



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **GROOMING AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
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CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 09/01/2019

I. POLICY

Officers of the Cottage City Police Department shall be well-groomed and present a neat, professional appearance while on duty.

II. PURPOSE

This General Order establishes grooming and personal appearance guidelines for on-duty personnel.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Citizens enjoy great freedom in the way they dress and groom, but the decision to join and serve the Cottage City Police Department entails certain sacrifices on the part of the officer. One of these sacrifices is the freedom to dress and groom with no concern other than one's own personal preference.

The regulations in this General Order strike a fair balance between the rights of the officers and the legitimate needs of the Department. In the regulations, distinction is sometimes drawn between the grooming required for males and that required for females. This does not reflect any difference in the degree to which it is imperative that female or male officers are well-groomed. Rather, it reflects acceptance of the fact that the public expects different grooming standards to be observed by the two sexes, and it is this public expectation which is central to the recognition of the respect of the officer, cooperation from the public, as well as the absence of antagonism.

This grooming and personal appearance regulation serves two functions: it facilitates instant recognition and fosters quick, respectful cooperation by the public; and, it causes officers to project a "neutral" image, thereby minimizing public antagonism from everyday contacts, whether or not cooperation or recognition is needed.

The importance of the first function stems from the fact that it is, on occasion, vital to public safety as well as the safety of all officers that the public be able to recognize, instantly and without doubt, an officer as representing legitimate authority. In some cases, hesitation in either seeking assistance from an officer or cooperating with an officer can be a matter of life or death.

Moreover, the Police Department's job is made significantly easier if the public feels minimal hostility toward it. Hostility may result not only from abrasive personal contact, but also from mere occasional glimpses of officers whose appearance suggests that the officers might be less than evenhanded in their treatment of different segments of the public. Thus, the second function of this regulation, the assurance of impartiality, is essential to the Department.

IV. APPEARANCE

A. All Personnel

At all times when on duty, unless expressly authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee, all Department members shall be well-groomed and clean in their person.

1. Hands

Fingernails shall be trimmed not to exceed 1/4" from the end of the finger and free of dirt. Female employees may wear conservative polish or coating on their fingernails.

2. Eyebrows

Eyebrows shall be well-groomed to remain within the area defined by the natural hairline.

3. Jewelry

Personal jewelry shall be held to a minimum. Bracelets and visible necklaces will not be worn with the uniform, with the exception of medical alert type bracelets.

4. Hair

Hair will not be of a style, length, or artificial color which is offensive to the general public.

5. Sunglasses may be worn. The frames must be a conservative color. Gaudy or colorful frames and lenses are prohibited. Sunglass strap holders are prohibited. Sunglasses shall be removed when speaking to the public or traffic violators.

B. Male Officers

1. Hair

Hair shall be combed or brushed in such a manner that it does not protrude over two inches in a perpendicular line from the scalp and shall be gradually tapered to the sides in such a manner that the outer portion of the ear is visible and not covered by hair when viewed for the front, side, and rear. Hair shall be evenly trimmed at all times. Hair in the back of the head shall be trimmed in such a manner that it does not extend over the shirt or uniform collar while standing in normal posture. While the officer is on duty, his hair shall not be worn in braids, plaits, pigtailed, ponytails, or drawn together and pinned. No eccentric styles.

2. Sideburns

Sideburns shall not extend below a horizontal line drawn from the lowest portion of the ear. They must be trimmed in such a manner that the ear is visible from the front and that the width of the sideburns does not exceed the area defined by the natural hairline.

3. Mustaches

If only wearing a mustache, it must be trimmed so that the upper lip of the officer is visible when viewed from the front. Mustaches must be trimmed so that they do not extend beyond W' from a perpendicular line drawn at the corner of the mouth. Mustaches must also be trimmed in such a manner that they do not extend over W' below the horizontal line formed by the corners of the mouth. Mustaches must not be waxed or otherwise treated to extend them beyond the natural hairline.

4. Other Facial Hair

All other facial hair such as beards, chin, neck hair, or lower lip whiskers, shall be clean trimmed to ¼" inch. No eccentric styles.

5. Male personnel may not wear earrings.

C. Female Officers

1. Hair shall be arranged in such a manner that it does not extend below the bottom edge of the collar. Hair styles used in accomplishing this goal shall permit the proper wearing of the uniform hat. Wigs or hairpieces of a color close to the normal hair color may be worn if they conform to the guidelines of this regulation.

2. No ribbons or ornaments shall be worn in the hair except for neat, inconspicuous bobby pins or conservative barrettes.

3. Female officers may wear one pair of small, plain, button-type earrings.

4. Make-up will be kept to a minimum.

D. Other Public Safety Employees

1. Public Safety Employees, who are not, because of their assignment, required to wear a uniform, will dress in a manner which reflects a professional appearance.

2. Grooming standards for these employees will be the same as those for uniformed police personnel.