



# GENERAL ORDER ADM-13 UNIFORM AND PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

EFFECTIVE JUNE 4, 2021

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This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. UNIFORM OF THE DAY
- III. UNIFORM WEAR AND INSIGNIA
- IV. ISSUED EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM
- V. GROOMING STANDARDS
- VI. CIVILIAN, VOLUNTEER, AND CIVILIAN COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL
- VII. CASUAL DAY/UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES ATTIRE – NON-UNIFORMED CIVILIANS
- VIII. COURT APPEARANCES
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- X. CANCELLATION

## **I. POLICY**

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) shall provide all personnel with the equipment and uniform components necessary to perform their duties.<sup>1</sup>

## **II. UNIFORM OF THE DAY<sup>2</sup>**

A. Uniform of the Day is the class of uniform with appropriate accoutrements as prescribed by the Chief of Police.

1. Members are required to maintain a clean, neat, well-groomed appearance. Illustrated guides for the proper wearing of the uniforms are posted in the briefing rooms of each District and in other designated areas.
2. Members are responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all issued equipment and uniforms.
3. Uniforms shall be worn in their entirety. No unauthorized adornments shall be displayed on any uniform.
4. Supervisors are responsible for inspecting members to ensure proper grooming and that issued equipment is kept in good working condition.

B. Class A: Dress Uniform

1. Blouse, collar ornaments, badge, nameplate, commendations, long sleeve shirt, necktie with tie bar, issued blue trousers with blue stripe, and black oxford or polished dress shoes.
2. Gun belts must be leather and have a buckle.
3. Sergeants and below shall wear a Sam Browne strap with the buckle in the center of the chest.
4. The gun belt, when worn as part of the Class A uniform, shall have the D rings attached to the weapon side of the belt. The Sam Browne shoulder strap shall be attached to these rings with the strap running through the non-weapon side epaulet and the D rings attached in front of and behind the holster.

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<sup>1</sup> CALEA 22.1.6

<sup>2</sup> CALEA 22.1.6

5. Only a holster, magazine pouch, and handcuff case shall be worn on the duty belt.
6. No cell phones or pagers shall be visible when wearing the Class A Uniform.

C. Class B: Long-Sleeved Uniform

1. Long-sleeved shirt with the sleeves extended, all buttons fastened, and the shirt collar worn outside of the external vest carrier; issued blue trousers with blue stripe.
2. Members may choose to wear either:
  - a. The issued dickey or a plain navy blue or black mock neck shirt or a plain navy blue, black, or white t-shirt. No writing, insignias, or logos shall be visible on the mock neck shirt unless it is issued by the Quartermaster; OR
  - b. The issued tie and tie clasp. The tie and tie clasp, if worn, will be worn under the external vest carrier and the tie shall not extend below the bottom of the external vest carrier.
3. External vest carrier or soft body armor.
4. Badge, nameplate, and appropriate rank insignia on the outermost garment.
5. Issued sweater (optional).
6. All-black shoes or boots.
7. Issued winter coat or lightweight patrol jacket (optional).
8. Issued ski-type hat or baseball-style cap with HCPD logo as detailed in this General Order (optional).

D. Class C: Short-Sleeved Uniform

1. Short-sleeved shirt, all buttons fastened except the top button, and the shirt collar worn outside of the external vest carrier; issued blue trousers with blue stripe.
2. External vest carrier or soft body armor.
3. Badge and nameplate on outermost garment; appropriate rank insignia.
4. All black shoes or boots.
5. Issued lightweight patrol jacket or winter coat (optional).
6. Issued ski-type hat or baseball-style cap with HCPD logo as detailed in this General Order (optional).

E. Class D Uniform

1. The Class D uniform may be worn for those components identified in Appendix A of this General Order.
2. A District or Bureau Commander may authorize the HCPD-sanctioned BDU for special details, when appropriate.

F. Business Attire

1. Males shall wear a business suit or sport coat with tie and dress slacks or trousers.
2. Females shall wear a professional pantsuit, dress, dress skirt, or slacks; a dress blouse; and a jacket to conceal the firearm.

**III. UNIFORM WEAR AND INSIGNIA**

A. Armband: The HCPD-issued armband shall be worn as an identification device by on-duty non-uniformed officers and off-duty PVSP/SAV/PAV officers engaged in official police business whenever a quick means of identification is necessary.

B. ASP Baton and Scabbard: Officers shall carry the ASP baton and scabbard on the weapon side of the gun belt, immediately to the rear of the duty weapon.

C. Awards and Commendations

1. All HCPD awards and commendations should be worn on the Class A dress uniform. HCPD awards and commendations may be worn at the officer's discretion on the Class B and C uniforms. Awards or commendation ribbons shall be centered above the right breast pocket with the bottom of the award touching the top seam of the pocket.
2. Awards shall be affixed to and worn on the uniform as detailed in General Order ADM-05, [Awards and Commendations](#).
3. Service pins issued by the Howard County Government for length of service may be worn centered over the right breast pocket with the bottom of the pin one-half inch above all other awards or pins. Only the latest service pin issued may be worn on the uniform.
4. No special awards may be worn on any uniform without the written approval of the Chief of Police. This includes awards, commendations, and insignias received from other jurisdictions, agencies, or community or civic organizations.
5. Special Event Pins may be worn on all uniforms but should be worn on the dress blouse.

D. Badges

1. Badges shall be worn on the outermost garment of the uniform of the day.
2. Detective Badges:
  - a. Shall not be worn on any HCPD uniform.
  - b. Shall only be used as identification when in plain clothes assignments.
  - c. Shall be turned in to the Quartermaster Section upon completion of the detective assignment, to be held for a shadow box for the officer's retirement.
3. Non-sworn members are prohibited from carrying their badges as a form of identification, i.e. Cadets, Animal Control Officers, Duty Officers, etc.
4. The Chief of Police may authorize the wearing of special issue badges such as the HCPD anniversary, COPS, inaugural, or other commemorative badges. These badges may only be worn during the time specified by the Chief of Police.

- E. External Vest Carrier or Soft Body Armor<sup>3</sup>
1. All uniformed operational personnel regularly engaged in enforcement activities shall wear the issued External Vest Carrier (EVC) or soft body armor while on duty.
    - a. The issued uniform EVC with body armor plates shall be worn over the approved uniform shirt.
    - b. Soft body armor shall be worn under the approved uniform shirt.
    - c. The use of the EVC or soft body armor shall be optional when the National Weather Service has forecast a temperature of 90 degrees or more for a shift or the actual temperature is 90 degrees or more. In those cases, the vest must be kept readily available for use.
    - d. An exclusion from this provision may be the HCPD counter sniper, with supervisory approval.
    - e. Officers actively involved in covert operations in which body armor wear would present a danger of identification, such as Vice and Narcotics details, may be exempt from body armor requirements, to be determined on a case-by-case basis with supervisory approval.
    - f. Officers who work extra-duty assignments such as Uniformed Police Security Details and Board of Education assignments are required to wear HCPD issued body armor.
  2. All other sworn personnel are strongly encouraged to wear the EVC or soft body armor while on duty or in uniform, regardless of their assignment.
  3. The wearing of protective vests is mandatory for all personnel engaged in pre-planned, high-risk situations regardless of the temperature.<sup>4</sup>
    - a. This shall include but not be limited to all Tactical Section call-outs and details, pre-planned warrant executions, drug operations, Emergency Services Unit (ESU) details, and any other situation so designated by a supervisor or commander.
    - b. Sworn personnel have also been issued Level III protective vests to be worn when directed by a supervisor or at the officer's discretion during a high-risk situation.
  4. Vests shall be readily available at all times to all on-duty sworn personnel, including those serving in an administrative capacity.
  5. Officers with medical conditions that prevent them from wearing the external vest carrier or soft body armor must provide a medical note to the Chief of Police for waiver consideration.
  6. The Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee shall maintain a vest replacement schedule for standard vests and coordinate sizing and replacement issues with the appropriate vendor.
    - a. Officers must promptly report any changes that affect proper fit, wear, or function of their issued vest to the Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee.
    - b. Officers shall report expired vests so that replacements may be issued in a timely manner.

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<sup>3</sup> CALEA 41.3.5

<sup>4</sup> CALEA 41.3.6

7. The Special Operations Bureau will track the Level III. A. Tactical Vests that are issued to the Critical Incident Negotiation Team (CINT) and Tactical Section members.
- F. Footwear: The HCPD will only reimburse members who purchase footwear to be worn with the Class A through D uniform; or for an employee or group of employees whose position requires specific protection, are more specialized, and the protective footwear is required by a specific standard. Footwear may be purchased from any vendor consistent with the following guidelines:<sup>5</sup>
1. The reimbursement for the purchase of shoes shall not exceed \$105.00 per pair. The reimbursement of boots shall not exceed \$130.00 per pair. Any expense that exceeds the amount contributed by the department shall be the sole responsibility of the employee. Sales tax and shipping and handling will not be reimbursed.
  2. Shoes worn with the Class A uniform shall be a low-cut black Oxford or dress shoe with a smooth finish and rounded toe or soft soled tie shoe with smooth leather uppers that are completely black in color. The shoe shall always be highly polished. Boots and tennis shoes are prohibited.
  3. Shoes worn with other class uniforms may either be the Oxford-type shoe or any soft soled tie shoe with smooth leather uppers that are completely black in color.
  4. Boots shall be black in color, round toe, and plain tip style. Boots shall be a military-type boot or design in appearance with no buckles, snaps, or Velcro. Boots shall maintain a uniform black appearance and not be excessively worn.
    - a. Side zipper type boots are permissible when they otherwise conform to the above design requirements.
    - b. During inclement weather, plain black pull-on rubber boots may be worn.
  5. Footwear reimbursement will be limited to one pair of shoes once every 12 months unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as job-related damage to shoes.
  6. Officers who purchase their own footwear should follow these procedures to be reimbursed through the County:
    - a. Complete HCPD Form 7020, Footwear Preauthorization and Reimbursement, and submit it to the Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee for approval of the selected footwear prior to purchase.
    - b. Following the purchase of footwear, provide the original receipt and the Form 7020 to the Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee for submission.
    - c. Employees will be reimbursed through the County's Employee Expense Claim process within 30 days.
- G. Gloves
1. Gloves may be worn in cold weather provided they are solid black in color. No writing, insignia, or logos shall be visible. Mittens and fingerless gloves are prohibited.

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<sup>5</sup> CALEA 41.3.4

2. Protective black gloves (e.g. leather) may be worn when responding to incidents that have a high potential to expose the officer to blood borne pathogens or contact with sharp objects. They must not interfere with firearm control or defensive tactics.
3. An approved case may be worn on the rear of the gun belt to carry disposable gloves.
4. White gloves may be worn for ceremonial occasions or for other special occasions, such as traffic direction, per a commander's instruction.

H. Gun belt

1. The HCPD issued gun belt should be worn by all uniformed officers regularly engaged in enforcement activities. Alternative gun belts purchased by officers must meet HCPD specifications and be approved in writing by the Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee.<sup>6</sup>
2. The gun belt shall be worn over the waist belt and shall fit snugly, completely covering the waist belt.
3. The gun belt shall be maintained to ensure a uniform black appearance. Basket weave leather is prohibited.
4. The thicker portion of the gun belt shall be worn on the weapon side.

I. Handcuffs

1. Uniformed officers shall wear the issued handcuffs in the issued handcuff holder. The handcuff holder shall be maintained to ensure a uniform black appearance. The handcuffs and holder shall be worn on the non-weapon side of the gun belt.
2. A second pair of handcuffs approved in writing by the Education & Training Division (E&T) may be worn. The second pair of handcuffs shall be worn in an issued handcuff case or in an alternative handcuff case purchased by the officer that meets HCPD specifications and is approved in advance by The Executive Director of the Administration Command or his designee.<sup>7</sup>
3. On-duty officers not in uniform in an operational assignment should carry issued handcuffs on their person or have them immediately accessible. Undercover officers are exempt from this requirement.

J. Handgun,<sup>8</sup> Holster, and Magazine Case

1. On-duty officers shall carry the issued service weapon in the issued holster. The weapon shall be carried loaded. Two additional loaded magazines shall be worn on the non-weapon side of the gun belt, forward of the radio.
2. Administrative uniformed officers shall carry at least one additional loaded magazine in the issued case.
3. On-duty uniformed officers regularly engaged in enforcement activities shall wear the issued holster on the weapon side of the gun belt. Other uniformed officers shall wear the issued administrative holster on the weapon side of the waist belt.

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<sup>6</sup> CALEA 22.1.6 & 41.3.4

<sup>7</sup> CALEA 41.3.4

<sup>8</sup> CALEA 22.1.6

4. Non-uniformed officers shall wear the issued holster or a holster that has been approved by the Firearms Unit.

K. HCPD Patch

1. The issued patch shall be worn on both sleeves of the issued blouse, nylon coat, lightweight jacket, one piece overall, sweater, long sleeve shirt, and short sleeve shirt.
2. Permission to wear the patch elsewhere must be obtained through the Chief of Police or his designee.

L. Headgear

1. The eight-point uniform hat shall be worn as part of the Class A dress uniform.
  - a. The hat shall have a badge centered on it.
    - i. The word "Police" shall appear on the hat badge underneath the State of Maryland seal for those officers who hold the rank of Police Officer and Police Officer First Class.
    - ii. The respective ranks shall appear on the hat badge beneath the State Seal for those officers holding the rank of Corporal or above.
  - b. The Chief and Majors shall have a gold strap over an embroidered black visor. Captains and Lieutenants shall have a gold strap over a plain black visor. All others shall have a black strap over a plain black visor.
  - c. Wearing of the eight-point uniform hat shall be optional for Class B and C uniforms except when directed by a supervisor.
  - d. The eight-point uniform hat shall be worn squarely on the head with the front brim approximately two fingers above the top of the nose. The hat shall be worn so that the top is level and not tipped back or tipped to the side.
2. Uniformed members may wear the issued ski-type hat embroidered with HCPD when exposed to cold weather conditions. The hat may not be worn indoors.
3. Personnel previously issued a fur-lined winter hat may continue to wear this hat. This hat may not be worn indoors.
4. The issued navy blue baseball cap with the HCPD patch centered on it may be worn by officers wearing the Class B, C, or D uniform when working on extended foot patrol or traffic details, or to protect the officer's face and head from sun or rain.
  - a. The issued cap shall be maintained in a professional manner. The brim of the hat shall not be flattened or bowed and may only be worn in its original condition. Caps displaying damage, fading, or wear may not be worn.
  - d. The cap is never to be worn indoors including any police station or office, a business establishment, or a citizen's house.
5. Other headgear shall be issued by the Quartermaster on approval of the Chief of Police or his designee.

M. Lapel Ornaments

1. Lapel ornaments shall be worn on the Class A dress uniform.

2. Lapel ornaments shall be centered on the collar just above the lapels, one-half inch from the edge of the collar, consistent with the uniform guide.

N. Name Plate

1. The issued nameplate with "Serving Since..." and the CALEA accreditation emblem shall be worn on the outer-most garment of the uniform of the day.
2. The nameplate shall be attached to the holder. If a holder is not provided on the garment, the nameplate shall be centered on the flap of the right breast pocket. The top edge on the nameplate shall be one-eighth inch (1/8") below the bottom of the seam flap.
3. The "Serving Since" date shall reflect the years of service as a Police Officer with the HCPD.
4. Certified Spanish-speaking officers shall wear the "Hablo Español" pin above the HCPD nameplate.

O. Necktie and Tie Bar

1. Only the issued tie and tie bar shall be worn with the long-sleeved uniform, when appropriate.
2. Only the issued tie bar with the Maryland State Seal shall be attached to the tie and shirt. The tie bar shall be parallel to the bottom edge of the shirt pocket flaps.

P. OC Spray and Holder: Issued OC spray and holder shall be worn on the duty belt consistent with training.

Q. Portable Radio and Case<sup>9</sup>

1. The portable radio shall be carried in the issued case on the non-weapon side of the gun belt. The radio may also be carried with the issued clip.
2. When issued with the lapel microphone, the microphone shall be attached to an epaulet. A black leather microphone holder, approximately three inches (3") in length, may be attached to the epaulet and then the microphone. No other objects shall be attached to the epaulets.

R. Rank Insignia shall be worn on all shirts, jackets, and other outerwear of all uniformed officers of appropriate rank.

1. Commissioned officers shall wear their rank insignia on the epaulet of all blouses, coats, and patrol jackets. The rank insignia shall also be affixed to the collars of the shirts, parallel to the bottom edge of the collar, with one-half inch (1/2") from the bottom of the collar to the bottom edge of the rank insignia.
  - a. Chief of Police: Holding the rank of Colonel.
    - i. Gold eagles affixed to epaulets of blouses, coats, and winter outerwear. Gold eagles affixed to shirt collars in the manner described above.
    - ii. Four one-half inch (1/2") gold braids shall be sewn on each sleeve of the dress blouse, with three-eighths inch (3/8") separation between braids. The braids shall begin two and one-half inches (2 1/2") from the bottom of the sleeves.

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<sup>9</sup> CALEA 22.1.6



- b. Major
  - i. Gold oak leaf cluster on each epaulet of the blouses, coats, and winter outerwear. Gold oak leaf cluster shall be affixed to the shirt collars as described above.
  - ii. Three one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) gold braids shall be sewn on each sleeve of the dress blouse, with three-eighths inch ( $\frac{3}{8}$ " ) separation between the braids. The braids shall begin two and one-half inches ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ " ) from the bottom of the sleeves.
- c. Captain
  - i. Twin gold bar collar pins on each epaulet of the blouse, coat, patrol jacket, and winter outerwear. Twin gold bar collar pins shall be affixed to the shirt collars as described above.
  - ii. Twin one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) gold braids shall be sewn on each sleeve of the dress blouse with three-eighths inch ( $\frac{3}{8}$ " ) separation between the braids. The braids shall begin two and one-half inches ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ " ) from the bottom of the sleeves.
- d. Lieutenant
  - i. Single gold bar collar pins on each epaulet of the blouse, coat, patrol jacket, and winter outerwear. Single gold bar collar pins shall be affixed to the shirt collars as described above.
  - ii. A single one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) gold braid shall be sewn on each sleeve of the dress blouse. The braids shall begin two and one-half inches ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ " ) from the bottom of the sleeves.

2. Noncommissioned Officers

- a. Noncommissioned officers shall wear chevrons on the sleeves of their shirts and blouse. The chevrons shall be centered on the sleeves one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) below the HCPD patch.
  - i. Sergeant Triple Chevrons
  - ii. Corporal Double Chevrons
  - iii. Technical Corporal Double Chevrons above one star
  - iv. Police Officer First Class Single Chevron
- b. Sergeants and Corporals shall affix rank pins to the epaulet of the patrol jacket.
- c. The blouse has a navy-blue braid that begins two and one-half inches ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ " ) from the bottom of the sleeve.

S. Scarves are prohibited.

T. Socks<sup>10</sup>

- 1. Socks shall be solid black or navy blue in color.

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<sup>10</sup> CALEA 41.3.4

- 2. Socks worn with boots may be other colors provided they are not visible at the top of the boot when seated.
- U. Specialty pins approved by the Chief of Police may be worn on the Class B, C, and, when appropriate, D uniforms, for members assigned to the component or specialty identified by the pin.
  - 1. The pin may always be worn on the Class A uniform, even for former component or specialty members.
  - 2. Pins shall not be worn on sweaters.
- V. Sunglasses<sup>11</sup> that are conservative or military style may be worn when needed. Mirrored sunglasses and white or brightly colored frames are prohibited.
- W. Sweaters
  - 1. The issued blue sweater may be worn as outerwear with the shirt collars tucked in the sweater.
  - 2. The sweater shall have the HCPD patch attached to the left shoulder. The patch shall be one-fourth inch (1/4") from the top seam and centered on the sleeve.
  - 3. The badge shall be worn on the left breast and affixed to the holder. The nametag shall be worn on the right breast and affixed to the holder.
  - 4. Corporals and above shall have their issued rank insignia attached to the epaulets.
  - 5. No other accoutrements shall be affixed to the sweater.
- X. T-Shirts<sup>12</sup>
  - 1. T-shirts worn under the long- or short-sleeved shirt shall be navy blue, black, or white in color.
  - 2. No writing or logos shall be visible on the t-shirt. Any visible portion of the T-shirt shall be unfrayed, clean, and neat in appearance.
  - 3. No portion of the T-shirt shall appear hanging below the sleeves of the uniform shirt.

**IV. ISSUED EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM**

- A. The following equipment and uniforms shall be standard issue for Sworn Personnel.<sup>13</sup>

Uniform	Equipment
Arm band for identification	ASP baton and scabbard
Badge	Ballistic vest
Dress blouse	External Vest Carrier and plates
Lightweight patrol jacket	Flashlight, cone, and charger
Nameplate	Gas mask
Raincoat	Gun belt
Rank insignia	Handcuffs and case
Shirt – long and short sleeved	Holster
Shoes or boots	ID card
Sweater	Magazines and magazine pouch

<sup>11</sup> CALEA 41.3.4

<sup>12</sup> CALEA 41.3.4

<sup>13</sup> CALEA 22.1.6

Tie and tie bar	OC spray and holder
Traffic vest	Portable radio with charger clip
Trousers	Rubber gloves and holder
Uniform hat and rain cover	Sam Browne strap with D rings
Winter coat	Service weapon
Winter hat w/logo	Tourniquet and tourniquet holder

- B. Any request to deviate from wearing the standard uniform and/or equipment as required, i.e. not enough space on the duty belt for all equipment, shall be made in writing through the chain of command.
- C. Other non-standard uniform components and equipment may be issued based on assignment.

**V. GROOMING STANDARDS**

- A. Uniformed Male Members (excludes civilian Communications members)
  - 1. Hair shall be neat, clean, properly trimmed, and well-groomed while members are on-duty. The coloring, style, or cut shall not detract from or degrade the intent of the uniform or position.
    - a. Hairstyles shall be conservative and professional in appearance. Extreme or fad hairstyles are prohibited, including but not limited to those that incorporate designs or sculptures using the hair and/or cut into the hair, and any style that presents an unprofessional or disheveled appearance.
    - b. Only natural hair colors, i.e. no pink, blue, green, etc., are permitted.
    - c. The hair on top of the head shall be neatly trimmed and the sides shall not fall over the ear. The bulk or length of the hair should not interfere with the normal wearing of the uniform hat.
    - d. The sides and back of the hair shall be neatly trimmed and tapered. The hair on the sides and back of the head shall not protrude from the bottom edge of the uniform hat in such a manner that the hair appears to bulge outward.
    - e. Sideburns shall be neatly trimmed with straight lines and no flair at the base. The base of the sideburns shall not extend below the bottom of the earlobe.
    - f. Hairpieces or wigs, if worn on duty, shall present a natural appearance, shall not interfere with the proper performance of duty, and shall not present a safety hazard. If worn while in uniform, the hairpiece or wig shall comply with the provisions of this section.
  - 2. Uniformed members shall be clean shaven. Neatly trimmed moustaches may be worn provided the ends of the moustache do not exceed the corners of the mouth. Beards of any kind are prohibited for all sworn police members unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee.
    - a. Medical Condition Beards: The Chief of Police or his designee may authorize sworn police members to wear a beard or maintain an alternate shaving schedule if they have an existing medical condition that restricts or prevents them from shaving.
      - i. Member Responsibility

- a) Sworn members that have an existing medical condition that restricts or prevents them from shaving shall submit to the Employment Services Division an original HCPD Form 1107, Beard Exemption, completed and signed by a licensed dermatologist, documenting the medical condition.
  - b) The HCPD Beard Exemption Form must be dated and include the dermatologist's name, telephone number, and original signature. The report shall also include the member's name and assignment.
  - c) Sworn members shall renew their HCPD Beard Exemption Form every year in January, regardless of when the initial request was approved. For example, if the initial request was approved in November, the member shall submit a new Form 1107 signed and dated by a licensed dermatologist in January.
- ii. Beard Appearance Standards
- a) Sworn members who have a diagnosed medical condition that restricts or prevents them from shaving and who have been authorized to wear a beard or maintain an alternate shaving schedule as described above shall keep their facial hair neatly trimmed, not to exceed one-fourth inch ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " in length.
  - b) Goatees and other designer facial hairstyles that require partial shaving are strictly prohibited.
- iii. The Employment Services Division shall:
- a) Be responsible for maintaining a file for all members that submit medical substantiation reports that restricts or prevents them from shaving.
  - b) Provide the member with a copy of the approved HCPD Beard Exemption Form.
  - c) Make notification to the member's Watch Commander or Division Commander.
- iv. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with grooming standards.
- b. Non-medical Condition Beards
- i. The Chief of Police will provide a list of approved plain clothes assignments or specialty positions that will be exempt from the beard restriction.
  - ii. Members assigned to an approved assignment or position via light duty or administrative duty are not exempt from shaving.
  - iii. Division Commanders can request an exemption for their personnel via memorandum to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will review the request and either approve or deny the request.

- iv. The Employment Services Division shall be responsible for maintaining a file for plainclothes assignments, specialty positions, and individuals authorized at the discretion of the Chief of Police to wear a beard or facial hair for non-medical reasons.
  3. Necklaces, medals, etc. may be worn if they are not visible. Visible medical bracelets are permitted. Earrings and other visible piercings shall not be worn while on duty, outside of covert operations.
  4. Any exceptions to these provisions shall be approved in advance by the Chief of Police or his designee.
- B. Uniformed Female Members (excludes civilian Communications members)
  1. Hair shall be neat, clean, properly trimmed, and well-groomed while members are on-duty. The coloring, style, or cut shall not detract from or degrade the intent of the uniform or position.
    - a. Only natural hair colors, i.e. no pink, blue, green, etc., are permitted.
    - b. Hair style may not interfere with the wearing of the uniform hat.
    - c. Hair may touch the shirt collar but shall not fall below the collar's lowest edge to the rear. No hair shall show under the front brim of the uniform hat.
    - d. Any hairstyle that is bound, such as braids, and meets the above requirements must be worn close to the head and present a professional appearance.
    - e. Objects worn in the hair shall be for the sole purpose of holding the hair in place and shall be similar in color to the individual's hair color or be solid navy blue or black. No object should interfere with the wearing of the uniform hat.
      - i. Combs, pins, or any other item that can be used as a weapon against the officer are prohibited.
      - ii. Hairnets are prohibited.
    - f. Hairpieces or wigs, if worn on duty, shall present a natural appearance, shall not interfere with the proper performance of duty, and shall not present a safety hazard. If worn while in uniform, the hairpiece or wig shall comply with the provisions of this section.
  2. Makeup may be worn if it is natural in color and does not detract from or degrade the intent of the uniform or position.
  3. Fingernails may be polished provided the polish is one color, the same color is on all nails, there are no adornments, and nails are kept short.
  4. Necklaces, medals, etc. may be worn if they are not visible. Visible medical bracelets are permitted.
  5. Only one stud-type earring per earlobe is permitted while on duty.
    - a. Loop, wrap, or dangle style earrings are prohibited.
    - b. Other visible piercings including but not limited to nose, eyebrow, and any part of the ear except the lobe shall not be worn while on duty outside of covert operations.

6. Any exceptions to these provisions shall be approved in advance by the Chief of Police or his designee.
- C. Civilian non-uniformed personnel and civilian Communications personnel shall maintain proper grooming and appearance.
1. Hair or hairpieces shall be neat, clean, and groomed in such a fashion as not to interfere with the employee's duties.
  2. Beards and moustaches shall be neat, trimmed, and shall not interfere with the employee's duties.
- D. All members
1. Tattoos, Body Art, and Brands
    - a. The purpose of the tattoo policy is to promote the uniformity of appearance; to maintain neutrality and the perception of neutrality amongst members of the public; to prevent discrimination or the perception of discrimination amongst members of the public; to foster discipline; and to encourage public confidence in members of the HCPD.
    - b. No visible tattoos will be displayed on the face, head, neck, or hands.
    - c. Tattoos will not be visibly displayed on any part of the body if they are obscene, offensive, sexually suggestive, profane, or discriminatory towards persons based on their race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, age, sex, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or identity, or disability, or otherwise out of conformance with this policy.
    - d. Waivers shall be requested in writing from the Chief of Police or his designee for visible tattoos, body art, or brands that do not conform with this policy.
  2. Mutilation
    - a. Intentional body mutilation, piercing, branding, or intentional scarring that would be visible while in uniform or civilian clothing is prohibited. Some examples are split or forked tongue, foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design or pattern, enlarged or stretched out holes in the ears other than a standard piercing, or intentional scarring that appears on the neck, face, scalp, or arms.
    - b. Waivers shall be requested in writing from the Chief of Police or his designee for prior existing body mutilation, piercing, branding, or intentional scarring.
  3. Dental Ornamentation
    - a. The use of gold, platinum, or other veneers or caps for purposes of ornamentation is prohibited. Teeth, whether natural, capped, or veneer, shall not be ornamented with designs, jewels, initials, etc.
    - b. Waivers shall be requested for prior existing dental ornamentation from the Chief of Police or his designee.

**VI. CIVILIAN, VOLUNTEER, AND CIVILIAN COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL**

- A. To achieve and maintain the highest standard of professional excellence is a primary objective of the HCPD. One of the qualities that mark a professional organization is the exemplary appearance of all its personnel. The HCPD is often judged by the appearance of a single employee; the dress and grooming of all members must establish and maintain the credibility and professional standards of the HCPD.
- B. Uniformed civilians shall refer to Appendix A for a listing of the uniform components for their assignment.
- C. The Chief of Police reserves the right to determine appropriate attire for police employees. In the event an employee is uncertain about policy compliance, other attire should be worn until specific permission is obtained.
- D. Members shall conform to the professional business attire standards routinely required of office personnel in private business firms unless otherwise directed by their supervisor.
- E. All members must dress in a neat, clean, and professional manner, including on casual days.
- F. HCPD-sanctioned polo and oxford shirts with the HCPD logo may be purchased through the Quartermaster and worn as an alternative to professional business attire when approved by the employee's supervisor.
  - 1. These shirts shall be worn with slacks or khaki-styled pants and shall be worn tucked in.
  - 2. There may be specific meetings or events when the alternate polo shirt is not appropriate attire. Supervisors will make this determination in advance of such an event.
- G. Clothing should be of appropriate length and fit to facilitate movement and to portray a professional image. Skirts should be no shorter than three inches (3") from the top of the knee.
- H. Clothing should be clean, unwrinkled, and of a size appropriate for the individual. Torn, dirty, stained, wrinkled, or excessively tight or worn clothing of any type is considered inappropriate for the workplace.
- I. Undergarments shall be worn so they are not visible through or outside of the member's clothing.
- J. Shoes shall be clean, polished, in good repair, appropriate for the outfit, and appropriate in style and heel height. Casual non-sneaker-type shoes are acceptable.
- K. Supervisors may exempt a member from meeting professional business attire requirements to complete a specific task or assignment that would require a personal appearance in variance with the provisions of this policy.
- L. Jewelry that detracts from a professional appearance or that could be offensive or disturbing to others shall not be worn.
- M. Sunglasses shall not be worn in any fashion while working in an office environment.
- N. Hats are not to be worn indoors.
- O. Contemporary hair and grooming styles are permitted as long as a neat appearance is maintained and it does not constitute a safety hazard to the employee or to others. A Deputy Chief of Police may allow alternative hairstyles, goatees, and/or beards for members in non-uniformed assignments, consistent with the member's duties.
- P. Attention to personal hygiene is a requisite when in an on-duty status.

- Q. All non-uniformed employees inside any HCPD facility shall wear their identification card in plain sight on their outer garment.
- R. Unacceptable attire:
  - 1. Shorts, sweatpants, leggings, jeans and slacks styled like jeans, any type of cut-off pant, or unhemmed slacks or skirts.
  - 2. Sweatshirts, tank tops, or t-shirts.
  - 3. Tennis or athletic shoes of any color unless required by a documented medical condition; flip-flops and other beach-styled footwear.
  - 4. Low or revealing necklines, see-through material, halters, midriff-baring tops, tube tops, leisure wear, sleepwear, and pajama-style clothes.

**VII. CASUAL DAY/UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE ATTIRE – NON-UNIFORMED CIVILIANS**

- A. Clothing that is more comfortable and relaxed may be worn on casual days as designated by the County or the Chief of Police. When a County holiday falls on a Friday, casual day will be permitted on Thursday.
- B. When the County declares liberal leave for inclement weather, non-uniformed civilian employees who report to work may wear casual day attire.
- C. It is expected that all clothing worn on casual days shall meet the standards and restrictions as previously stated regarding length and proper fit.
- D. Jeans and denim shirts, skirts, or jumpers shall be acceptable.
- E. Sandals and tennis shoes shall be allowed.
- F. Any item of clothing with an inappropriate message, image, or slogan shall not be worn at anytime.
- G. Shorts, bib overalls, and T-shirts are prohibited.

**VIII. COURT APPEARANCES**

- A. When appearing in uniform, members shall be in the appropriate Class A, B, or C uniform. The tie and tie pin are preferred but optional when appearing in Circuit Court in the Class B uniform. Class D Uniforms or any modified uniform shall not be worn with the exception of on-duty members of Bicycle Patrol, K-9, Tactical, and Traffic Enforcement.
- B. Members not appearing in uniform shall appear in appropriate business attire.
  - 1. Males shall wear a business suit or sport coat with tie and dress slacks or trousers.
  - 2. Females shall wear a professional pantsuit, dress, dress skirt, or slacks, and a dress blouse and jacket.
  - 3. The same grooming requirements apply to off-duty members appearing in court as to on-duty members.
- C. When appearing in Circuit Court, Narcotics Officers shall wear a pin that will be mutually recognized by the Howard County Police and Sheriff's Departments, in the interest of identifying these officers.
- D. Casual clothing shall not be worn during court appearances when representing the HCPD.



- E. Members appearing in court regarding matters not associated with their official duties shall not appear in uniform or display HCPD identification.
- F. Consistent with General Order ADM-56, [Authorized Weapons, Qualifications, and Inspections](#), non-uniformed officers shall keep their weapon concealed from public view except at a crime scene or other assignment where their police identification is visible and they are readily identifiable as police officers.

**IX. CLASSROOM ATTIRE**

- A. Personnel attending training classes shall wear the uniform of the day or appropriate business attire, except for on-duty Aviation, Bicycle Patrol, K-9, Tactical, and Traffic Enforcement. E&T Division may authorize the wearing of the Class D uniform for certain training classes.
- B. When training indicates that casual attire is appropriate as determined by E&T or another training entity, dress shall be appropriate casual wear. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts, and tennis shoes are not appropriate attire.
- C. Personnel attending physical training classes may wear t-shirts and athletic-style clothing or another type as designated by the supervisor. However, a duty uniform, weapon, and vest are to be immediately accessible.

**X. CANCELLATION**

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order ADM -13, [Uniform and Grooming Standards](#), dated July 12, 2019.

AUTHORITY:

  
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Lisa D. Myers  
Chief of Police