

DALTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

S.O.G.: GP-3
Effective: 08/27/2019
Revised:
Reviewed: 08/24/2021

Fire Chief Signature

DATE

Division: All

Subject: Professional Grooming

Purpose: To establish a guideline detailing professional grooming and uniform standards that contribute to uniformity of appearance, professionalism, esprit de corps and firefighter safety.

Scope: All personnel

PROCEDURE:

Personnel present an image of competence, efficiency and pride. It is critical to the operations that members are groomed in such a manner to instill confidence in the public. Personnel shall maintain their appearance in a manner consistent with professionalism in the fire service and in keeping with applicable safety and accident prevention standards in the workplace. All individuals shall be clean, neat and well-groomed in consideration of the extremely close personal contact required between personnel and our citizens. All employees of the department are subject to the provisions of this Standard Operating Guideline, and must adhere to the content within this document.

Unless it is specifically addressed, the Fire Chief will be the final authority of items not covered under this guideline.

Hair Standards for Suppression Personnel

1. The department recognizes that traditionally acceptable standards for female firefighter hairstyles, and length, may differ considerably from those of male firefighters. Female hairstyles that would normally not conform to the standards outlined in this policy may be pinned up or secured in order to comply while on duty, and shall not interfere with proper wearing of uniform hats or protective equipment, or in any way create a safety hazard.
2. Hair accessories such as clips, rubber bands, pins, combs, or barrettes, must be transparent or similar in color to the individual's hair color and shall be concealed as much as possible. Authorized accessories shall only be worn when needed to restrain or manage hair and at no time allowed for decorative purposes. The devices used must not interfere with safe and proper use of prescribed headgear (fire resistant hoods, SCBA face-piece, etc.).

3. Hair on the top and sides of the head must be neatly groomed. The back of the hair may be either tapered or block cut and may extend to the bottom of the department issued dress/polo shirt collar. Hair may cover to the mid-ear level. Hair must never be of such bulk or length that it will affect the safety of personnel in the performance of firefighting or other emergency operations. For safety reasons, particular emphasis must be placed on a secure and snug fit of personal protective equipment so that maximum protection may be afforded by their use. Personnel may wear their hair, compacted, not to exceed two inches in depth on both sides and top. The length of the hair is not to hinder the proper fit of issued headgear.
4. If bangs are worn, they are to be maintained at mid-forehead level. At no time can bangs interfere with the seal of the mask face-piece or protective helmet.

Hair Standards for Administrative Staff & Non-Suppression Personnel

1. Female's hair may be worn down to a length that does not extend below the pant/belt/skirt line. Personnel may wear their hair, compacted, not to exceed two inches in depth on both sides and top. Styles of hair and accessories will meet standards the fire department deems professionally acceptable, and will be enforced by the appropriate supervisor.
2. Males will follow the same guidelines as those for males covered under Suppression Personnel.

General Hair Standards for All Personnel

1. Hair shall be well trimmed and tapered or layered. Hair shall not be worn in fad styles such as Mohawk, ducktail, mullet, or spikes or in any way that does not meet the goals of the profession and esprit de corps of department. Etching or other extreme cutting styles are also not permitted.
2. Hair may be dyed, tinted, or frosted any color which could naturally occur in human hair. Striping, spots or dying of color, other than natural tones is prohibited.
3. The wearing of a wig or hairpiece while in uniform shall be allowed for the purpose of covering natural baldness or medical condition. If under these conditions a wig is worn, it shall be of natural appearance, not to interfere with the proper performance of duty and conform to the general provisions of this policy.

Facial Hair

1. The face is to be clean-shaven except as specified. Beards or goatees, of any type (soul patch), are specifically prohibited. In no case, will facial hair come in contact with the seal of the SCBA face-piece. This is per OSHA, NFPA, and SCBA manufacturer's standards and recommendations.
2. Mustaches shall be neat, well-trimmed, and symmetrical at all times provided it does not:
 - a. Latterly extend more than 1 inch from the edges of the mouth
 - b. Extend closer than ½ inch to the horizontal line of the lower jaw
 - c. Exceed a width of ½ inch at any point

- d. Extend more than 1/3 inch over the upper lip
3. Sideburns may not extend more than 2-inches forward of the ear, and shall be no longer than the ear lobe and shall end in a clean horizontal line. They shall not be bushy, flared or more than ½ inch wider at the bottom than their natural width at the top. At a minimum, sideburns will maintain a distance no less than 1 inch from the furthest extension of a mustache.

Cosmetics

1. Cosmetics shall be worn in a conservative fashion, which gives the wearer a natural look. Fingernails shall not be styled in a manner that delays in donning of gloves or compromises the integrity of EMS exposure protection gloves. In no case shall fingernail length extend more than ¼ inch beyond the end of the fingertip. If worn, by suppression personnel, fingernail polish must be transparent or similar in color to the nail or nail bed. Administrative or non-suppression personnel may not wear fingernail polish that distracts from the appearance of the uniform. Extreme or brightly colored fingernail polish shall not be permitted for any employee.

Jewelry

1. Administrative and non-suppression personnel may wear items identified in this policy in a conservative manner, unless specifically mentioned.
2. The wearing of a necklace or medallion about the neck is permitted; however, it may not be displayed, or exposed, by suppression personnel while wearing a Class B or higher uniform.
3. One bracelet, on either wrist, may be worn if the article does not interfere with the use of gloves and turnout gear and is not subject to catching or snagging due to being loose on the wrists.
4. The wearing of rings is not recommended when responding to emergencies due to the potential of injury (e.g., electrical burns, crushing, and entanglement). Rings may be worn if they are not overly large or ornate, and will not subject the individual to potential injury. Rings with projections that may compromise the integrity of EMS exposure protection gloves are not permitted.
5. Any jewelry that interferes with the rapid donning of operationally required gear or distracts attention from the appearance of Class A/B uniforms, are not permitted.
6. Earring, worn by suppression personnel, shall be limited to the style referred to as “ear post”, and are only allowed in the ear lobe. No more than one ear post is allowed per ear. The decorative front of the post shall not exceed ¼ inch in diameter. The ear post may be silver or gold in color only. Hoop, ring or gauge shapes are not permitted.
7. No employee shall wear any other visible piercings while wearing department uniforms or while on duty. This includes, but not limited to facial piercings, nose rings, tongue studs, gauges, etc.

Tattoos

1. The department recognizes that some forms of body art are becoming a more accepted, or tolerated, social practice.
2. Tattoos, body art, or brands on the head, face, or neck area are prohibited. The neck will be defined as any marking that protrudes past the threshold of any department issued t-shirt.
3. Tattoos, body art, or brands that are obscene, sexually explicit, denote a violent or exclusionary group, or advocate or symbolize discrimination against gender, race, religion, ethnicity or nationality, represent gang affiliation, represent narcotics of any form are prohibited. Other tattoos, body art, or brands may be generally visible to others that are not prejudicial to good order.
4. Employees shall not be considered in violation of this particular section of the guideline if he, or she, obtained the marking prior to the implementation of this guideline. Within 30 days of this SOG's execution, the Fire Chief shall formally determine if the currently approved long sleeved uniforms must be worn in order to cover such prohibited markings.
5. Tattoos, body art, or brands on other parts of the body not mentioned are acceptable as long as they are covered by the employee's duty uniform.

Implementation

All new employees shall comply with this SOG upon the start of employment. Existing personnel are to be in compliance with this SOG within 2 weeks of the date of issue.

Failure to Comply

In the event that an employee violates any part of this policy corrective action will be taken per the disciplinary actions found in the department's disciplinary manual. The level of corrective action will depend upon the offense.