

# **ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **11.01 PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

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**ISSUED 04/2014**

**REVISED 10/2015, 08/2018, 6/2019**

### **11.01 PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Employees of the Erie County Sheriff's Office shall be neat and clean at all times while on duty. They shall bathe regularly, shave cleanly, and keep their hair properly trimmed in accordance with this policy.

#### **HAIR**

Hair will not touch the ears or collar, except for the closely cut hair on the back of the neck. Hair in front will be groomed so that it does not fall below the band of properly worn headgear. Hair shall be cut so as to have a neat, clean, and business-like appearance—numerals, designs, and radical vertical or side blocking is not permitted. Hair color shall not be different from that occurring in nature. Non-functional hair ornaments shall not be worn. When functional hair ornaments are worn, they shall be gold, silver, or blend with the color of the hair.

#### **FACIAL HAIR**

A short and neatly trimmed moustache may be worn, but it shall not extend over the top of the upper lip or beyond the corners of the mouth. Sideburns may be worn provided that they shall not extend below the middle of the external ear opening.

Beards and goatees may be worn under the following circumstances:

1. Employees may only start to grow a beard or goatee on October 1 annually.
2. If the beard or goatee is shaved off after October 1 annually, the employee may not grow another beard or goatee until the following October 1.
3. Beards or goatees will be kept closely trimmed and well maintained such that the employee presents a professional appearance at all times. Areas outside of the beard (i.e: upper face and neck) will be kept clean shaven at all times.
4. If an employee who chooses to grow a beard or goatee fails to maintain the beard or goatee as required above, the employee will be ordered to remove the beard or goatee and will not be authorized to grow another beard or goatee until the following October 1.

#### **FINGERNAILS**

For the Sheriff, Deputy Sheriffs, and Corrections Officers, fingernails shall be naturally grown, neatly trimmed and shall not extend more than one-quarter (1/4) inch beyond the quick of the nail. Fingernail polish, if worn, shall be either clear or a single subtle color that blends with the uniform. No design of any type is permitted to be placed on or in the fingernail(s).

For Administrative Assistants and Dispatchers, fingernails may be natural or artificial (acrylic), they shall be neatly trimmed and shall not extend more than one-half (1/2) inch beyond the end of the fingertip. Fingernail polish colors are not limited.

For all employees, attachments to fingernails such as charms, beads, chains, etc. are prohibited.

#### **JEWELRY**

No visible jewelry may be worn by uniformed or sworn personnel, other than a maximum of one finger ring per hand. A wedding and engagement ring set, when worn together, will count as one finger ring for purposes of this policy. No rings will be worn on either thumb or, for sworn personnel, on either index finger. Earrings of any type are prohibited for all uniformed personnel or sworn personnel assigned to plainclothes duty, unless prior approval of the Sheriff or the Chief Deputy is obtained under limited circumstances (i.e.: employees performing "undercover" law enforcement activities).

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Dispatchers and Administrative Assistants may wear no more than two conservative earrings on/in each ear provided that the wearing of said earrings does not interfere with the employee's job duties. These employees may also wear no more than one visible neck chain.

Nose rings or studs, eyebrow rings, tongue studs, and any other similar jewelry items that could be visible to the public are prohibited for all employees.

### **TATTOOS**

All agency employees are generally prohibited from displaying any tattoos that are visible outside of the prescribed uniform of the day or other approved attire and would be exposed to public view, except that employees wearing short-sleeved shirts are permitted to have visible tattoos on both arms that do not extend below the wristline—provided that such tattoos are not offensive, as determined by the Sheriff; and employees are authorized to have a visible tattoo that replaces the wearing of an engagement and/or wedding ring, again provided that this tattoo is not offensive as determined by the Sheriff. Any employee contemplating the application of a tattoo that the employee believes could be deemed to be offensive, or otherwise not in compliance with this policy, is encouraged to receive the approval of the Sheriff prior to the tattoo's application.

No other tattoos that would be visible while the employee is wearing the uniform of the day or other approved attire and would be visible to the public—except as noted above—are authorized without the permission of the Sheriff and/or his/her designee.

Tattoos on the arms that are not in compliance with this policy will be covered with a black or flesh-colored tattoo "sleeve" or a long-sleeved shirt. Other tattoos will be covered as practicable.

### **NON-UNIFORM DRESS**

When an employee is authorized to wear non-uniform dress, the employee shall be conservatively dressed in business-like or casual attire based upon the employee's job duties and approval by the employee's supervisor. Male employees shall wear ties and jackets when appearing in court; female employees shall wear appropriate dress attire when appearing in court.

### **WEARING OF THE UNIFORM**

All uniformed personnel will wear their uniforms in accordance with the standards promulgated by the County Sheriffs' Standard Car-Marking and Uniform Commission, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 311.28 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 311-1-03, unless otherwise approved or directed by the Sheriff. Uniformed personnel will report for duty in full regulation or approved uniform, unless otherwise ordered by a supervisor, and will remain in that full uniform until reporting off duty. All components of the uniform will be worn at all times when the employee is subject to being viewed by the public—including while in transit to or from the work place or for assigned duties—or no part of the uniform will be worn. No unissued, unauthorized, or unsightly items may be worn on the uniform duty belt or anywhere else on the employee's body if the item would be visible to the general public while the employee is in uniform. Any uniform item issued to an employee by this agency will only be worn for employment related activities—i.e.: traveling to and from the workplace, working a shift, and traveling to and from, and attending, agency approved training or events during which the employee is representing the agency.

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### **ALTERNATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIFORM**

Certain employees (Dispatchers and Administrative Assistants) may be issued an alternative uniform consisting of polo-style shirts, khaki pants, black belt, and black shoes or boots. In addition, sworn personnel may also be issued this uniform to be worn when performing certain duties. As with the wearing of the standard uniform, all components of the alternative administrative uniform will be worn at all times when the employee is subject to being viewed by the public—including while in transit to report for assigned duty—or no part of the uniform will be worn, and any uniform item issued to an employee by this agency will only be worn for employment related activities—i.e.: traveling to and from the workplace, working a shift, and traveling to and from, and attending, agency approved training or events during which the employee is representing the agency. Black socks will be worn with this alternative administrative uniform.

### **ALTERNATIVE UNIFORM SWEATERS FOR NON-SWORN PERSONNEL**

Corrections Officers, Dispatchers, and Administrative Assistants may purchase black sweaters to be worn over the issued uniform shirt while on duty to meet their individual comfort needs, provided that those sweaters are free of defects (rips, holes, etc.) and have the proper shoulder patches displayed. Patches will be obtained and attached at the expense of the employee. Other than these black sweaters, no other alternative uniform item is authorized to be worn while the employee is in uniform.

### **APPEARANCE AND BEARING**

While on duty, employees shall maintain a military bearing and appearance. Employees will avoid such habits as keeping hands in pockets, slouching, leaning, or any other mannerisms that project a slovenly attitude. Employees will not smoke or use any other visible form of tobacco when in direct contact with the public.

### **POLICY EXECUTION**

The officer in charge of any shift is responsible for the appearance of the employees on that shift and shall check the appearance of all employees, when possible, at the beginning of each shift. Officers-in-charge shall take appropriate, immediate action to correct any infractions of this policy.