



<b>SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE IN THE WORKPLACE</b>	<b>PAGE</b> 1
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<b>POLICY No.:</b> 704	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 02/01/10
<b>APPROVED BY:</b> <i>Jonathan Feldman MD</i>	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b> DHS Policy No. 706.01

**PURPOSE:** To establish a policy for professional appearance in the workplace for the Department of Public Health (DPH) employees and to ensure compliance with County Policy, 512 Professional Appearance in the Workplace and County Code Section 5.72.010.

**POLICY:** DPH employees are required to wear clothing suitable to their occupations, as may be determined by the Director of Department of Public Health. Employees shall furnish and maintain in suitable and appropriate condition such clothing and associated articles at their own expense except as otherwise expressly provided for by the Board of Supervisors. Employees should maintain a neat and professional appearance in the performance of their duties.

**GUIDELINES:**

DPH provides a wide variety of programs and services and the professional image of our workforce is critical to fostering public confidence and providing "effective and caring service." Therefore, these guidelines on professional appearance are intended to:

- Foster respect and earn the confidence of our customers, the public, vendors and fellow employees.
- Promote a positive work environment and limit distractions.
- Ensure safety and security while working.

DPH respects the diversity of its residents and its workforce. This policy provides guidelines on dress and appearance appropriate to the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the service provided to the public, and/or other circumstances or business needs as defined by the Director of Public Health.

Employees are expected to abide by the following standards:

- Employees shall present a neat, clean, and professional appearance in their performance of duties at all times based on the employee's assignment and/or work location.
- Employees must dress in a manner that will not hinder their ability to effectively complete their work assignments, including consideration of the communities served, customer expectations, business needs or standards of the department and the employee's safety.
- Employees are expected to practice personal hygiene that does not interfere with the public and/or co-workers in their work environment.
- Employees should be mindful of, and dress appropriately for, special events, meetings and appointments with customers.
- Official photo identification badges and uniforms (where applicable) should be worn in the performance of County of Los Angeles business and in all County of Los Angeles facilities in order to identify employees as legitimate County representatives.
- Employees shall abide by specific dress requirements intended to ensure job-related safety such as when operating equipment or machinery, working with potentially dangerous chemicals, or for public health consideration.

Except as noted or approved by the Director of Public Health, DPH employees may not wear the following:

- T-shirts or clothing articles that may create a hostile or abusive work environment, such as sexually suggestive cartoons, pictures, or words.
- Denim pants or jean-style pants of any color except for carpenter and ground maintenance worker assignments which include carpet laying, moving equipment, and repairing and assembling equipment.
- Pants below the waistline or low-rise pants showing undergarments.
- Low front tops, halter tops, bare midriffs.
- Flip-flop styled sandals.
- Athletic wear, e.g., gym or sweat pants, leggings, jogging outfits, shorts, spandex, worn during work hours. Exception for break time when walking, running, etc.
- Torn, frayed, or ripped clothing.
- Excessively tight fitting or oversized (baggy) garments.
- Visible excessive number of earrings and/or studs; no nose, eyebrow, lips, tongue rings and/or studs.
- Tattoos, must be reasonably covered (with exception for cultural or religious purposes).

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Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Director of Public Health in circumstances such as County of Los Angeles or DPH-sponsored events, special occasions, seasonal weather changes, and business casual days, but may also be made based on the requests for reasonable accommodation (e.g., religious, cultural, disability, etc.).

**Dress Policy Enforcement**

This policy is intended to provide guidelines on dress and appearance and is not meant to address all situations. Therefore, depending on the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the public, or other circumstances, there may be some differences in dress guidelines. Consistent with this policy, exceptions can be made at the department level by the Director of Public Health with approval from the Director of Human Resources due to the nature of work, special events, and business casual days. Employees who report to work and are not in compliance with this policy may be sent home to change and return to work, unless some other remedy can be arranged, such as an employee putting on a jacket.

Any questions regarding the dress policy within your department should be directed to the DPH Human Resources Office.

**AUTHORITY:** County Code, Title V Personnel, Section 5.72.010 – Suitable clothing to be worn.

Department of Human Resources Policy Number 512

County of Los Angeles Employee Handbook, Section C, Performance Expectations