
Personal Appearance Standards

1022.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the personal appearance of members of the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department.

Requirements for department uniforms and civilian attire are addressed in the Uniforms and Civilian Attire Policy.

1022.2 POLICY

Town of Cheektowaga Police Department members shall maintain their personal hygiene and appearance to project a professional image that is appropriate for this department and for their assignments. Department personal appearance standards are primarily based on safety requirements, appearance conformity and the social norms of the community served, while considering matters important to members of the Department.

1022.3 GROOMING

Unless otherwise stated and because deviations from these standards may present officer safety issues, the following appearance standards shall apply to all members, except those whose current assignments would deem them not applicable, and where the Chief of Police has granted an exception.

1022.3.1 PERSONAL HYGIENE

All members must maintain proper personal hygiene. Examples of improper personal hygiene include, but are not limited to, dirty fingernails, bad breath, body odor and dirty or unkempt hair. Any member who has a condition due to a protected category (e.g., race, physical disability) that affects any aspect of personal hygiene covered by this policy may qualify for an accommodation and should report any need for an accommodation to the Chief of Police.

1022.3.2 HAIR

Hair shall be clean, neatly trimmed or arranged, and of a natural hair color. Hairstyles with shaved designs in the scalp are prohibited. Hair adornments shall be primarily for the purpose of securing the hair and must present a professional image.

Male – Police, court, or detention officer's hair length may touch but may not extend more than one inch below the top of the ear. Hair length may touch but may not extend below the top of the collar. Hairstyle will not preclude the wearing of the uniform hat in such a manner as to reflect a wellgroomed professional image. Hair shall not be dyed or cut/worn so as to appear outstanding from the general population or to present a nonprofessional image. Dangerous or conspicuous pins, combs or barrettes will not be worn.

Female – Police officers and police matrons must arrange their hair in such a manner that it presents a professional appearance at all times. Hair must be arranged so that it does not extend below the bottom of the collar and does not present a danger to the officer, or be styled in a

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ponytail. Ponytail styles are not recommended and are worn at the officer's own risk. Length of ponytail must maintain a well-groomed image; subject to approval of the Chief of Police. Hairstyle will not preclude the wearing of the uniform hat in such a manner as to reflect a well-groomed professional image. Hair shall not be dyed or cut/worn so as to appear outstanding from the general population or to present a nonprofessional image. Dangerous or conspicuous pins, combs or barrettes will not be worn.

1022.3.3 MUSTACHES

Mustaches will be neatly trimmed and no portion extending beyond the corners of the mouth will fall below a line parallel with the bottom of the lower lip. Officers on special assignment or due to health reasons, with permission from the Office of the Chief of Police may be exempt from this rule.

1022.3.4 SIDEBURNS

Sideburns will not exceed one inch in width and shall not flare more than one-quarter inch top to bottom. Sideburns will not extend beyond the lowest tip of the earlobe and will end in a clean shaven, horizontal line.

1022.3.5 FACIAL HAIR

1. Beards and Goatees are authorized; however, they must be worn with a mustache. Beards shall be kept clean and neatly trimmed. Officers are to be growing beards during off time so as to not present an unshaven look while on duty. No portion of the beard may be exceptionally longer than the rest, and beard hair length shall not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. The neck shall be kept clean shaven.
2. Patchy, spotty clumps of hair are not considered beards and, as such, are not permitted. The immediate supervisor will have the authority to deem an employee's facial hair inappropriate
3. Beards are not authorized for recruit or probationary officers or for members of the Honor Guard.
4. Permission to wear beards, mustaches and goatees may be withdrawn by the chief, at any time.

1022.3.6 FINGERNAILS

Fingernails shall be clean and neatly trimmed to a length that will not present a safety concern. The color of fingernail polish shall present a professional image.

1022.4 APPEARANCE

1022.4.1 JEWELRY

For the purpose of this policy, jewelry refers to rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, wristwatches and tie tacks or tie bars. Jewelry shall present a professional image and may not create a safety concern for the department member or others. Jewelry that depicts racial, sexual, discriminatory, gang-related or obscene language is not allowed. See the Uniforms and Civilian Attire Policy for jewelry specifications that apply while wearing the department uniform.

- (a) Necklaces shall not be visible above the shirt collar.
- (b) Earrings shall be small, worn only in or on the earlobe and only by female department members. Earrings shall be limited to no more than two earrings per ear.

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- (c) One ring or ring set may be worn on each hand of the department member. No rings should be of the type that would cut or pose an unreasonable safety risk to the member or others during a physical altercation, if the member is assigned to a position where that may occur.
- (d) One small bracelet, including a bracelet identifying a medical condition, may be worn on one arm.
- (e) Wristwatches shall be conservative and present a professional image.
- (f) Tie tacks or tie bars worn with civilian attire shall be conservative and present a professional image.

1022.4.2 TATTOOS

A uniformed employee will not have any tattoos, body art or branding on the head, face, neck, scalp or hands. Any visible tattoo, body art or branding that is obscene, advocates or symbolizes gangs or extremist groups, drug use, sexual, religious or racial discrimination or are deemed offensive are not permitted.

1022.4.3 BODY PIERCING OR ALTERATION

Body piercing (other than earlobes) or alteration to any area of the body that is visible while on-duty or while representing the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department in any official capacity, that is a deviation from normal anatomical features and that is not medically required, is prohibited. Such body alteration includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Tongue splitting or piercing.
- (b) The complete or transdermal implantation of any material other than hair replacement (i.e., foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design or pattern).
- (c) Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, nose or teeth (i.e., enlarged or stretched out holes in the earlobes).
- (d) Branding, scarification or burning to create a design or pattern.

1022.4.4 DENTAL ORNAMENTATION

Dental ornamentation that is for decorative purposes and that is not medically required is prohibited while on-duty or while representing the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department in any official capacity. Such ornamentation includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Objects that are bonded to front teeth.
- (b) Gold, platinum or other veneers or caps used for decorative purposes.
- (c) Orthodontic appliances that are colored for decorative purposes.

1022.4.5 GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES

Eyeglasses and sunglasses shall be conservative and present a professional image. Contact lenses with designs that change the normal appearance of the eye and that are not medically required are prohibited while on-duty or while representing the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department in any official capacity.

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1022.4.6 COSMETICS AND FRAGRANCES

Cosmetics shall be conservative and present a professional image. Use of cologne, perfume, aftershave lotion and other items used for body fragrance shall be kept to a minimum.

1022.4.7 UNDERGARMENTS

Proper undergarments shall be worn as necessary for reasons of hygiene and general appearance standards.

1022.5 RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

The religious beliefs and needs of department members should be reasonably accommodated. Requests for religious accommodation should generally be granted unless there is a compelling security or safety reason and denying the request is the least restrictive means available to ensure security or safety. The Chief of Police should be advised any time a request for religious accommodation is denied.

Those who request to wear headscarves, simple head coverings, certain hairstyles or facial hair for religious reasons should generally be accommodated absent unusual circumstances.