



Dress and Grooming Policy

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DocuSigned by:
Dr. Georgina Yoshioka
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Georgina Yoshioka, DSW, MBA, LCSW, Director

Policy It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to require staff to adhere to County and Department dress and grooming standards in order to promote a positive and professional image and work environment.

Purpose The purpose of this policy is to outline the standards of dress and appearance required of all DBH employees (including permanent or temporary status, volunteers, interns, residents, contract employees, etc.).

Acceptable Attire Employees must wear business clothing that is professionally appropriate to their position. Consideration will be given for the nature of the work environment and duties performed. The following list includes acceptable attire for the workplace:

- Dresses or skirts
 - Length of dresses or skirts cannot be shorter than mid-thigh when seated;
- Business suits;
- Capri-style suits;
- Slacks/trousers worn with blouses, collared shirts, collared sport shirts, dress shirts, polo shirts, sweaters and/or jackets;
 - When deemed appropriate, ties should be worn.
- Uniforms
 - DBH staff, specifically Storekeepers, are expected to report for duty in the Department-assigned uniform -clean and pressed.
- Medical scrubs are an option for DBH staff working in specified work areas, including:
 - Physicians working in the jails, juvenile hall, Crisis Walk-In Clinics and Arrowhead Regional Medical Center;
 - Clinic Assistants working in outpatient clinics;
 - Licensed Vocational Nurses and Psychiatric Technicians working in outpatient clinics;
 - Registered Nurses working in outpatient clinics, and
 - Health Information Management Assistants and Office Assistant staff assigned and working in outpatient clinics' chartrooms and/or at DBH Medical Records.

Continued on next page

Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Acceptable Attire, continued

- Blue denim jeans when paired with a Department-approved collared shirt bearing the County logo and Department name are permitted on casual Fridays and the first Wednesday of each month **only**, referred to as “casual days” herein.
 - Staff attending a meeting or training on casual days must dress professionally in business attire (may not wear jeans).
 - Denim dresses, skirts, shirts and jackets are permitted on casual days, as long as they are not frayed, ripped or in poor condition.
- Colored denim jeans are permitted on casual days **only** and do not have to be paired with a Department-approved collared shirt.
- Sneakers/tennis shoes may be worn with jeans on casual days **only**.
- All attire must be clean, in good condition, well fitting, free of wrinkles, holes and/or discoloration.
- Clothing with designs must be professional and appropriate. Screen printed clothing is **not** permitted.

Note: Employees shall adhere to the dress code when reporting to work, even when working overtime unless an exception has been made and approved by the immediate supervisor.

Clothing Not Permitted

Employees may **not** wear the following when reporting for duty. (Note, this is not a comprehensive list and may not include all items deemed inappropriate or unprofessional):

- Blue denim jeans not paired with a Department-approved collared shirt bearing the County logo and Department name.
- Overalls or coveralls.
- Shorts of any type.
- Tee shirts or jerseys with graphics/screen-prints.
- Gym or sweatpants, workout wear or uncovered spandex pants/leggings.
 - Spandex pants and/or leggings are permitted *if* paired with a dress or long blouse that covers the person’s posterior.
- Shirts or dresses with spaghetti straps or strapless not covered by a jacket, blouse or other outer garment.
- Shirts that expose stomach or midriff area, halter or tube type shirts, see-through or fishnet tops.
- Low-front or low-back attire.
- Medical scrubs, when not working in a specified DBH work area referenced on p. 1 of this Policy; and
- Excessively tight fitting or oversized (baggy) garments

Continued on next page

Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Footwear and Accessories

All footwear and accessories are expected to be appropriate to the employee's position. The following guidelines are deemed acceptable:

- Shoes that are neat, clean, in good repair and are businesslike. Examples of businesslike shoes include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - dress pumps
 - sling backs
 - mules or clogs
 - boots
 - oxfords
 - loafers
 - dock shoes
 - sandals, open or closed toe (no flip-flops)
- Hosiery/stockings/tights in solid neutral colors.
- DBH staff working in specified work areas who are permitted to wear medical scrubs and Storekeepers may wear clogs or sneakers/tennis shoes *only if* the shoe is one solid neutral color (shoe and sole)

Note: Heels shall not be more than three (3) inches high when measured from the inside of the heel.

The following includes a list of **unacceptable** footwear and/or accessories (list may not include all items deemed inappropriate):

- Flip-flops or thongs (even if there is a heel strap), which are sandals of any material with or without a heel, that are open toed with a strap that passes between the first and second toes (typically in a Y shape)
- Snow boots, galoshes and/or rain boots are prohibited for work (employees may change into these boots when leaving work or change out of when arriving for duty)
- Athletic footwear may only be worn if job specific (i.e., DBH Storekeepers)
- Bandanas, baseball caps or hats except as approved by DBH Director or his/her designee.
- Unprofessional hosiery/stockings/tights, including, but not limited to fishnets, stockings with back seams, patterned, non-neutral colors, etc.

Continued on next page

Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Optional Apparel for Field Based Programs

Field-based programs have the option to wear varied footwear and accessories due to the nature of their duties, including exposure to various weather conditions and outdoor environmental factors. Field-based programs include Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT), Recovery Based Engagement Support Teams (RBEST), Homeless and Outreach Support Teams (HOST), and Triage and Engagement Support Teams (TEST).

With the approval of their Program Manager, DBH field-based program staff, have the option to wear the following:

- Department-issued baseball style cap (neutral color) with the “San Bernardino County – DBH” logo on the front
- Close-toed solid black tennis shoes with black soles and laces

Field based program staff who elect to wear optional head and footwear will be expected to:

- Adhere to the DBH Dress Code Policy when they anticipate either a full or partial day attendance at departmental meetings and/or trainings in the community.
- Remove Department-issued cap when on site inside a County and/or community operated facility/building.
- Remove Department-issued cap for all non-work-related activities.

Note: Program participation in this optional dress code is based on program funding availability to cover the cost for the Department issued standard head covering.

Tattoos, Jewelry and Make-up

The following standards apply to staff tattoos, jewelry and make-up:

- Tattoos on the head, face, or neck must be covered.
 - All other tattoos may be visible, as long as they do not depict images or words that promote drug use, gang activity, hate, racism, profanity, or violence, or may create a hostile or abusive work environment, such as sexually suggestive cartoons, pictures, or words.
 - Reasonable effort must be taken to cover any tattoos when providing service directly to members of the public, including clients and family members.
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Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Tattoos, Jewelry and Make-up, continued

- Nose piercing(s) are allowed (not to exceed 2mm - stud only)
 - Tongue piercing(s), eyebrow piercing(s), lip piercing(s), or any other facial piercing(s) jewelry are prohibited.
- Body modifications such as, but not limited to, ear tapers, ear stretchers horns, bone ear expanders or transdermal implants are prohibited.
- Any non-conforming piercing insert shall be removed, covered, or replaced with a clear insert.
- Body and/or face painting is not acceptable.
- All jewelry worn by employees must be appropriate and align with a professional appearance.
- Make-up shall be professional and tasteful.
 - Extreme or bold colors are prohibited such as, but not limited to, blue or black lipstick.

Note: Exception to the above may be made by the Department Director or designee.

Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is mandatory. The following is a list of acceptable and unacceptable hygiene standards:

- All employees must maintain a clean and presentable appearance.
- Personal hygiene includes a regular/daily bath/shower, use of deodorant, and appropriate oral hygiene.
- Strong odors caused by perfumes, scented hair sprays, and aftershave lotions can be offensive and are to be used in moderation, outside of worksite premises, out of consideration of others.
- Maintain professional hairstyles and grooming:
 - Beards, sideburns, and mustaches must be clean and neatly groomed.
 - Hair must be properly restrained for its length and job assignment.
 - Hair coloring should be within the range of natural hair colors.

Note: Employees should be aware that others, including clients, might be sensitive to applied perfumes, body washes, body splashes, aftershave, or colognes. These scents may be offensive and cause respiratory distress in persons with allergies, asthma, etc., therefore they are to be applied moderately outside of worksite premises.

Continued on next page

Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Identification (ID) Badge

For consistency and security reasons, DBH employees shall ensure the following occur regarding their approved County ID badge:

- Physically have on his/her person
 - In accordance with DBH Facility Physical Security and Access Control Policy (BOP3025) and Procedure (BOP3025-1), employees shall immediately notify their direct supervisor when ID badge is missing, lost, or stolen.
- Wear in plain view (at waist level or above) at all times while on duty
- Display photo side facing out,
 - Except where specifically exempted or prohibited by the employee's department due to a safety issue, or
 - In the case where wearing an identification badge will interfere with the execution of the employee's duties

Note: Employees shall **not** wear their County ID badge after hours for the purposes of engaging in any non-work-related activities.

Staff and Leadership Responsibilities

To ensure staff are aware of, and compliant with, the DBH Dress and Grooming Policy, the following activities shall be completed:

- Each new employee shall receive a copy of the Policy during DBH New Employee Orientation.
- Each new employee is required to sign the Standards for Dress and Grooming Acknowledgement Form confirming the policy has been read and is understood.
- Employees shall exercise prudent judgment when reporting to work regarding their choice of attire, footwear and accessories, and are individually responsible for ensuring nothing is offensive to clients or other employees.
- All leadership providing direct oversight of staff are responsible for explaining and enforcing the Dress and Grooming Policy.
- All executive leadership, managers and/or supervisors are expected to enforce the Dress and Grooming Policy throughout Department.
- Department Director or designee has the sole discretion to determine what is appropriate business or casual attire.

Continued on next page

Dress and Grooming Policy, Continued

Staff and Leadership Responsibilities, Continued

- Employees who report to duty and are non-compliant with the dress and appearance policy may be sent home to change without compensation.
- Supervisors and Managers shall exercise prudent judgment when requiring staff to change clothing.

Note: Failure to comply with, and repeated violations of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Exceptions

Exceptions may be made by the Department Director or designee due to the nature of work, special events, casual days (Fridays and first Wednesday of the month), departmental clean-up days, disasters and/or emergencies, etc. Staff who are participating in occasional therapeutic program-oriented activities, such as client outings and activities, certain in-service staff training programs (i.e., CPR/First Aid training, etc.), or other events as part of their workday, may wear denim jeans and athletic footwear as appropriate and upon approval from the immediate supervisor.

Consideration will be taken for deviations from standards for the following reasons, as defined by applicable law, on a case-by-case basis with the applicable chain of command and Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP):

- Religious beliefs
- As a reasonable accommodation due to a medical condition, when accompanied by an appropriate medical note.

Note: Staff requesting an accommodation or exemption should contact their immediate supervisor. DBH is an equal opportunity employer and is fully committed to the principle of non-discrimination in all employment related practices and decisions.

Enforcement Issues

The Department Director or designee and/or the Department's HRBP will review issues or disagreement arising out of the enforcement of this Dress and Grooming Policy.

Related Policy

[San Bernardino County Policy Manual](#)

- Standards of Dress and Grooming: No. 07-16