

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

Standard Operating Procedures

10.04.05
GROOMING STANDARDS



Adopted: 12/20/16
Reviewed: 05/30/18
Revised: 05/30/18

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Fisher", is written over a horizontal line.

Purpose: To set minimum standards for personal grooming and uniforms of all personnel.

References: N/A

Procedure:

1. All personnel must present themselves in such a way as to generate trust, confidence, and respect from the public and the citizens of Spokane County Fire District 8.
 - a) It is not the goal of this procedure to regulate or dictate matters of personal style and taste, except to the degree that individual appearance decisions would lessen public confidence in the District.
 - b) In addition, for those employees in uniform, procedures stress that personal appearance must be commensurate with the high standards traditionally associated with the fire service.
2. Authority and Responsibility: All supervisors are responsible to ensure that members conform to these standards.
 - a) All personnel are expected to take pride in their appearance, maintain a positive public image, and enhance personal safety through the grooming standards outlined in this procedure. The standards outlined in this procedure are a job requirement.
 - b) Employees whose appearance violates District standards will be informed of the necessary corrections needed for compliance. In cases of extreme violations or safety hazards, employees will not be permitted to be on duty until the correction has been made.
 - c) Employees who refuse to comply with these standards may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
3. Tattoos, Branding, Scarring or other forms of body art.
 - a) Personnel (regular and volunteer) are prohibited from having tattoos or any other form of body art such as branding and/or scarring that is visible while in public. This should be accomplished by selecting business attire or uniform items that obscure the tattoo/body art from view while in public.
 - i. Exempt from this procedure are personnel or volunteers employed or offered employment as of 12/20/2016, who have existing tattoos or body art of an artistic or benign nature. This does not exempt new tattoos or body art obtained by current personnel from the restrictions against prohibited types of body markings noted below.

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- b) Employees are prohibited from showing tattoos or body art that are prejudicial to good order, discipline or morale, or bring discredit to the District.
 - i. Examples of prohibited markings include those that are considered by the District to be sexist, racist, vulgar, anti-social, violent, or discriminate against any protected class by virtue of including words, symbols, or pictures in the tattoo or body art.
 - c) Exempt from this standard are tattooed wedding rings and tattooed make-up for female firefighters giving the appearance of natural color and style.
 - d) Division Chiefs/or department managers may allow for short sleeve uniform shirts to be worn while working on shift on a situational basis, should the need for short sleeves outweigh the procedure to cover tattoos.
 - e) The District has the right to request that an employee cover a tattoo when it is found to violate this procedure, or to take necessary corrective action for non-compliance.
4. Grooming Standards-Uniformed Personnel.
- a) Necklaces, pendants, and medallions may not be worn exposed while on duty.
 - b) Wrist watches, rings (one per hand), and medical related bracelets may be worn if the article does not interfere with performing assigned duties, and not subject to catching or snagging due to being loose on the wrists or fingers.
 - c) No visible body piercing (or piercing holes), to include ears (except by females), nose, eyebrows, and tongues. Earrings worn by females should be small posts, no "gauges" or earrings that could interfere with performing assigned duties.
 - d) Articles such as wallets, watch chains or fobs, personal jewelry, handkerchiefs, combs, cigars, tobacco cans, cigarettes, and pipes are not part of the uniform and will not be attached to or visible on the uniform.
 - e) Sunglasses and frames must be of neutral tones (black, brown, tan, etc.) and not have ornate frames.
 - f) Members will maintain acceptable personal hygiene standards at all times.
 - g) Fingernails will be of moderate length and neatly manicured.
 - h) Hair, sideburns, moustaches, soul patches, and articles of clothing must never interfere with the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including helmets and SCBA masks.
 - i. Hair must be neat, clean, and conservatively groomed as described. Hair length, style, and bulk must permit safe and effective use of all PPE required to be used by the employee.

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- ii. Hair may be dyed, tinted, or frosted any color that could naturally occur in human hair. Any stripes, spots, or dying of colors other than natural tones is prohibited.
 - iii. No decorations may be worn in the hair. Hair clips or pins matching hair color may be worn.
 1. Men-Must wear hair so that it does not extend below the bottom of the uniform collar. Hair may be combed over the ears, but may not extend below the top one-half of the ears, nor more than two inches in front of the ears. Hair that is styled or combed forward must be no lower on the forehead than three-quarters of an inch above the high point of the eyebrows.
 2. Women-Traditional and acceptable standards for female hairstyles differ considerably from those of males. Hair must be pinned up or secured at all times while on duty, and must not interfere with the effective use of all PPE required by the employee. Braiding of hair is considered to be an acceptable means of securing it. Hair may not reach below the shoulder blades. If the braid gets in the way of an employee's ability to perform their job, it must be modified.
 - iv. Beards are prohibited on structural firefighters, except soul patches, which is a small tuft of hair below the lower lip that does not connect with the corners of the mouth.
 - v. Moustaches must not interfere with the seal of a mask and must be kept neatly trimmed.
 - vi. Sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the earlobe, nor exceed 1-1/2" at the widest point, or extend to a point that interferes with the seal of the SCBA mask.
5. Grooming Standards-Non-Uniformed Personnel.
- a) Piercings-Other than ears, no visible body piercings (or piercing holes), to include nose, eyebrows, and tongues. No "gauges" or earrings that could interfere with performing assigned duties. Piercing holes larger than those to accommodate a small post earring must be closed or covered while at work.
 - b) Hair-Hair must be neat, clean, and conservatively groomed. Hair length, style, and bulk shall permit safe and effective use of all equipment and/or PPE required by the employee.

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