

## **Model Policy: Dress code and appearance**

### Why you need this model policy:

Employees affiliated with a medical practice are representatives of the practice and are responsible for creating a positive experience for patients, families, visitors, clinical staff, and fellow workers.

### How this model policy helps you:

This model policy allows a practice to address all aspects of employee appearance, including clothing, grooming, personal hygiene, and more. Even if your office staff wears uniforms, you still need a policy in order to establish and enforce standards related to cleanliness and other aspects of appearance.

### How to use this model policy:

Adapt this policy as required for your medical practice.

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## **Model Policy: Dress code and appearance**

### **I. PURPOSE**

To establish a dress code and appearance policy for [Practice Name]. This policy outlines the minimum acceptable standard for dress and appearance.

### **II. RATIONALE**

Employees affiliated with [Practice Name] are representatives of the practice and are responsible for creating a positive experience for our patients, families, visitors, clinical staff, and fellow workers. The described standards of dress and appearance are defined to provide consistent and acceptable presentation, both internal and external.

### **III. PERSONS AFFECTED**

This policy applies to all persons performing work for [Practice Name] (including regular employees, physicians, temporary or contract employees, and any others). For purposes of this policy, these persons will be collectively referred to as employees.

### **IV. POLICY**

While the following guidelines provide information about specific items of clothing and aspects of appearance which are acceptable or unacceptable (as outlined below), the ultimate consideration is whether a professional appearance is maintained. Therefore, an employee may violate this policy by not exhibiting a professional appearance, even though s/he is wearing acceptable items of dress.

#### **A. Dress**

1. Compliance with these guidelines is expected at all times, including situations where personal attire may be covered by a lab coat.
2. Inappropriate Dress
  - A. Caps, head coverings. Head coverings may only be worn when associated with professional or religious affiliation or as they relate to state/or federal legislation.
  - B. Shorts (including Bermuda shorts), mini-skirts, culottes, gauchos above the knee
  - C. Leggings or stretch pants
  - D. Blouses, shirts, sweaters, skirts or pants that do not cover the shoulders, back or stomach while standing or sitting
  - E. Flannel shirts
  - F. T-shirts
  - G. Exercise clothes (sweatshirts, sweatpants, jogging suits, etc.) Exception: Sports Medicine personnel are permitted

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- to wear appropriate fitness apparel related to their position.
- H. Sheer, spandex, low cut/slung garments
  - I. Clothing which is torn, faded, stained, frayed or gives an unkempt appearance
  - J. Bib overalls
  - K. Any jean or jean-styled pant (denim jeans, blue jeans, white jeans, color fashion jeans, etc). Exception: Plant engineering trade workers are permitted to wear denim pants in accordance with local trade practice.
  - L. Denim or cargo-style capris or cropped pants
  - M. Pants worn below hip level ("sagging")
3. Appropriate Dress
- A. Suits
  - B. Dress pants
  - C. Casual dress pants (i.e., Dockers, chinos, khakis, etc.)
  - D. Dress capris or cropped pants
  - E. Skirts
  - F. Casual dresses
  - G. Dress shirts/blouses and collared sports shirts
  - H. Sweaters/vests
  - I. Sport coats/blazers
4. Clothing should be clean, neat, in good condition and fit properly. Torn, faded, stained or frayed articles of clothing are not acceptable.
5. Shoes should be clean and in good repair.
- A. Direct caregivers (those staff members that provide hands-on care at any time): Closed-toed shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes should include noise resistant soles and heels.
  - B. Non-direct caregivers: Open-toed shoes may be worn as long as they look professional. Flip-flops are not acceptable.
6. Hosiery and socks:
- A. Direct caregivers: Hosiery or socks must be worn at all times.
  - B. Non-direct caregivers: Hosiery or socks are not required as long as a professional appearance is maintained.

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7. Direct patient care staff may have additional organization-specific policies related to use of scrub attire. This policy does not supersede those policies.
8. Theme dress days will be permitted on a reasonable basis with approval from the manager. Examples may include wearing a certain color of clothing to show support for a cause or sports team. Sites observing these days shall continue to follow the guidelines of this policy to ensure a professional environment is maintained.

**B. Appearance**

1. Hair should be clean, combed, and professional in appearance. Just as with tattoos and body piercings, hair dyed in non-traditional, vibrant colors can serve as a distraction, and therefore is not appropriate for the workplace. In patient contact situations, long hair must be controlled to prevent contact with the patient, equipment or supplies. Managers and supervisors will be responsible for addressing any violations of this policy at their own discretion.
2. Control of beards and mustaches will be coordinated by individual departments, if they affect or interfere with job performance and safety.
3. Cologne, perfume, make-up, and specific jewelry may be worn sparingly unless precluded by departmental policy, working conditions or directives. Sites which house individuals with medically-proven allergies to various fragrances may prohibit use of these substances.
4. Other than pierced ears, jewelry worn in pierced body parts (e.g., tongue, nose, gauged ears, lips, eyebrows, etc.) may not be visible or detectable.
5. Tattoos with slogans, graphics, sayings or offensive wording should be covered (e.g., long sleeve shirt, gloves, etc.). Managers also have the discretion to require that an employee cover any tattoo(s) or combination of tattoos that could be considered offensive.

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**C. Cleanliness**

1. Neat and clean dress demonstrates pride in the job and is a courtesy to those around you. Attention to the principles of hygiene while working is necessary.
2. Each individual employee is responsible for maintaining personal hygiene needs and cleanliness.
3. Proper hand washing techniques are important for personal safety and control of infection.
4. Nails should be neatly trimmed and clean.
5. Employees that provide direct patient care are not permitted to wear artificial nails.

**D. Safety**

1. Protective shoes with reinforced toes are required when specified by individual departments.
2. Non-conductive safety shoes are required where specified by individual department.
3. All direct caregivers (those staff members that provide hands-on care at any time) must wear closed-toed shoes.
4. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is available on all inpatient units and clinics. Employees must use this equipment while a risk of exposure exists.

**E. Enforcement**

1. Managers and supervisors should address this policy in pre-hire interviews, job descriptions, during annual performance appraisals, and on an ongoing basis as needed.
2. Managers and supervisors are responsible for employee orientation and enforcement of this policy. Non-compliance with

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this policy may result in counseling or appropriate progressive discipline.

3. Employees arriving at work inappropriately dressed or otherwise in violation of this policy may be directed to clock out for the day, and may also be subject to disciplinary action.

**F. Managers and supervisors will make the final decision if there is any question regarding proper attire and cleanliness.**

**G. Exceptions**

Requests for exceptions for medical (e.g., foot surgery requiring a special shoe), religious reasons or other reasons must be reviewed with the manager and any deviation from policy, not already identified elsewhere in this policy, must have manager approval.

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