

**SUBJECT/TITLE: Professional Appearance**

**PURPOSE:** Staff, faculty, physicians, house staff physicians and dentists, students, and volunteers who are required by UI Hospitals and Clinics Photo Identification Card Policy to wear a UI Hospitals and Clinics or UI Health Care identification badge, are expected to present a professional personal appearance at all times while on duty at work in the hospitals and clinics. This policy does not apply to off-site locations staffed by non-clinical personnel.

**DEFINITIONS:** None

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of UI Hospitals and Clinics that the dress, grooming, and personal hygiene of each person covered by this policy must be professional and appropriate to the work situation. Applicants and new hires will receive information about this policy as part of their interview/orientation process. Departmental management and supervisors will be responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Policy Application:**

- A. This policy will apply to all on-duty staff, faculty, physicians, house staff physicians and dentists, students, volunteers, or any other individuals in the hospitals and clinics who are required by policy to wear a UI Hospitals and Clinics or UI Health Care identification badge. This policy does not apply to off-site locations staffed by non-clinical personnel. Departments may, because of the nature of job duties or other regulatory or legal requirements, adopt more stringent personal appearance guidelines to address issues not covered by this policy.
- B. This policy will be administered with sensitivity and respect for each individual's medical, religious, or ethnic need to diverge from the guidelines set forth. Therefore, exceptions to the policy for these reasons should be considered on a case-by-case basis and appropriate counsel sought from Health Care Human Resources.
- C. Supervisors and managers who determine that a staff member, faculty, physician, house staff physician or dentist, student, or volunteer's personal appearance is inappropriate for the work environment are responsible for counseling the person regarding the professional appearance requirements and determining whether the individual needs to

leave the workplace to change. Repeated instances of inappropriate dress/personal appearance may result in discipline.

**The following sections apply to all staff, faculty, physicians, house staff physicians and dentists, students, and volunteers who are required to wear a UI Hospitals and Clinics or UI Health Care identification badge while working or volunteering within UI Hospitals and Clinics.**

**A. Staff Identification:**

1. The ID badge must be worn at the breast pocket or lapel level with picture and name forward, immediately visible to patients, visitors, and other staff.
2. The ID badge must be clipped on; lanyards are prohibited.
3. Nothing will be attached to the badge that obscures identification—pins and awards shall not be worn in any manner that restricts the visibility of the photo and name.
4. Last names must be fully displayed unless a formal request to UI Health Care Human Resources has been submitted and approved, as described in UIHC policy HR-03.04.

**B. Grooming/Personal Hygiene:**

1. Staff, faculty, physicians, students, and volunteers must be physically clean, well groomed, and take steps to prevent and/or address problems of offensive odors such as body odor, cigarette or cigar smoke, etc.
2. In order to promote a fragrance-free environment staff will not wear perfume or other scents. Fragrances may cause allergic or adverse reactions in others and must be avoided.
3. Hairstyles are not to interfere with assigned duties or pose a threat of infection or physical hazard.

**C. Jewelry/Adornments/Tattoos:**

1. The wearing of jewelry and accessories must not interfere with assigned duties and must not pose an infection threat or physical hazard to the patient, to self, or to another person.
2. Tattoos, piercings, and body art with wording, images, or placement (e.g., tongue) that are inappropriate or offensive in a professional work environment must be covered, or removed, during work time.

**D. Clothing/Footwear/Uniforms:**

1. Clothing must be neat, clean, and free from offending odors.
2. Certain departments may require special dress standards, such as wearing uniforms or scrubs.
3. OSHA Standard 1910.136(a) mandates that caregivers use protective footwear when working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, or objects piercing the sole, and where such caregiver's feet are exposed to biological or electrical hazards. Closed toed shoes are required in departments and areas in which the above hazards exist, including all patient care areas.

## **E. Examples of Apparel Not Appropriate for the Workplace**

1. No shorts, no denim clothing of any type, no yoga pants or other exercise or workout clothing, T-shirts, sweatshirts, fleece apparel, or sweatpants. Groundskeepers and valets may wear knee-length shorts for exterior work.
2. No flip-flops or other such footwear.
3. No open-toed shoes in clinical areas.
4. No caps or hats, unless worn for medical or religious reasons or for the nature of specific duties, such as outdoor work.
5. No apparel with inappropriate or unprofessional images, wording, or logos.
6. No clothing that is too tight, too short, form fitting, loose fitting, exposes cleavage, undergarments, mid-section, underwear, or buttocks.
7. No holiday or event-themed costumes; Halloween costumes are prohibited.

***This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, and management reserves the right to determine whether apparel or personal grooming is appropriate for the workplace.***

## **F. Additional Items to Consider**

1. Departments may have additional guidelines not covered by this policy due to health or safety concerns particular to a unit.
2. Questions about specific situations due to medical, religious, or ethnic issues should be discussed with supervisors or Departmental HR Representatives.
3. Noncompliance with these guidelines will result in counseling and may result in a request for staff to change into appropriate attire before being able to begin work.
4. This policy will be enforced by departmental managers and supervisors.

## **RELATED POLICIES:**

[UIHC Photo Identification Card Policy](#)

[Scrub Attire](#)

University of Iowa's [Policy on Human Rights](#)

UI Hospitals and Clinics [Infection Control Manual](#)

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