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SECRETARIAL DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: Dress Code for Non-Uniformed Personnel

NUMBER: 2021-03

SUPERSEDES: SD 2020-04

APPLICABILITY: All Department of Corrections Non-Uniform Personnel

REFERENCE: Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-43-105, 25-43-108, and 25-43-403

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ISSUED BY: Original Signed by Secretary Solomon Graves **EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 15, 2021

I. POLICY:

As the executive head of the Department of Corrections (DOC), it is the responsibility of the Secretary of Corrections to establish and monitor standards for non-uniformed personnel's dress to reflect a professional appearance for the organization.

II. PURPOSE:

To ensure that the DOC non-uniformed personnel dress in a professional manner as outlined in the dress code policy.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Offensive Tattoo. A tattoo which may result in a negative reaction from personnel or offenders, including but not limited to, any tattoo depicting a symbol or images associated with gang affiliation, profanity, sexual content or innuendo or any other image which would reflect negatively on the DOC.
- B. Revealing Attire. Clothing that is inappropriate for a professional environment due to being low-cut and exposing cleavage, being too tight, or exposing the midriff.
- C. Thong Sandal or Flip-flop. A backless shoe with a V-shaped strap, whether plain or embellished, which passes between the first and second toes and around either side of the foot and holds the sole of the shoe loosely on the foot.

IV. PROCEDURES:**A. Professional Dress and Grooming Guidance**

1. All non-uniformed personnel must wear clothing that is appropriate for their job and work site. Clothing and appearance should be neat, clean, in good business taste, and must not constitute a safety hazard. The DOC is a professional organization that interfaces with other state agencies, the business community, and the public. Personnel must project a professional public image.
2. In keeping the DOC's intention to maintain a dignified business atmosphere, extreme or unkept hairstyles and distracting body accessories are not permitted. Personal grooming and cleanliness must be maintained to present a neat appearance, nail polish, and makeup consistent with the professional business world.
3. Personnel are expected to practice good personal hygiene, select attire that is clean and in good repair, and present a professional image. Personnel are expected to shower and/or bathe daily and to attend to their personal hygiene as part of their professional appearance as an employee of the DOC. Neatly pressed clothing appropriate to the job is to be worn while on duty.
4. Hair, including facial hair (beards, mustaches, sideburns), is expected to be well-groomed and clean. Hairstyles are to conform to business, professional and department standards. Hair color should be within naturally occurring color tones. Extreme colors, such as green, purple, pink, etc. are prohibited.
5. Jewelry, including necklaces, earrings, bracelets, etc. should be modest and must conform to business, professional and department standards. Piercings should not be worn on duty except for earrings which are appropriate for a professional environment.
6. No Offensive Tattoos shall be visible while on duty.

B. Examples of acceptable attire include, but are not limited to:

1. Business suits, blouses, shirts, pants, ties;
2. Skirts and dresses that reach the top of the knee while standing;
3. Sweaters;
4. Shirts with collars;
5. Slacks and trousers;
6. Sports jackets and blazers;
7. Footwear designed for business purposes;
8. Dress sandals, dress wedges, or dress heels;
9. Leggings, but only if worn with a long shirt or dress that fits within the restrictions set forth in this policy; and
10. Hats, but only when used to keep warm in the process of entering or exiting a building, or for religious purposes.

C. Examples of unacceptable attire include, but are not limited to:

1. Clothing with a printed message, slogan, political message, picture or art depicting drugs, alcohol, smoking, sex, weapons, violence, or a message that is inflammatory, obscene, disrespectful, or potentially disruptive within a correctional or professional environment;
2. Dresses or blouses that are backless, strapless, sleeveless or have spaghetti straps unless such garments are covered by another article of clothing, such as a sweater or jacket;

3. Tank, undershirts, or muscle tops unless such garments are covered by an approved article of clothing, such as a sweater or jacket;
4. Sheer or mesh clothing that exposes undergarments or midriffs or any clothing with exposed undergarments;
5. Camouflage apparel;
6. Crop tops;
7. Skirts or dresses that reveal the upper thigh;
8. Clothing that is frayed or has holes;
9. Athletic or tennis shoes, flip-flops, or thong sandals;
10. Hooded sweatshirts or sweatpants;
11. Jeans or denim pants of any color, unless authorized by the appropriate Division Director or the Secretary;
12. Pants or slacks which are unhemmed or drag the floor;
13. Shorts of any kind;
14. Costumes of any kind;
15. Revealing Attire;
16. Athletic clothing; and
17. Hats, except as otherwise provided in this policy.

D. Safety Issues

Personnel must not wear clothing that is unsafe. Accessories such as rings, necklaces, bracelets, and earrings must not present a potential safety hazard. Division Directors or the Secretary may institute more restrictions for safety reasons.

E. Legislative and other High-Profile Events

Personnel attending meetings at the State Capitol, Governor's Office, with a Committee of the General Assembly, or other high-profile events must follow a "formal business" dress code as outlined below:

1. Men

- a. Business suit with necktie;
- b. Sports coat with necktie and slacks or dress khakis;
- c. Blazer with necktie and slacks or dress khakis; and
- d. Dress shoes.

2. Women

- a. Business dress;
- b. Business suit;
- c. Sweaters or blouses with either slacks or professional skirts of modest length; and
- d. Necklines and footwear must be modest and appropriate for business.

F. Clothing and Footwear

Clothing and footwear should be appropriate to the workplace in terms of appearance and personnel safety. Footwear must be selected for safety and comfort and be otherwise acceptable for a correctional or professional environment.

G. Exceptions

The maintenance, construction, mailroom, farm, industry, and information systems staff that install equipment or do other physical labor, or personnel on special assignment as determined by the appropriate Division Director or the Secretary, shall wear clothing suitable to their jobs and to their worksite. Exceptions may also be granted based upon a medical or health condition; however, the request must be approved by the appropriate Division Director or the Secretary.

H. Failure to Comply

Supervisors have the discretion to determine whether attire is unprofessional and should provide guidance as to proper attire and grooming when necessary. Personnel who report to work in violation of this policy will be sent home with instructions to change and return to work. He or she will be required to use annual leave. Continued dress code violations may result in disciplinary action.