POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Tattoos and Body Piercings

(Updated 10/13/26)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines regarding tattoos and body piercings for all members of the agency, to include sworn and non-sworn personnel.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Conway Police Department to present a professional image and appearance to the public. In order to maintain this professional image and appearance, restrictions will be placed on tattoos and body piercings.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Tattoo: Includes any tattoo, scar branding, mark, or other permanent or temporary body art or modification deliberately placed on the body for purposes of decoration, ornamentation, or adornment. The term tattoo shall not apply to medically necessary procedures.

B. Inappropriate Tattoo: A tattoo is considered inappropriate if it depicts gang related images, racially inappropriate images, sexually suggestive or explicit images, is extremist or that undermines the Town of Conway or the Conway Police Department in images or words.

C. Offensive Tattoo: A tattoo is considered offensive if it depicts, describes, or refers to intolerance of, or discrimination against, any race, color, preference, creed, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or it is commonly associated with any organization or group which advocates such intolerance or discrimination; or it brings discredit upon the Conway Police Department or violates a reasonable person's standard of decency or morality.

D. Visible Tattoo: Any tattoo that can be seen when a member is wearing a department issued short sleeve uniform shirt or any shorts, including the approved detail shirt, short sleeve civilian shirts and skirts/dresses.

E. Tattoo Compliance Committee: A group comprised of the Chief, Lieutenant, a Police Commissioner and a member of patrol and dispatch.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Members who have visible tattoos while functioning in a law enforcement capacity or while they are conducting official business on behalf of the Conway Police

Department will be required to have the tattoos approved by the Tattoo Compliance Committee. Any tattoos that have not been approved by the committee must be covered. Any covering, such as a tattoo sleeve, will have to be approved by the Chief of Police or their designee prior to being worn. The department will not be responsible for the purchase of any covering used outside the normal department issued uniform.

B. Tattoos are only approved if there is a unanimous vote by the Tattoo Compliance Committee.

C. No tattoo, all or in part, shall be located above the collar bone or on the hand, unless approved by the Chief of Police. Current employees shall receive prior approval from the Chief of Police before placing a tattoo above the collar bone or on the hand as these cannot be easily covered while on duty.

D. No member may have a tattoo(s), whether covered or not, that is considered inappropriate or offensive. Any disputes over whether or not a tattoo is considered to be offensive or inappropriate shall be brought before the Police Commission for final arbitration.

E. Members shall not wear any item of ornamentation in their nose, eyebrow, tongue or any other location of their body that is visible while functioning in a law enforcement capacity. Members are authorized to wear earrings; however, they will be limited to two (2) per ear. Officers shall only be permitted to wear small studs or loops not larger than one half (1/2) inch in diameter unless authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee. Ear gauges are not permitted unless authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee.

F. Ornamentation shall include body piercing, intentional body mutilation or scarring, or foreign objects inserted in/under the skin.

G. Intentional body mutilation, piercing, branding, or intentional scarring is prohibited. Examples of prohibited intentional mutilation include: split or forked tongues, foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design or pattern, enlarged or stretched out holes in the ears and intentional scarring that is visible.

H. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Chief of Police or their designee for officers working in an undercover capacity.