below the waistline or low-rise pants showing undergarments
- Low front or tops, halter tops, bare midriffs
- Flip-flop styled sandals
- Athletic wear, e.g., gym or sweat pants, leggings, jogging outfits, shorts, spandex, worn during work hours. Exception for break time when walking, running, etc.
- Torn, frayed, or ripped clothing
- Excessively tight fitting or oversized (baggy) garments
- Visible excessive number of earrings and/or studs; no nose, eyebrow, lips, tongue rings and/or studs
- Tattoos, must be reasonably covered (with exception for cultural or religious purposes)

Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Department Head in circumstances such as County or Department-sponsored events, special occasions, seasonal weather changes, and business casual days, but may also be made based on requests for reasonable accommodation (e.g., religious, cultural, disability, etc.).

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Dress Policy Enforcement

This policy is intended to provide guidelines on dress and appearance and is not meant to address all situations. Therefore, depending on the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the public, or other circumstances, there may be some differences in dress guidelines. Consistent with this policy, exceptions can be made at the department level by the Department Head with approval from the Director of Personnel due to the nature of work, special events, and business casual days. Employees who report to work and are not in compliance with this policy may be sent home to change and return to work, unless some other remedy can be arranged, such as an employee putting on a jacket.

Any questions regarding the dress policy within your department should be directed to your Departmental Human Resources Manager.

AUTHORITY

County Code, Title 5 Personnel, Section 5.72.010 - Suitable clothing to be worn.
County of Los Angeles Employee Handbook, Section C, Performance Expectations.

DATE ISSUED/REVIEW DATE

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February 10, 2009