

STOCKTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

GROOMING STANDARDS  
SUBJECT

DATE: January 16, 2015

NO: I-9

FROM: CHIEF ERIC JONES

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

INDEX: Grooming Standards  
Appearance, Grooming,  
Tattoo Standards

**I. POLICY**

- A. A neat well groomed appearance is an essential requirement for all police personnel. The requirements established must be based on acceptable contemporary standards to present a neutral and professional image to the community.
- B. This department is committed to working with unique needs due to medical conditions or religious faith by extending consideration for reasonable accommodations and limited exemptions of this policy on an individual and case-by-case basis.
- C. The following guidelines are established for all members of the Department.
  - 1. Unless otherwise noted, policies apply to both uniformed and plainclothes Department members.

**II. LAW**

- A. The Stockton Police Department prohibits any form of discrimination and/or harassment in employment based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, pregnancy, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, age, or any other category or attribute consistent with state or federal law. All such discrimination and harassment is unlawful and shall not be tolerated.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Medical Necessity: A deviation from the policy or policies related to the uniform and/or grooming standards of employees which is necessary due to a documented medical condition, prescribed by a physician, and which may be reasonably accommodated within the course and scope of the employee's normal job duties.
- B. Articles of Faith: Head covers, clothing, jewelry, objects, symbols, and other items of religious significance.
- C. Religious Grooming Customs: Deviations from the policy or policies related to the uniform and/or grooming standards of employees which are mandated by the employee's religious faith and may be reasonably accommodated within the course and scope of the employee's normal job duties.

**IV. STANDARDS**

- A. Uniform Personnel - Sworn and Civilian
  - 1. Hair
    - (a) The hair on the top and sides of the head shall be neatly trimmed and groomed so it will appear neat when a hat is worn. If the hair is styled or combed forward, it will be no lower on the forehead than 3/4 of an inch above the high point of the eyebrows.
    - (b) No decorations shall be worn in the hair. Hair clips or pins matching the color of

the hair or uniform may be worn.

- (c) The hair must be neat, trimmed, and meet the acceptable contemporary standards and appear neutral to the public.

2. Male uniformed members of the Department:

- (a) The hair around the ears will be neatly and evenly trimmed, and will extend no lower than mid-point of the tragus (the prominence in front of the external opening of the ear), as it passes over the ear.
- (b) The hair on the back of the head will be allowed to touch the top of the collar when the officer is in a standing position.
- (c) The maximum distance the hair shall extend outward from the top and sides of the head shall be two inches.
- (d) Sideburns shall be neatly trimmed and shall not exceed two inches in width. The base shall be a clean-shaven horizontal line designed to preclude bushy or "mutton chop" styles. The length of the sideburns shall extend no lower than the bottom of the earlobe.

3. Female uniformed members of the Department:

- (a) The hair shall be pulled away from the face and may be combed or pulled back over the ears. Hair worn down the back of the head will be in a manner not to extend one inch below the bottom of the collar when the officer is in the standing position.
- (b) The hair combed in front of the ears will extend no lower than the bottom of the ears and not more than two inches in front of the ears.
- (c) Longer hair will be worn in a "ponytail" and may be braided. The "ponytail" shall be worn in the middle of the back of the head and not to extend 3 inches in length from the bottom of the earlobe.
- (d) "Ponytails" shall be tightly secured with "black" or "dark blue" hair bands. The ponytail shall then be wrapped or formed in a circular shape and secured closely to the scalp.
- (e) Hair clip or pins matching the color of the hair may be worn.

4. Unacceptable Hair Standards

- (a) Unusual hair tint or colors, (purple, orange, etc.).
- (b) No "tails."
- (c) No designs, symbols, or jagged edges parting the hair. Hair parted, shall be naturally parted.
- (d) Other unusual or unacceptable styles as determined by the Chief of Police.

5. Facial Hair

- (a) The face shall be clean-shaven except that mustaches are permitted. If a mustache is worn, it must be trimmed so that it does not cover the upper lip and if the ends are combed down, they must not extend below the outer rim of the lower lip when the mouth is closed. Mustaches shall not extend more than 1/2 an inch out from the corner of the mouth.

B. Plainclothes Personnel - Sworn and Civilian

- 1. A neat, clean, and professional appearance is mandatory at all times. It is the

responsibility of the employee to arrive for work dressed in appropriate business attire.

- (a) This order does not interfere with a supervisor authorizing necessary clothing changes to accomplish a particular assignment.

C. Special Assignments (Narcotics, Vice, Strike, Etc.)

- 1. Special Assignments may require special appearances i.e.; hair, beards, mustaches, clothing. Any authorization to deviate from Departmental standards shall be granted by the Chief of Police, after discussion with the unit commander.

**IV. GROOMING**

A. Cosmetics

- 1. If worn, cosmetics will be subdued and blended to match the natural skin color of the individual.

B. Fingernails

- 1. Fingernails will be cleaned and trimmed. Nails will not extend beyond the tips of the fingers.
  - (a) The fingernail length of female personnel may extend beyond the tips of the fingers, but must be neat, trimmed, meet acceptable contemporary standards, and appear neutral to the public. Nail length must not interfere with performing tasks.
- 2. The color of fingernail polish, if worn, shall be pastel or soft tones (no shocking bright colors or decals).

C. Jewelry

- 1. No visible body pierce jewelry shall be worn by either uniform or plainclothes personnel.
  - (a) Male Department members will not wear any type of earring.
  - (b) Female department members may wear a pair of earrings, which are small and close to the ear. No hoops or dangling earrings. One earring shall be worn located in each earlobe.

**V. TATTOOS, SCARRING, BRANDING, AND STRETCHING**

A. Tattoos

- 1. Tattoos are permanent marks or designs made on the skin by a process of pricking and ingraining an indelible pigment or by raising scars. Tattoo visibility, while Departmental personnel are on-duty or otherwise representing the Department, is restricted according to the following rules.
  - (a) Tattoos on the arm and hand may be visible if they comply with the following:
    - 1. From a normal, standing position, a single tattoo on the arm shall not be visible larger than 4" x 4" in area, and a single tattoo on the hand shall not be visible larger than 2" x 2" in area.
    - 2. During normal movement, a 4" x 4" area of the tattoo on the arm, and 2" x 2" area on the hand, shall not be exposed for extended or continual periods of time.
    - 3. Only one tattoo per hand, and one tattoo per arm, will be allowed to be visible, regardless of whether additional tattoos may be smaller than 4" x 4" on the arm or 2" x 2" on the hand.

4. Any visible tattoo shall not be offensive in any manner or otherwise have a message or meaning that reflects negatively upon the Department.
- (b) Tattoos on the neck, face or head shall not be visible as according to the following:
    1. From a normal, standing position, a tattoo shall not be visible on the neck area.
    2. During normal movement of the neck, if a tattoo is exposed, it shall not be so exposed for extended or continual periods of time.
    3. Tattoos on the face or head shall not be visible at any time while personnel are on-duty or otherwise representing the Department.
  - (c) Permanent make-up shall be construed as a tattoo and shall be acceptable if applied in a manner that is consistent with the individual's natural appearance.
  - (d) Tattoos shall not be visible on the leg area.
2. The Chief of Police has the final approval to determine if a tattoo is offensive or inappropriate, and/or whether to allow any deviation from these guidelines.
- B. Scarring
1. Scarring, also referred to as Cutting or Scarification, is the act of intentional cutting of the skin for the purpose of creating a design, form, figure, or art.
    - (a) While on-duty or otherwise representing the Department, personnel are prohibited from exhibiting any scarring which may be seen by another person.
- C. Branding
1. Branding is the act of intentional burning of the skin for the purpose of creating a design, form, figure, or art.
    - (a) While on-duty or otherwise representing the Department, personnel are prohibited from exhibiting any branding which may be seen by another person.
- D. Stretching
1. Stretching, sometimes referred to as Gauging, is the intentional expansion of a body piercing for the purpose of wearing body piercing jewelry, typically upon the ear lobes.
    - (a) While on-duty or otherwise representing the Department, personnel are prohibited from exhibiting any stretching which may be seen by another person.
- E. Covering
1. Department members must cover prohibited tattoos, scarring, and/or branding, with a skin-toned patch, bandage, long sleeved shirt, or other material approved by the Chief of Police.
  2. Any authorization to deviate from Department standards shall be at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

## **VI. MEDICAL AND RELIGIOUS EXCEPTIONS AND ACCOMODATIONS**

- A. Exceptions
1. Employees may request authorization from the Chief of Police or designee for exemptions from the policy or policies related to the uniform and/or grooming standards of employees in order to accommodate medical necessities, religious grooming customs, or wearing of articles of faith.

2. The Chief of Police or designee shall make a determination regarding all requests for exemptions to the policy or policies related to the uniform and/or grooming standards of employees on an individual and case-by-case basis, taking into account any potential safety issues and/or operational concerns that the exemption may present to the employee, the public, or other department members.

B. Approved Articles of Faith

1. Articles specific to the Sikh Faith

- a. Head Covers

- i. Employees of the Sikh faith may wear a turban exclusively, at all times, unless otherwise directed or not permissible due to their assigned duty (e.g. when wearing a riot helmet). NOTE: In instances where a Sikh member is required to wear a riot helmet, the employee may wear a smaller "under-turban" underneath the appropriate helmet, providing the helmet fits properly and functions as intended without interference.
- ii. Employees who wear a Sikh turban shall ensure the turban fits snugly on the head so that the top peak of the turban is facing in the front with a Stockton Police hat badge centered on the front of the turban.
- iii. Turbans shall be the same color as the Class "A" uniform cap.
- iv. Employees who wear a Sikh turban may wear their turban at all items, to include administrative proceedings and while appearing in court, subject to court policy and procedure.

- b. Articles of Sikh Faith

- i. Kara

- (a) Employees of the Sikh faith may wear a Kara (i.e. steel bracelet) as long as the Kara does not interfere with the ability of the employee to perform their duties.

- ii. Kirpan

- (a) Employees of the Sikh faith who carry a Kirpan (i.e. religious sword) shall ensure the Kirpan has a blade no longer than three (3) inches.
- (b) The Kirpan shall be worn in a cloth holster (i.e. "Gatra") concealed and secured under the uniform shirt.

- c. Appearance Requirements

- i. Employees of the Sikh faith who wear a turban shall groom their hair on their heads and tie it in a top-knot/bun secured under their turban.
- ii. Male employees of the Sikh faith shall:
  - (a) Groom and tie their beards in a knot that is tucked and held in place under the chin in a neat and clean manner.
  - (b) Groom their mustaches in a neat and clean manner.