

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19104**

PARTNERSHIP FORUM AGREEMENT

JUNE 2017

DRESS CODE

I. PURPOSE: To define authorized or prohibited attire for all Medical Center employees that promotes an image of professionalism and complies with infection control and safety standards. Each employee's personal appearance contributes to the overall image of the Medical Center as a provider of quality health care. All employees are expected to present a clean and neat appearance.

II. POLICY.

- a) Recognizing that no policy can address all possible dress and grooming styles in the changing fashion world, the personal appearance of Medical Center employees are to be governed as follows.
- b) These guidelines apply to all CMCVAMC (full and part-time), volunteers, work study, students, residents, those appointed without compensation (WOC), and contracted staff while on official status in the Medical center

III. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a) It is the responsibility of each Service Chief, Manager, and Supervisor to demonstrate authorized dress and to discuss the expected manner of dress with each employee.
- b) The Director, Human Resources, has the responsibility and authority to furnish advice on those employees who are entitled to uniform allowances or whose uniform allowance should be rescinded. Employees should request uniforms or uniform allowances through their Service Chief, in accordance with VHA Handbook 1850.4.
- c) The Chief, Environmental Management Service, has the responsibility and authority for the procurement, storage, and issuance of all government-owned uniform/ scrubs. They will also receive all requests for issuance of VA uniforms/scrubs to new employees, positions newly determined to need VA issued uniforms/scrubs, or requests for replacement for fair wear and tear, etc.
- d) Employees are responsible to dress appropriately for the workplace, in order to foster confidence and trust in patients and visitors through professional appearance.

IV. GUIDELINES.

- a) **Casual Wear:** Jogging suits, yoga pants, sweat suits, warm-ups, shorts, lycra/stretch clothing are prohibited. Service Chiefs may authorize these articles for special events and assigned tasks.
- b) **Dresses & Tops:** Strapless, backless, and spaghetti strap style dresses and tops are authorized when worn with a jacket or sweater. Bare midriffs are prohibited.
- c) **Electronics:** Use of telephonic electronic ear devices (e.g. Bluetooth), earplugs/ ear buds, and headphones are prohibited while on duty status, unless specifically approved by the Service Chief.
- d) **Hats and Headwear:** Bandanas, baseball caps, sweatbands, and casual hats are prohibited unless worn as part of a uniform, or when required as protective measure for the duties being performed. Service Chiefs have the authority to determine when headwear is authorized for employees in their service.
- e) **Identification:** The PIV badge shall be facing out at all times with the portrait side clearly visible and unobstructed, worn at or above the waist.
- f) **Jewelry:** Jewelry that may inadvertently cause obstruction, injury to themselves, patients, or others is prohibited. Jewelry must be limited to size and quantity.
- g) **Length:** Dresses, skirts, skorts, culottes, and split-skirts shall be of reasonable length that allows comfortable bending and sitting without the potential to cause offense to another person. Lengths at floor length should not allow potential to cause injury to self or another person.
- h) **Pants:** Pants shall be of the appropriate size and should be worn with a belt or any other necessary accessories required for proper fit and retention. Slacks or khakis are strongly preferred over jeans for those employees who have direct patient contact, as jeans do not present a professional appearance. Service Chiefs should set the guidelines for jeans in their departments, after engaging in pre-decisional discussions with the Union and Employee and Labor Relations, and satisfying any bargaining obligations.
- i) **Fragrances:** Service Chiefs have the authority to prohibit fragrances after engaging in pre-decisional discussions with the Union and Employee and Labor Relations, and satisfying any bargaining obligations. Fragrances may be worn and shall be worn in moderation. Fragrances that are over-bearing (causing an allergic reaction, immediately noticeable upon entering a work place, lingers after an employee departs, or is an irritant to coworkers or the public) are prohibited.

j) **Protective Attire:** Protective attire (shoe covers, masks, gloves, isolation gowns) will be worn only for their intended purpose and must remain in the patient care areas where they are used. Protective attire must be removed when off the units or walking through public areas.

k) **Uniforms:** Wearing of scrubs is restricted to employees in those occupations authorized in accordance with VHA Handbook 1850.4 and Appendix A therein. Waivers must be processed in accordance with VHA Handbook 1850.4.

l) **Shirts:** T-shirts with offensive words, advertisements, or images are prohibited. Muscle shirts, T-shirts with sleeves torn or T-shirts torn are prohibited. Business casual, collared, or dress shirts are preferred.

m) **Shoes:** Shoes shall be neat, clean, safe, and compatible with the Medical Center environment and assigned duties. Flip-flops, thongs, slippers, stiletto heel, and house shoes are prohibited. Staff in patient care areas are prohibited from wearing open toe shoes. Enclosed shoes must be worn in all patient care areas.

n) **Sun Glasses:** Sunglasses shall not be worn inside the Medical Center

o) **Tattoos:** Tattoos or brands anywhere on the body that promote racism, discrimination, indecency, extremist or supremacist philosophies, lawlessness, violence, sexually explicit materials, are prohibited and must be covered.

p) **Undergarments:** Appropriate undergarments must be worn and employees will ensure that undergarments are not visible outside of or through clothing or uniforms. For clarification, this section does not apply to layering garments as camisoles, which may be visible in compliance with this agreement.

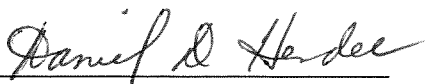
q) **Unkempt:** Any torn, frayed, ripped, dirty, soiled, or stained clothing or clothing with holes is prohibited.


V. EMPLOYEE COMPLIANCE

a) If an employee violates this policy, supervisors are required to engage in corrective action. If corrective action fails or if the violation(s) are blatant or continued in nature, the supervisor may apply appropriate standards of progressive discipline.

b) If the employee's failure to comply with this policy could cause, or causes a disruption in the work area or is offensive to a reasonable employee, or patient, the employee will be required to change into authorized attire. Employees required to leave the facility to change their clothing may request annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) for their absence and the employee is expected to return to work after changing.

1. **RESCISSIONS:** PARTNERSHIP FORUM AGREEMENT, dated March 2012.


Daniel D. Hendee, FACHE
Director


Karen Ford Styer, AFGE Local 1793
President