

Shaler Township Police Department Policy and Procedure



General Order Number: 8.5_2023
Subject: *Mandatory Appearance Guidelines*
Issue Date: 2/14/2023 **Effective Date:** 2/14/2023
Rescinds: *Any conflicting orders.*
By order of: *Chief J. Sean Frank*
Reevaluation Date: *TBD*
No. of Pages: 6
Distribution: *All Personnel*

This order consists of the following sections:

8.5.1 Personal Appearance

I. Purpose

Professional public safety law enforcement agencies are required to be well-disciplined organizations in service to the community and their mission. Effective discipline is a positive process when its purpose is to train or develop personnel.

This policy seeks to establish appearance guidelines that support the objective of organizational discipline.

II. Policy

The Police Department takes exceptional pride in being a “well disciplined” police organization and this order serves to maintain this high level of achievement. All personnel of the department shall abide by the provisions of this General Order at all times.

8.5.1 Personal Appearance

A. All employees - generally.

1. Employees will maintain a clean, neat, and well-groomed appearance in dress and department at all times during working hours, or whenever representing the department.

B. Police Officers.

1. While in Uniform.

- 1) The uniform identifies a police officer as a representative of the Department, and shall be clean, well pressed, and buttoned appropriately at all times.
- 2) Shoes and leather gear will be polished and well maintained.
- 3) All personnel are expected to groom themselves in such a way as to present a professional image while performing their official duties.
- 4) Hair is to be clean and neat. The length or bulk of the hair will not be excessive or present a ragged, unkempt, or extreme appearance. In all cases the bulk or length of hair shall not interfere with the normal wearing of departmental headgear.
 - a) Male officers must wear their hair neatly trimmed and tapered to the sides of the head and to the back of the neck. Hair may not cover the ears.
 - b) Facial hair is restricted to a moustache. The moustache is to be neatly trimmed and must not extend beyond the corner of the mouth.
 - c) Sideburns must be neatly trimmed, end in a clean horizontal line, not be flared and may not extend below the ear opening.
 - d) Female officers must style their hair in such a manner as to prevent it from extending or hanging beyond the bottom edge of the shirt collar while on duty. The style shall not interfere with the normal wearing of departmental headgear. Ponytails are not permitted, and braids must be securely pinned.

- e) No bows, ribbons or ornaments shall be worn. Either black or brown bobby pin or barrette is permissible for female officers.
- f) Wigs or hairpieces worn on duty must conform to the same standards as natural hair.
- g) Hair colors are restricted to naturally occurring colors only.

5) Body Piercing Prohibition

- a) No member shall attach, affix, or display objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to, or through the ear, nose, tongue, or any exposed body part, or cannot be visible through the clothing, while on duty, or representing the department.
 - (1.) Exception: On-duty female officers may wear one (1) small, conservative pierced or clip on earring per ear so long as it does not present a potential safety hazard.
- b) Foreign objects inserted under the skin, split tongue or gauged ears are prohibited. Dental veneers for the purpose of ornamentation are prohibited. Novelty contact lenses that alter the appearance of the eyes are prohibited.

6) Body Art and Tattoo Regulations

- a) It is not the intent of the Department to deny any employee the ability to personally express him or herself. The department does however require that all employees maintain a professional and conservative appearance. Therefore, the Department prohibits the display of overly conspicuous tattooing, such as tattoos located on the face, head, neck (above the collar bone and visible with an open collared shirt), and the hands and any tattoo that is visible in the long-sleeved and/or Class A long-sleeved uniform shirt. No tattoo shall be visible protruding from the uniform from the base of the neck to the top of the head and from the base of the wrist to the tips of the fingers, with the exception of a single ring shaped image displayed on a single finger of one hand. Officers must obtain permission from the Chief of Police to add a ring-shaped tattoo on a finger. Furthermore, tattoos on the exposed parts of the arms must be in good taste and not deemed offensive to contemporary community standards.
- b) All officers are prohibited from exposing, or being visible through the clothing, any tattoos, brands, or body art anywhere on the body that are obscene or that advocate sexual, racial, or religious discrimination while on duty, or representing the department.

- c) The following tattoo(s) are prohibited, regardless of visibility
- (1.) Extremist - Tattoo(s) affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities, including those advocating racial, gender, ethnic hatred or intolerance, or illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual or gender orientation, or national origin; or tattoo(s) advocating violence or other unlawful means of depriving individual rights under the U.S. Constitution and Federal or State law.
 - (2.) Indecent - Tattoo(s) that are grossly offensive to modesty, decency, propriety, or professionalism.
 - (3.) Sexist - Tattoo(s) advocating a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on gender.
 - (4.) Racist - Tattoo(s) advocating a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or nationality.
 - (5.) Gangs or Drug Related - Tattoo(s) promoting gang activity or the use of illicit drugs.
- d) Policies and prohibitions regarding tattoos apply to all forms of body art including, but not limited to, branding, scarification, and skin implants.
- e) Cosmetic tattoos (eyeliner, eyebrows, and lips, etc.) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the committee and the Chief of Police. Any approved cosmetic tattoos shall be natural in appearance.
- f) Pursuant to this policy, the Shaler Township Police Department will establish a Tattoo Review Committee consisting of a Police Lieutenant and two representatives from the Shaler Police Officers' Bargaining Unit. This committee will review the exposed tattoos of all employed officers and new prospective applicants to determine if the tattoos are in violation of this policy. If the tattoos are deemed appropriate the officer will be permitted to wear short sleeved uniforms. If the tattoos are deemed inappropriate by the committee, the officer has the option to initiate tattoo removal or will wear long sleeved uniforms during all shifts throughout the year. The final discretion rests with the Chief of Police.

g) Those officers interested in obtaining a new tattoo must first have the proposed artwork drawn and submitted to the Tattoo Review Committee. The Committee will then collectively review the artwork and inform the officer if the design is authorized or unauthorized. If the design is authorized, the officer may proceed with obtaining the tattoo and upon completion, will be subject to verification that the completed tattoo matches the authorized artwork submitted. If the artwork does not match and is deemed inappropriate by definitions described within this policy the officer will be required to either initiate tattoo removal or will wear long sleeved uniforms during all shifts throughout the year.

7) Fingernails

a) Fingernails must be kept clean and neatly trimmed. Only clear nail polish may be used.

8) Jewelry

a) The wearing of visible jewelry will be limited to a wristwatch, a medical alert bracelet or necklace, and one ring. Ornamental necklaces or chains shall not be exposed or interfere with the officer's performance of duty.

9) The following regulations will be followed by all officers:

a) Only departmentally approved uniforms and equipment shall be worn and utilized.

b) Shirt collars and cuffs shall be buttoned, and the tie properly adjusted (when applicable).

c) Badge and hat emblem will be cleaned and polished.

(1.) The badge shall be worn on the outermost garment over the left breast pocket.

d) Collar emblems, name tags, and whistle chain shall be worn in the manner designated by the Chief of Police.

C. Plainclothes Officers.

1) Shall, while not on special undercover assignments, be well groomed, neat,

and conservatively attired projecting a positive, credible image.

D. Civilian employees.

1. Shall adhere to the “dress code” guidelines established by the Chief of Police.

E. Corrective Measures

1. Appropriate sanctions shall be implemented for non-compliance of this policy, up to and including dismissal.

F. Administrative Review and Complaints

1. There will be a periodic review of this General Order and department practices conducted by the Chief of Police, or his design