

**EAST COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE**  
Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

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**SUBJECT: Grooming Policy**

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**APPROVED BY:**

  
Board Chair

**REVISED 11/21/2017**

**REVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_ BY: \_\_\_\_\_**

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**POLICY: Grooming Policy**

**Purpose:** To provide consistency of ECFR personnel appearance and promote a professional appearance to the public.

**I. Professional Appearance Expectations-**

Personnel must present themselves in such a way as to generate trust, confidence, and respect from the public they serve. It is not the goal of this guideline to regulate or dictate matters of personal style and taste except to the degree that individual appearance decisions would lessen public confidence in the organization. The organization reserves the right to interpret and apply this policy as necessary to assure that personnel appearance supports this goal. It is also a concern that all personnel wear clothing that provides maximum protection under various routine and emergency situations.

Uniformed personnel shall know and abide by the safety and grooming standards specified herein. All standards and rules that pertain to personal grooming and uniform regulations shall apply to all members anytime they are wearing the ECFR uniform, on-duty or off-duty. "On-Duty" refers to any member while conducting ECFR business or emergency response.

**II. Authority & Responsibility:**

Supervising Officers are responsible to ensure that members conform to these standards.

- A. Personnel whose appearance violates the standards will be informed of the necessary corrections. In cases of extreme violations or safety hazards, members will not be permitted to be on duty or on scene until the correction has been made.
- B. Personnel who refuse to comply with standards and directives may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

C. Personnel dress, hygiene, and grooming are appropriate subjects for consideration in performance evaluation, work assignment, and promotional eligibility.

### **III. Grooming General:**

It is the duty of all personnel to take pride in their appearance. Maintenance of a proper public image, personal safety and use of protective equipment dictate that certain standards be adopted.

- A. Necklaces, bracelets, pendants, or medallions shall not be worn exposed while on duty.
- B. Wrist watches, rings, and medical related bracelets may be worn if the article will not interfere with use of gloves and turnouts, and not be subject to catching or snagging due to being loose on the wrists/fingers.
- C. Exposed piercings (uniformed line personnel) or facial jewelry is not allowed while on duty; specifically eyebrow, tongue, nose and/or lip piercing.
- D. Articles such as wallets, watch chains or fobs, personal jewelry, handkerchiefs, combs, cigars, tobacco cans, cigarettes, and pipes are not part of the uniform and shall not be attached to or exposed from the uniform.
- E. Sunglasses and frames shall be of neutral tones and shades not to include ornate frames. Sunglasses should be removed when talking with the public.
- F. Hair, sideburns, mustaches, and articles of clothing must never interfere with normal wearing and timely utilization of the helmet, flash hood or any other protective equipment, including the seal of SCBA masks.
- G. Members will maintain acceptable personal hygiene standards at all times.
- H. Fingernails will be of moderate length and neatly manicured.

### **IV. Grooming Specific**

- A. Hair neatly cut, clean, and well groomed. Spiked hair, dyed stripes, spots, or any unnatural combination of hair color is prohibited.
- B. Sideburns will not extend below the bottom of the ear lobe, nor exceed 1-1/2" at the widest point.
- C. No decorations shall be worn in the hair. Hair clips or pins matching the color of the hair may be worn.

#### D. Facial Hair

- Beards of any type, to include goatees are specifically prohibited.
- Mustaches must not interfere with the seal of a mask and must be kept neatly trimmed. They may not exceed more the one-inch (1") beyond or one-inch (1") below the corner of the mouth.

#### V. Tattoos:

While the District does not believe tattoos and piercings contribute to the professional image that the District desires for members, it recognizes that tattoos are becoming more commonplace and are an acceptable norm for many persons we serve. The District further maintains that appearance has an impact on both member performance and customer perception.

The District will allow exposed tattoos on the arms of members.

Tattoos shall not display any violent, sexual, anti-societal, racial, profanity, or similar imaged scenes. However, any member displaying a tattoo on any exposed surface of their body that, in the sole determination of the District, is inconsistent with District policies governing harassment or political activity, may be required to wear clothing that completely covers the tattoo. Tattoos on body parts other than arms, will need to be covered by the District uniform while on duty. There shall be no tattoos on the face or neck area.

The Fire Chief or the Chief's designee shall make the final determination on appropriate tattoos.

