



SOUTH LYON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Manual of Procedures 104

Personal Appearance and Grooming Standards

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Approved: Chief Mike Kennedy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to regulate and promote a professional appearance, safety and to ensure that department personnel maintain a neutral appearance, which is consistent with contemporary standards.

II. OBJECTIVE

All personnel must present themselves in such a way as to generate trust, confidence, and respect from the public and the citizens the department serves. It is not the goal of this guideline to regulate or dictate matters of personal style and taste, except to the degree that individual appearance decisions would lessen public confidence in the organization. In addition, for those employees in uniform, regulations stress that personal appearance must be commensurate with the high standards traditionally associated with the fire service.

III. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Members shall maintain a neat, clean, well groomed and professional appearance at all times. Members shall not wear or display any type of offensive symbols, jewelry or statements. Anytime an employee is being paid, baseball style caps are not to be worn backwards.

IV. TATTOOS, BRANDING, SCARRING OR OTHER FORMS OF BODY ART

- A. Tattoos or any form of body art that is visible on the neck, head, face, or from the t-shirt collar to top of head is strictly prohibited.
- B. Employees are prohibited from showing/displaying tattoos or body art no matter the circumstances that are prejudicial to good order, discipline or morale, or bring discredit to the South Lyon Fire Department.
- C. Tattoos that are visible in any department uniform shall not exhibit:
 - Depictions of nudity or violence
 - Sexually explicit or vulgar art, works, phrases, or language
 - Symbols likely to elicit a strong negative reaction in the workplace or public
 - Illustrations, references, symbols, acronyms, etc. that represent criminal, oppressive, prejudicial, or discriminatory beliefs or organizations
 - Political beliefs, political parties, or represent any in a negative light
 - Illustrations, references, symbols, acronyms, etc. that denigrate the United States, State of Michigan, City of South Lyon, or the South Lyon Fire Department.
 - Sexist, racist, vulgar, anti-social, violent, gang related, or discriminate against any protected class by virtue of including words, symbols, or pictures in the tattoo or body art.



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- D. The department reserves the right to request that an employee cover a tattoo when it is found to violate this policy, or to take necessary corrective action for non-compliance.

V. BODY MODIFICATIONS

Body modifications visible while on duty are prohibited. Body modifications include, but are not limited to:

- Tongue splitting or bifurcation.
- Complete or trans-dermal implantation of any objects other than hair replacement.
- Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, or nose.
- Outlandish or unnatural contact lens colors or color variations that detract from a professional appearance.
- Gauging or gradually increasing the radius of a surgically induced opening in the flesh in areas such as the ear lobes or lips.
- Branding or scarification.
- Abnormal filing of the teeth.
- Body modifications shall not include those procedures medically necessitated by illness, deformity, or injury when performed by a licensed medical professional.

VI. GROOMING STANDARDS

- A. Necklaces, pendants, and medallions shall be worn under the t-shirt and may not be worn exposed while on duty.
- B. Wrist watches, rings (one per hand), and medical related bracelets may be worn if the article does not interfere with performing assigned duties, and not subject to catching or snagging due to being loose on the wrists or fingers.
- C. Rings that interfere with the quick donning of turnout coat, gloves, and/or medical gloves or whose raised design will compromise the integrity of the protective ensemble is prohibited.
- D. No visible body piercing (or piercing holes), to include ears (except by females), nose, eyebrows, cheeks, and tongues.
- E. Earrings worn by females shall be gold or silver posts no larger than 4mm in size. Earring posts shall be limited to no more than one post per ear.
- F. Ear plugs, talons, earlets, expanders, stretchers, flesh tunnels, or other types of ear "gauges" or earrings that could interfere with performing assigned duties are strictly prohibited. Piercing holes larger than those necessary to accommodate a small post earring are prohibited.
- G. Articles such as wallet chains, watch chains or fobs, personal jewelry, handkerchiefs, combs, cigars, tobacco cans, cigarettes, and pipes are not part of the uniform and will not be attached to or visible on the uniform.
- H. Sunglasses and frames must be of neutral tones (black, brown, tan, etc.) and not have ornate frames.
- I. Fingernails will be of moderate length and neatly manicured.
- J. No artificial fingernails or extensions will be allowed. Natural nail tips are to be kept at less than ¼-inch long. Males are prohibited from wearing any type of nail polish.



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Females: Nail polish is allowed and shall be a single pale color, or French manicure. Female personnel shall not wear shades of nail polish that distinctly contrast with their complexion, that detract from the uniform, or that are extreme. Some examples of extreme colors include but are not limited to, purple, dark blue, black, gold, neon/florescent. Decorations to the fingernails are not permitted.

- K. Cosmetics: Shall be conservatively colored and moderately applied.
- L. Hair, sideburns, mustaches, and articles of clothing must never interfere with use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including helmets and SCBA masks.

VII. HAIR

- A. Hair must be neat, clean, and conservatively groomed as described. Hair length, style, and bulk must permit safe and effective use of all PPE required to be used by the employee.
- B. Hair may be dyed, tinted, or frosted any color that could naturally occur in human hair. Any stripes, spots, or dying of colors other than natural tones is prohibited. Unnatural hair coloring, such as green, purple, blue, bright red, etc. are not permitted. Hair pins, combs, or barrettes, must be neutral in color.
- C. The following hairstyles are prohibited:
 - i. Pigtails
 - ii. Spikes greater than 1 inch in length
 - iii. Dreadlocks
 - iv. Mohawks
 - v. Mulletts
 - vi. Shaved designs
 - vii. Rat Tails
 - viii. Unusual or unnatural coloring
- D. No decorations may be worn in the hair. Hair clips or pins matching hair color may be worn.
- E. Hair on the top and sides of the head must be neatly groomed. The back of the hair may be either tapered or block cut and may extend to the bottom of the shirt collar. This is measured when standing at attention. Hair may cover to the mid-ear level. Hair must never be of such bulk or length that it will affect the safety of personnel in the performance of firefighting or other emergency operations. For safety reasons, particular emphasis must be placed on a secure and snug fit of personal protective equipment so that maximum protection may be afforded by their use. Personnel may wear their hair, compacted, not to exceed two inches in depth on both sides and top. The length of the hair is not to hinder the proper fit of issued headgear. If bangs are worn, they are to be maintained at mid-forehead level. At no time can bangs interfere with the seal of the SCBA facepiece or protective helmet.
- F. It is recognized that traditionally acceptable standards for female firefighter hairstyles differ considerably from those of male firefighters.

Female hairstyles that would normally not conform to the standards outlined in this policy may be pinned up or secured in order to comply while on duty. Braiding of hair is considered to be an acceptable means of securing it.



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Hair may not reach below the shoulder blades. If the braid gets in the way of an employee's ability to perform their job, it must be modified. Hair or hair style shall not interfere with proper wearing of uniform hats or protective equipment, or in any way create a safety hazard.

- G. Hairpieces and wigs shall be of good quality and fit, present a natural appearance, not interfere with the proper performance of duty.

VIII. FACIAL HAIR

- A. Beards, goatees, soul patches (which is a small tuft of hair centered under the lower lip) or other facial hair beneath the lower lip is prohibited. Per Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Part 451, "(1) Facepiece seal protection. (i) The employer shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have: (A) Facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function." All firefighters are required to be clean-shaven to ensure MIOSHA compliance. Clean-shaven shall generally mean that the employee has shaved within the last 24-hours.
- B. Mustaches must not interfere with the seal of a mask and must be kept neatly trimmed. They may not exceed more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " below the lower lip and no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ " on either side. Mustache shall not cover the top lip or protrude out over the top lip more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ ". "Fu Manchu", "Handlebar" or similar style mustaches are prohibited.
- C. Sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the earlobe, nor exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$ " at the widest point, or extend to a point that interferes with the seal of the SCBA mask. "Muttonchops", "Ships Captain" or similar grooming styles are prohibited.

This policy does not cover all potential appearances and grooming issues and any extreme clothes, hairstyles, facial hair or jewelry are not permitted. Department members are expected to use discretion in maintaining the professional image of the fire department.

Approved by
/s/ Chief Mike Kennedy