

**TUALATIN VALLEY FIRE AND RESCUE  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE  
NUMBER 8.5.1**

**ORIGINATED AND APPROVED: 08-01-89  
LAST REVISED: 12-15-23**

**SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS**

**PURPOSE:** To set minimum standards for personal grooming and uniforms of all personnel. All personnel must present themselves in such a way as to generate trust, confidence, and respect from the public and the residents we serve. For uniformed personnel, regulations stress that personal appearance must be commensurate with the high standards associated with the fire service.

**POLICY:** Personnel are expected to maintain acceptable personal hygiene standards at all time. Personnel are expected to take pride in their appearance, maintain a positive public image, and enhance personal safety through the grooming standards outlined in this policy. The standards outlined are a job requirement. All standards and rules that pertain to personal grooming apply to all uniformed line and non-line personnel anytime they are in uniform and to non-uniformed personnel any time they are on duty or representing the District. The District will comply with ORS 659A as it pertains to non-discrimination based on race and physical characteristics historically associated with race, including but not limited to natural hair, hair texture, hair types, and protective hairstyles, so long as those do not create safety hazards associated with the requirements outlined in this policy.

**AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY:** Individuals are ultimately responsible for meeting the standards specified in this policy. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring their personnel conform to these standards and informing their personnel of the necessary corrections needed for compliance when the appearance of their personnel violates these standards.

**PROCEDURE**

**I. GENERAL**

- A. In cases of extreme violations or safety hazards, supervisors must ensure personnel are not permitted to be on duty until the correction has been made.
- B. Personnel who refuse to comply with these standards and directives may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
- C. Grooming is an appropriate subject for consideration in performance evaluation, work assignment, and promotional eligibility.
- D. When working out, personnel are required to wear a shirt fully covering their torso.

## II. TATTOOS, BRANDING, SCARRING OR OTHER FORMS OF BODY ART

- A. Personnel are prohibited from:
  - 1. Having visible tattoos or any other form of body art such as branding and/or scarring on the face, head, and neck while at work or on duty. Exempt from this is tattooed make-up giving the appearance of natural color and style.
  - 2. Showing tattoos or body art containing obscene, profane, racist, sexual, violent, discriminatory, or objectionable words, symbols, or imagery which may bring discredit to the District.
- B. Prohibited tattoos or body art must be covered.
- C. The decision as to the appropriateness of a tattoo or body art is made by the fire chief. Exceptions to the above tattoo and body art standards must be approved by the fire chief.

## III. UNIFORMED LINE PERSONNEL

- A. Necklaces, pendants, and medallions 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. Ears are the only accepted visible body piercing. When worn, earrings must be small posts which will not interfere with performing assigned duties. Piercing holes larger than a standard 18-gauge piercing are not allowed and must be closed or covered while on duty and/or in uniform.
- D. Articles such as wallets, watch chains or fobs, personal jewelry, handkerchiefs, combs, cigars, tobacco cans, cigarettes, and pipes are prohibited from being attached to or visible on the uniform.
- E. Sunglasses and frames must be of neutral tones (e.g., black, brown, tan) and not ornate.
- F. Fingernails must be of moderate length and kept neat.
- G. Hair (including facial hair) and articles of clothing must never interfere with use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including helmets and SCBA masks.
- H. Hair:
  - 1. Hair must be neat and clean. Hair length, style, and bulk must permit safe and effective use of all required PPE.

2. Hair may be dyed, tinted, or frosted any color that naturally occurs in human hair. Any stripes, spots, or dying of colors other than natural tones is prohibited.
3. Hair decorations are prohibited, except hair clips, bands, or pins matching hair color.
4. Shorter hair may be combed over the ears, but may not extend below the top one-half of the ears, nor more than two inches (2") in front of the ears. Hair that is styled or combed forward must be no lower on the forehead than three-quarters of an inch (3/4") above the high point of the eyebrows.
5. Hair must be worn so that it does not extend below the bottom of the uniform collar. Hair longer than the uniform collar must be pinned up or secured at all times while on duty and must not interfere with the effective use of all required PPE. Braiding of hair is considered an acceptable means of securing it. If the braid gets in the way of a person's ability to perform their duties, it must be modified.

I. Facial Hair:

1. Beards are prohibited, except soul patches (a small tuft of hair centered under the lower lip). Soul patches must not connect to mustaches or extend lower than one inch (1") below the corners of the mouth.
2. Mustaches must not interfere with the seal of a mask and must be kept neatly trimmed. Mustaches may not exceed more than one inch (1") beyond or one inch (1") below the corner of the mouth.
3. Sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the earlobe, nor exceed one and one-half inch (1-1/2") at the widest point or extend to a point that interferes with the seal of the SCBA mask.

IV. NON-UNIFORMED AND UNIFORMED NON-LINE PERSONNEL

- A. The ears and nostrils are the only accepted visible body piercings. Piercings must not interfere with performing assigned duties. Piercings to the nose septum or other parts of the nose are not allowed. Piercing holes larger than a standard 18-gauge piercing are not allowed and must be closed or covered while on duty or representing the District.
- B. Hair must be neat and clean. Hair length, style, and bulk must permit safe and effective use of all required equipment and/or PPE. Hair may be dyed, tinted, or frosted any color that naturally occurs in human hair. Any stripes, spots, or dying of colors other than natural tones is prohibited.
- C. Business casual or business professional dress is required, except for Fridays and during inclement weather (e.g., significant snow or ice). On these days, jeans of

any color are permitted. Jeans must be clean and in good condition without holes, frays, etc. Jeans are not permitted when personnel are notified of a special event or have a business meeting.

APPROVED:

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DERIC WEISS  
FIRE CHIEF