



WINDHAM SCHOOL
DISTRICT

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SUPERSEDES: SD-07.16
December 8, 2014

SUPERINTENDENT DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE AND GROOMING

AUTHORITY: Windham Board Policy (WBP)-03.02, “Windham School District Superintendent Responsibilities and Authority”

Reference: TDCJ Executive Directive PD-28, “Dress and Grooming Standards”

APPLICABILITY: Windham School District (WSD)

EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL CLAUSE:

These guidelines **do not** constitute an employment contract or a guarantee of continued employment. The WSD reserves the right to change the provisions of these guidelines at any time.

Nothing in these guidelines and procedures limits the superintendent’s authority to establish or revise human resources policy. These guidelines and procedures are adopted to guide the internal operations of the WSD and **do not** create any legally enforceable interest or limit the superintendent’s authority to terminate a noncontract employee at will.

POLICY:

While on duty, an employee of the WSD shall adhere to the acceptable standards of dress and grooming as set forth in this policy, as well as maintain a professional standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene.

DEFINITIONS:

“Athletic Shoe” is a shoe designed to be worn by participants in sporting activities. These are also known as sports, running, sneakers, trainers or tennis shoes.

“Business Casual” is attire less formal in nature than professional attire, but remains appropriate for a professional office environment, such as sport jackets, slacks, dresses, blouses, polo shirts, and skirts. Clothing should be neat, clean, and should not present a ragged or unkempt appearance.

“Extreme,” for the purposes of this policy with regard to dress and grooming, is defined as exceeding established norms for a professional workplace.

“Professional Attire” is attire considered to be appropriate in a professional workplace business setting, such as men’s and women’s suits, dresses, dress shirts, dress pants, ties, and scarves.

“Security Threat Group” (STG) is any group of offenders that the TDCJ determines poses a threat to the physical safety of other offenders, staff, or the public due to the organization and activities of the STG. Such a group shall be designated by the Security Threat Group Management Office (STGMO) and designation shall require the approval of the director of the Correctional Institutions Division (CID).

“Well-Groomed,” for the purposes of this policy with regard to hair, beards, mustaches, or sideburns, is defined as hair that is clean, neatly combed or brushed, does not present a ragged or unkempt appearance, and meets the guidelines established herein.

DISCUSSION

Appropriate dress and grooming promotes a professional image of the WSD and are essential for the safety of both staff and the incarcerated population.

Disciplinary action may be taken against an employee for violation of this policy in accordance with WBP-07.44, “Professional Standards of Conduct and Disciplinary Guidelines.”

PROCEDURES:

Supervisors are responsible for administering and enforcing this directive.

I. General Provisions

All employees of the WSD are required to dress in a clean and neat manner that is appropriate for the job being performed and to adhere to the grooming standards established herein.

Regardless of job assignment, any attire or body art, for example tattoos, of extreme design, revealing in nature, or conveying messages of a derogatory or offensive nature through language, logos, or symbols is prohibited. This includes signs or symbols of apparent membership in an STG or clique, as evidenced by tattoos or other signs or symbols of membership in such groups.

Employees are expected to maintain a professional standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene. Any fragrance or odor, including body odor, that is extreme or offensive is prohibited. Employees may have sensitivity or allergic reactions to fragrances and

unpleasant odors; therefore, supervisors shall address any issues regarding sensitivity or allergic reactions to fragrances or unpleasant odors on a case-by-case basis.

Any extreme haircut style is prohibited.

II. Education Employees

A. Appropriate Attire

Employees may wear appropriate, neat, business casual attire. Such attire must be compatible with a classroom or office environment and not detract from the overall mission of the WSD or TDCJ. Attire must be compatible with security awareness responsibilities of the workplace environment. When the employee's job requires meeting members of the public sector or representing WSD at official functions, other than a training session in which business casual attire is the normal attire, employees should wear appropriate professional attire.

Female employees may wear sandals with straps that divide the toes along with a strap in back or across the sandal. Such sandals shall be professional in keeping with a business environment. All employees may wear athletic shoes that are consistent with a professional business environment. All employees must wear shoes that promote business casual appearance while maintaining compatibility with security awareness responsibilities of the workplace environment.

On Fridays, employees may wear jeans and a business casual shirt or blouse. Jeans shall be neat, clean, and in good repair, such as without holes, ragged edges, stains, or discolorations. Employees attending meetings representing WSD or who have contact with the public shall dress in professional or business casual attire, as appropriate. This policy is not intended to preclude employees who have incidental contact with the public from substituting jeans and a business casual shirt or blouse with supervisory approval. Incidental contact includes an employee who has contact with the public during their visit to an office or facility when the purpose of the public's visit is not to meet with the employee.

B. Inappropriate Attire

Attire that is not considered appropriate or compatible with the business environment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Females

- a. Dresses or skirts shorter than three inches above the middle of the knee while standing;
- b. Any attire with a slit higher than three inches above the middle of the knee while standing;

- c. Shorts of any length; leggings that are not accompanied with a shirt or skirt that reaches the middle of the knee while standing;
- d. Capri pants shorter than three inches below the knee while standing;
- e. Sweat suits, wind suits, scrubs or the tops or bottoms of any such suit;
- f. Any attire exposing the midriff, shoulder, or any portion of an undergarment while sitting, standing and performing regular job duties;
- g. Any attire considered by a supervisor to be see-through, low-cut, in front or back, or tight-fitting;
- h. T-shirts of any kind;
- i. Flip-flops, foam bottom shoes, shower shoes, or any sandal with the top portion consisting only of a strap that divides the toes; and
- j. Jewelry items in the nose, tongue, cheeks, or eyebrow.

2. Males

- a. Shorts;
- b. Sweat suits, wind suits, scrubs or the tops or bottoms of any such suit;
- c. T-shirts of any kind;
- d. Open-toe shoes; and
- e. Jewelry items in the ears, nose, tongue, cheeks, or eyebrow.

C. Accessories such as Hats and Caps

Hats and caps are not specifically prohibited from employee attire. Hats and caps may be worn to and from the workplace, but are not appropriate in an educational environment. Exceptions may include medical and religious reasons and authorizations outlined in section D below.

D. Attire for Positions Requiring Physical Exertion

Division directors, principals and supervisors may grant written authorization to employees in positions with job duties that require **daily** physical exertion and exposure to weather elements, such as moving filing cabinets, loading or unloading supplies, warehouse, or vocational shops to wear jeans and caps. Employees in positions with job duties that require **occasional** physical exertion may also be granted written authorization to complete a specified task on an as needed basis.

Any written modifications shall state the attire must be appropriate, neat, and compatible with a business environment.

E. Grooming

Hair and fingernails shall be well-groomed. Makeup may not be extreme in nature, such as glittering. Beards, mustaches, and sideburns shall be neatly trimmed and well-groomed. Hair color shall be of a natural shade such as blonde, brown, red, or black and may not be an unnatural shade such as purple, green, or other similar colors.

III. Supplemental Policies

- A. Supplemental dress and grooming policies or standards are not authorized. Division Directors, Department Administrators, Principals or Supervisors may not set standards that exceed or diminish from the intent of this directive.

Signature on File
Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S., Superintendent
Windham School District