

Personal Appearance Standards

1023.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the personal appearance of employees of the New York State Park Police who have regular contact with the public. These requirements are in addition to the Agency's Employee Code of Conduct (HR-POL-025).

Requirements for Division uniforms and civilian attire are addressed in the Uniforms and Civilian Attire Policy.

1023.2 POLICY

New York State Park Police employees shall maintain their personal hygiene and appearance to project a professional image to the public that is appropriate for this Division and for their assignments. Division personal appearance standards are also based on safety requirements.

1023.3 GROOMING

Unless otherwise stated and because deviations from these standards may present officer safety issues, the following appearance standards shall apply to all employees, except those whose assignments would deem them not applicable. The Director of Law Enforcement may grant exceptions.

1023.3.1 PERSONAL HYGIENE

All employees should maintain proper personal hygiene. Examples of improper personal hygiene include, but are not limited to, dirty fingernails, bad breath, body odor and dirty or unkempt hair. Any employee who has a condition due to a protected category that affects any aspect of personal hygiene covered by this policy may report any need for an accommodation to the Director of Law Enforcement or follow the Agency's Reasonable Accommodation Request Procedure for Current and Prospective State Employees (HR-PCD-004).

1023.3.2 HAIR

Hairstyles for officers and Public Safety Rangers must not extend below the top edge of a uniform or dress shirt collar while assuming a normal stance. Longer hair shall be worn up and secured to the head above the bottom edge of the shirt collar.

Hair shall be clean, neatly trimmed or arranged, and of a natural hair color. Hairstyles with shaved designs in the scalp are prohibited. Hair adornments shall be primarily for the purpose of securing the hair and must present a professional image.

1023.3.3 MUSTACHES

Mustaches shall not extend below the corners of the mouth or beyond the natural hairline of the upper lip and shall be short and neatly trimmed.

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1023.3.4 SIDEBURNS

Sideburns shall not extend below the bottom of the outer ear opening (the top of the earlobes) and shall be trimmed and neat.

1023.3.5 FACIAL HAIR

Facial hair, other than sideburns, mustaches and eyebrows, is prohibited, unless authorized by the Director of Law Enforcement or the authorized designee.

1023.3.6 FINGERNAILS

Fingernails shall be clean and neatly trimmed to a length that will not present a safety concern. The color of fingernail polish shall present a professional image.

1023.4 APPEARANCE

1023.4.1 JEWELRY

For the purpose of this policy, jewelry refers to rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, wristwatches, and tie tacks or tie bars. Jewelry shall present a professional image and may not create a safety concern for the Division employee or others. Jewelry that depicts racial, sexual, discriminatory, gang-related, or obscene language is not allowed.

- (a) Necklaces shall not be visible above the shirt collar when in uniform.
- (b) Officers and Public Safety Rangers are prohibited from wearing earrings while on-duty.
- (c) No rings should be of the type that would cut or pose an unreasonable safety risk to the employee or others during a physical altercation, if the employee is assigned to a position where that may occur (e.g., the need to wear disposable gloves).
- (d) Only a bracelet identifying a medical condition may be worn on one arm, unless authorized otherwise by the Zone Commanding Officer.
- (e) Wristwatches shall be conservative and present a professional image.
- (f) Tie tacks or tie bars worn with civilian attire shall be conservative and present a professional image.

1023.4.2 TATTOOS

While on-duty or representing the New York State Park Police in any official capacity, the following are guidelines for tattoos:

- (a) Tattoos, brands and/or body art that are unprofessional or offensive are prohibited. Examples shall include but not be limited to:
 - 1. Depictions of violence or criminal activity;
 - 2. Sexually explicit/vulgar art, words, or profane language
 - 3. Symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group, i.e., swastikas, etc

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4. Initials, symbolism, or acronyms that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations or activities, i.e., AB, KKK, SS, street gang names, numbers and/or symbols
- (b) Tattoos on the head, neck, ears, scalp or face are prohibited. Exceptions to this subsection may be made for members who have permanent makeup (e.g., eyeliner/eyebrows). All exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Director of Law Enforcement or designee,
- (c) Tattoos on the hands or fingers are prohibited, with the exception of a single band tattoo that resembles a wedding ring on the traditional ring finger a wedding ring is worn, so long as the tattoo band is no more than 3/8 of an inch in width on the finger.
- (d) Brands and/or body art are subject to the same requirements, limitations and prohibitions applicable to tattoos.
- (e) Ultra-violet (UV) tattoos - any tattoo only visible or apparent with the use of ultra-violet lights must adhere to the requirements listed above.
- (f) Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1023.4.3 BODY PIERCING OR ALTERATION

Body piercing (other than earlobes) or alteration to any area of the body that is visible while on-duty or while representing the New York State Park Police in any official capacity, that is a deviation from normal anatomical features and that is not medically required, is prohibited. Such body alteration includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Tongue splitting or piercing.
- (b) The complete or transdermal implantation of any material other than hair replacement (i.e., foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design or pattern).
- (c) Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, nose or teeth (i.e., enlarged or stretched out holes in the earlobes).
- (d) Branding, scarification or burning to create a design or pattern.

Note: The exemptions for body piercing or alterations (including brands or body art) that were grandfathered in for or granted to certain members under Force Directive 07-06 (August 1, 2007) shall remain in effect.

1023.4.4 DENTAL ORNAMENTATION

Dental ornamentation that is for decorative purposes and that is not medically required is prohibited while on-duty or while representing the New York State Park Police in any official capacity. Such ornamentation includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Objects that are bonded to front teeth.
- (b) Gold, platinum or other veneers or caps used for decorative purposes.
- (c) Orthodontic appliances that are colored for decorative purposes.

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1023.4.5 GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES

Eyeglasses and sunglasses shall be conservative and present a professional image. Contact lenses with designs that change the normal appearance of the eye and that are not medically required are prohibited while on-duty or while representing the New York State Park Police in any official capacity.

1023.4.6 COSMETICS AND FRAGRANCES

Cosmetics shall be conservative and present a professional image. Use of cologne, perfume, aftershave lotion and other items used for body fragrance shall be kept to a minimum.

1023.4.7 UNDERGARMENTS

Proper undergarments shall be worn as necessary for reasons of hygiene and general appearance standards.

1023.5 RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

The religious beliefs and needs of Division employees (e.g., requests to wear headscarves, simple head covering, certain hairstyles, facial hair for religious reasons) should be reasonably accommodated in accordance with the Agency's Reasonable Accommodation Request Procedure for Current and Prospective State Employees (HR-PCD-004). However such requests should also be reviewed by the Director of Law Enforcement through the chain of command, who may recommend denial if the request would present a security or safety risk based on the requesting employee's individual assignment.