

**SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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HR002.00 DRESS CODE

POLICY

EFFECTIVE: September 5, 2006

APPLIES TO: All SCDHHS Workforce Members

POLICY

The Department of Health and Human Services (the Department) reserves the right to ensure that a proper businesslike appearance is maintained by all employees, and that individual attire preferences do not disrupt or negatively affect the work environment. Employee dress should be neat in appearance and consistent with a business-like atmosphere, keeping in mind the impression made on other employees, customers and visitors. Employees are encouraged to consult with their supervisor whenever necessary regarding acceptable dress for their work area.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish dress code guidelines for the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (the Department). As representatives of the Department, all employees are expected to present a neat, well-groomed and businesslike appearance at all times. Employees contribute to the creditability and reputation of the Department in the way they present themselves. A professional appearance is essential to a favorable impression with customers. Good grooming and appropriate dress reflect employee pride and inspire customer confidence.

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2.01 Business Casual Attire

- A. Business casual attire is a benefit and must be adhered to in order to be retained. Choose business casual clothing that communicates professionalism.
- B. While the Department observes a business casual environment, there may be situations requiring full or formal business attire. Appropriate dress and hygiene are important in promoting the appropriate image to our customers, both internally and externally. Employees should know their audience, and dress accordingly when hosting or attending meetings or during business travel, seminars, tradeshow, or any other contact with the public. If an employee is unsure of the appropriate attire for a specific business function, they should contact the organizer and/or consult with their supervisor.
- C. Examples of business casual attire may include but are not limited to a blazer or sports coat, collared shirt, golf shirt, polo shirt, blouses or sweaters, dresses, casual dress pants, slacks, loafers with socks, and sandals. T-shirts and blue jeans are not considered business casual attire.
- D. Identification badges are required for all employees and must be worn at all times in the workplace.
- E. Denim jeans and sneakers/tennis shoes should not be worn Mondays through Thursdays unless prior approval is given by the supervisor. Examples of special supervisory exceptions may include but are not limited to office moves, participation in special wellness/employee activities and events, or incidents of hazardous or emergency weather shelter duty.
- F. The Department observes casual Friday dress when permissible. Denim jeans may be worn on casual Fridays but should be clean, neat, not faded and without rips or tears.
- G. Please be considerate of co-workers, visitors and guests. Good personal hygiene is a must. Heavy perfume and cologne is not permitted and in some areas may be eliminated due to sensitivity (allergies, illness) of employees and/or visitors.

2.02 Unacceptable Attire

- A. The following is a list of examples of clothing items which are **not acceptable on any**

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workday. This list is not, nor is it intended to be, all inclusive:

- Flip-flops, dirty or torn sneakers/tennis shoes or bedroom slippers;
 - Cut-off, faded, dirty or ripped jeans or bibbed overalls;
 - Shorts, mini-skirts or skorts;
 - Halter tops, back-less tops, spaghetti-strap tops, or work-out attire;
 - Anything backless, baring the midriff, revealing undergarments, see through, cut too low to properly cover the chest area, distracting, offensive, provocative or revealing;
 - All spandex, leggings or other form-fitting pants;
 - Short skirts, mini or micro-mini skirts;
 - Warm-up suits, sweat pants, track suits or wind suits; and
 - T-shirts, sports jerseys or sweatshirts.
- B. The basic rule for determining whether or not apparel is acceptable is, “When in doubt, do not wear it!” If the clothing you are considering for work is something you would wear to an after work party, to the beach, to an athletic event or to perform manual labor, then it is probably not acceptable business or business casual attire as the terms apply to this dress code. Employees are encouraged to consult their supervisors whenever necessary regarding acceptable dress for their work area.

2.03 Compliance

- A. Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of each employee of the Department.
- B. Managers and supervisors are responsible for interpreting and enforcing dress and grooming standards in their areas of responsibility. This includes counseling employees whose appearance is inappropriate. Supervisors and managers are expected to strictly enforce the policy for their Bureau, Division, Department, Unit, and/or Team.
- C. When an employee’s dress does not comply with established standards, the normal response should be to discuss the matter privately with the employee.

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- D. Whether or not an employee will be sent home to change into more appropriate clothes will be at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Employees sent home will be expected to submit annual leave or arrange to make up the missed time at work.
- E. Questions or complaints that cannot be handled to an employee's satisfaction by his or her supervisor or manager should be taken to Human Resources.
- F. Reasonable accommodation will be made for employees' religious beliefs and/or disabilities whenever possible, consistent with the business necessity to present a professional appearance to the public.
- G. Repeated policy violations may result in disciplinary action.