

Pi45.10 Appearance and Standards

1. Rationale

1.1 The public expect everyone working in the police service to have the highest standards of professionalism. Police officers and members of staff in a non-uniformed role also have a responsibility to present a professional image of the organisation, in line with the College of Policing's Code of Ethics. This Guidance applies to Police Officers, Police Staff (whether employed by the Chief Constable or the PCC) Special Constables and Volunteers collectively.

1.2 This document provides you with clear and comprehensive guidance on your appearance, to present a professional image, achieve and maintain standards while also allowing for a level of self-expression. Our appearance and standards of dress are an important display of our professional image. It is based upon guidance developed by a group including the Police Federation of England and Wales and Unison.

1.3 It is expected that all individuals working for South Yorkshire Police will take personal responsibility in making sure they attend work presenting themselves appropriately and behaving in line with the standards of professional behaviour and code of ethics. This requirement is based upon maintaining the safety of the public, the safety of members of staff and the maintenance of a credible, public-facing professional image of South Yorkshire Police.

2. Overriding principles

2.1 Unless otherwise stated, this guidance applies to all police officers and members of staff who are in a public-facing role. Deviating from these standards without justification may result in you facing disciplinary proceedings. SYP aspires to the provision of an excellent police service which inspires confidence in all victims and communities. This policy seeks to minimise, as far as is reasonably possible, any negative perception or misconception which could be drawn by the communities we serve, based upon appearance and subsequently diminish confidence in SYP as a whole.

2.2 All officers and staff – specifically covert operations staff – should dress appropriately for their specific job role, unless otherwise dictated by operational needs:

3. Supervisors

3.1 As supervisor, you have a responsibility to ensure that there is a robust and consistent approach towards this guidance, rather than your personal interpretation of it. You are expected to challenge officers and staff who do not present a professional image of the force in line with the guidance.

3.2 Set an example with your own high standards of appearance. Ensure groups of uniformed staff and officers working together in public view are dressed uniformly as far as is practicable, subject to operational commitments, religious observance/cultural needs, medical, maternity or health reasons.

4. Hair

4.1 Uniformed staff

Wear your hair so that it is cut or secured above the collar and ears, in a bun and/or close to the head and ensuring it is neat and tidy. This includes hair that is worn long owing to religious observance. It should not present a health and safety hazard. Any hair accessory must be plain in design and black or navy blue in colour. Extreme and vivid hair colouring is not permitted. Hair should be of natural colours and extra tones should be natural and subtle.

For police officers and other operational uniformed staff, pigtailed and ponytails are unacceptable due to officer safety implications.

4.2 Non-uniformed staff

Ensure your appearance reflects the same high standard required of all other members of the force, dependent on working environment

5. Facial hair

5.1 Facial hair should be neat and tidy. Do not dye it in conspicuously unnatural colours. An unshaven/stubby appearance is unacceptable unless you are growing a beard or moustache. This does not apply where there is a genuine medical reason not to shave.

5.2 Lengthy beards are not acceptable for health and safety reasons. Where religious observance dictates that beards may not be cut, they will be secured appropriately whilst on operational duty.

6. Tattoos

6.1 South Yorkshire Police recognises the prevalence of body art in modern society and the right of each individual to make their own choices about their appearance. We are cognisant however, that for a cross section of the public we serve, visible tattoos can serve to diminish the confidence they have in us as public servants.

6.2 Visible tattoos are unacceptable if they could reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory or offensive and/or indicate attitudes or views inconsistent with the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Professional Behaviour. The presence of any such tattoo would preclude an applicant from being recruited into the employ of SYP. If a member of staff obtains a tattoo of this nature after having commenced their service, disciplinary proceedings may be appropriate.

6.3 Tattoos that are visible in normal duty uniform i.e. face, scalp, ears, neck, hands, and forearms or visible in an open collared/short sleeved shirt are not considered appropriate for those in public facing roles. Existing staff with such visible tattoos must ensure they are covered at all times. Suitable SYP uniform is available to cover tattoos on arms, e.g. long sleeved shirts. It is recognised that some existing staff in public facing roles, with tattoos, which are visible in normal duty dress, may find them difficult to cover. Common sense will apply in this case.

6.4 Tattoos visible on your face, neck, hands or head are not permitted. Current staff with such tattoos ought to cover these up where possible but no retrospective action will be taken if such tattoos are in existence prior to this publication.

6.5 The practical effects of this policy, in respect of applicants to SYP, may preclude the applicant in circumstances where the visible tattoo cannot be concealed by standard uniform. In rare circumstances, SYP may consider the merits of an individual application to be exempted from the elements of the policy relating to tattoos, but a panel chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable would make such decisions. Similarly, such tattoos of a cultural nature will be considered and may be exempted from elements of this policy.

6.6 If a current member of staff were to obtain a tattoo which does not fit within these guidelines then this may be considered as gross misconduct and subsequent proceedings could lead to dismissal.

7. Jewellery

7.1 Operational staff

Individuals should consider carefully the potential risk to Health & Safety in their choice of jewellery at work and should be in line with our professional image. You are permitted to wear a watch ensuring that the design is commensurate with a professional image, a band ring (e.g. a wedding, civil partnership or modest signet ring) and small stud earrings and a

necklace (provided this is worn under clothing and is not visible). Rings with raised stones are not allowed for operational officers.

7.2 You may wear other jewellery with permission and on a case-by-case basis. This could be on medical grounds, e.g. an alert bracelet, or religious grounds but must be of a design that ensures any risk is minimised.

7.3 It is permissible for members of staff to wear one charity wristband, however this must be for a registered UK charity, and must not detract from the overall appearance of the member of staff.

7.4 All other staff

You may wear jewellery but must maintain the professional image of the force. Jewellery is worn at your own risk and SYP will not be liable for any loss, damage or theft of such. You are therefore encouraged not to wear valuable jewellery to work.

7.5 Facial or tongue piercings are not permitted by any member of staff in a public facing role or in circumstances where such piercings would impede their ability to perform their role. An exception may be justified where a role specifically dictates such a need for successful covert operations.

7.6 The wearing of rings on two fingers is permitted, provided there is no risk to the member of staff or any other person and the design is commensurate with a professional image.

8. Footwear

Footwear will be appropriate for the duty/role being undertaken and must be kept clean and polished.

8.1 Uniformed staff

Wear plain black boots or shoes appropriate for the role to be performed. Footwear must be clean, with a low, flat heel.

8.2 Socks and tights or stockings must be of a plain/dark colour and appropriate to the uniform being worn.

8.3 Non-uniformed staff

Only wear footwear that is clean, smart and appropriate to your role and in keeping with the standards set for uniformed staff. Some styles of shoe are inappropriate in certain situations due to health and safety considerations, e.g. high-heeled shoes and open-toe sandals.

8.4 All staff

If there is a medical need (e.g., disability or pregnancy) for certain types of footwear, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

9. Makeup

9.1 You are permitted to wear minimal makeup appropriate to your natural skin tone or in connection with your religion/faith, e.g., the Bindi. You may also wear makeup to conceal a facial disfigurement or significant blemish.

9.2 Uniformed operational staff, for health and safety reasons, should keep fingernails trimmed short and clean. You may not wear any jewellery or attachments on the nails. Nail polish must be clear or of subtle colour. Nail art is not permitted but short extensions are acceptable.

10. Headgear

10.1 Headgear is an integral part of police uniform and an important element in enabling the public to recognise you. It is compulsory for uniformed staff to wear force-issued headgear

while performing public duties. This not only projects a professional image but, where appropriate, assists in the health and safety of staff.

10.2 Flat caps are issued to male officers for use on general patrol but Custodian and bowler helmets must be retained and used in public order or high visibility patrol situations and ceremonial or similar duties. Headgear may be directed to be used in certain circumstances at the direction of supervisors so all headgear must be available for use.

10.3 The following also applies:

11. Uniform dress code

11.1 Keep all items of uniform clean and in good repair. It is your responsibility to ensure lost/damaged items of uniform are replaced. Unless permitted to wear plain or alternative clothes, e.g., on account of an officer's pregnancy or disability, uniformed staff will wear uniform at all times when on duty or at work.

11.2 Only wear police-issue items of equipment on the uniform belt. Wear utility belts over the trousers or skirt and fleece, blouson or high-visibility jacket for health and safety reasons and to ensure uniformity.

11.3 Do not wear large bunches of keys hanging from the belt to avoid risk of injury, unless there is an operational requirement (eg, custody).

11.4 Insignia/epaulettes of rank or post must be worn and visible at all times.

11.5 Do not wear uniform when appearing on social media or internet sites in an off-duty situation or in any other off-duty capacity without prior authority of a manager.

11.6 No item of uniform or equipment issued by the force will be altered, defaced or deliberately damaged in any way, with the exception of minor tailoring adjustments. They also remain the property of the Force and must be surrendered upon leaving.

11.7 All items of uniform and equipment issued to a member of staff will be cared for properly whilst in use, and stored securely and appropriately when not in use. Members of staff who fail to take reasonable care of their uniform or equipment may find themselves financially liable for its replacement or repair and/or subject to disciplinary action.

11.8 Items of equipment or uniform used or worn inappropriately may be removed from the officer by a supervisor.

11.9 Members of staff attending training courses, in absence of any course specific instruction, will wear their normal operational attire (for officers this is with the exception of their PPE and protective vest).

11.10 There may on occasion be a short or long term medical need causing a slight deviation from this guidance. On these occasions, this need will be clearly documented by the Occupational Health Unit who will agree necessary adjustments for the required period, along with the staff member's supervisor.

12. Uniformed Operational Duties

12.1 Unless it has been authorised, members of staff that are in a role that requires a uniform must wear it whenever they are on duty and members of staff performing operational duties must be in possession of all items of PPE, wear their protective vest and be in possession of their airwaves radio at all times.

12.2 Only the uniform and equipment that relevant to their role profile may be worn. No items obtained privately may be worn, with the exception of small items of utility equipment (i.e. torch or multi-tool).

12.3 Only items of uniform formally issued by the Regional Stores Unit are permitted to be visible on a member of staff performing uniformed operational duties.

12.4 Members of staff issued specific items of uniform or equipment to perform specialist roles will only wear those items which actively undertaking that specialism, and will not wear those items when performing normal duties.

12.5 High Visibility jackets must be worn when dealing with traffic or working on or near any road, highway or railway. Such jackets must always be the outermost garment worn, as high visibility body armour covers do not attain the required standard. The wearing of black protective vests over high visibility jackets is not permitted.

12.6 When officers operate in pairs, or as part of a larger group such as a public order serial, any variance of uniform kept to a minimum to portray a professional, corporate image.

12.7 The senior officer in charge of an operation or event may make directions about the wearing of any items of uniform or equipment to meet a policing objective.

12.8 Police uniform and equipment must only ever be used for an authorised policing purpose. Misuse may lead to disciplinary or even criminal proceedings.

13. Wearing Uniform at Non-Police events

13.1 Should a uniformed member of staff wish to participate in an event in uniform other than on policing duties they should apply in writing to the relevant district command team on each occasion. All applications will be considered on their own merits.

13.2 Only events of a memorial/religious or non-political nature will be considered initially as appropriate events at which members of staff in approved uniform should represent the Force.

13.3 All members of staff must be aware that whilst in uniform the public are likely to consider them 'on duty' and it is the responsibility of members of staff to maintain the public facing, professional image.

14. Spectacles

14.1 Prescriptions spectacles worn during operational activity, including roles that involve direct contact with the public, must have lenses made of safety plastic and not glass, for health and safety reasons. The frame should generally be plain and neutral in colour and style. Those members of staff holding a force driving authority and required to drive as part of their role should avoid wearing spectacles with wide arms due to them blocking side-vision. Spectacles must be of a type that adheres to Force policy. Please refer to the guidance note entitled **Optical Care** for further details. Under certain circumstances, you can obtain an optical voucher from the force towards payment of spectacles – refer to your local administration officer.

15. Sunglasses

15.1 Frames should be plain and neutral in colour and style. Mirrored reflective lenses are not permitted.

15.2 Remove your sunglasses when talking to a member of the public and inside a building unless it is necessary to continue wearing them for medical reasons or because they are prescription sunglasses. In such cases, consult a supervisor. You may need to provide supporting evidence, eg, a medical note from the GP or a request from occupational health.

15.3 Coloured contact lenses of an unnatural eye colour must not be worn, unless there is need owing to a specific confirmed medical reason.

16. Ties and cravats

16.1 Staff wearing the operational shirt will not be required to wear a tie/cravat. In all other cases, you should wear a force-issue tie/cravat, unless permission has been given to remove this due to weather or staff are on a meal break away from public view.

16.2 Staff may wear a single tie slide or pin. Designs should be discrete and free from political bias.

16.3 No charity badges, bracelets or tie pins must be worn when attending court.

17. Protective vests

17.1 Protective vests will be worn when undertaking all operational duties unless a suitable risk assessment has been carried out that negates the necessity for its wear. This must be approved by a supervisor where appropriate.

18. Cold weather clothing

18.1 In cold weather conditions, uniformed staff are permitted to wear the following additional issue items of uniform:

19. Non-uniform dress code

19.1 Individuals wearing plain clothes for their role should ensure that their standard of dress and appearance reflects the same high standard required of uniform staff.

19.2 You must have your ID card on display while on police premises (remove visible identification when away from police premises) and consider the appropriateness of the lanyard.

19.3 Dress in business wear, which is smart and clean. Business suits or an appropriate smart jacket are the expected forms of dress whenever you are representing the force at events, at court or in contact with the public through your role.

19.4 Individuals engaged in covert operations where their identity must be concealed may dress to suit the circumstances.

19.5 Members of staff engaged in plain clothes operations will carry their PPE unless a suitable risk assessment has been carried out that negates the need for a particular item to be carried.

20. Warrant/identification cards

20.1 Carry your warrant/identification at all times and must produce it upon demand for purposes of identification, unless carrying this would compromise an authorised covert policing activity.

20.2 All members of staff must wear their name badge and identity card on their outer clothing for security reasons, at all times while on police premises, this includes those in uniform. Security is everyone's responsibility and we encourage the checking and challenging of anyone not wearing such identification.

20.3 You must report the loss or theft of a card to a line manager immediately due to security implications.

20.4 When visiting certain countries on vacation, seek guidance in relation to the current threat levels and whether you should take your warrant/identification card.

20.5 All uniformed members of staff must have their collar number and/or relevant rank or insignia, including correct indication of rank, clearly visible.

20.6 Any member of staff who require access to a police building whilst off duty, will carry their identity cards and produce them upon demand.

21. Medals

21.1 You may wear medals and ribbon brooch bars on tunics for special events. The medal ribbon brooch bars may be worn on fleeces. Medal ribbons should be positioned just above the left breast pocket flap of the tunic centred over the pocket button, in order of importance from right to left, i.e. the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal first, followed by the Diamond

Jubilee and then the Police Long Service and Good Conduct medal. The General Service Medal and other military medals should precede the jubilee medals.

21.2 Retain police medals of any description issued/awarded to you at all times while you remain in service to ensure that you are able to comply with any force requirement to wear medals at relevant events and occasions. For that reason, do not sell police medals or otherwise dispose of them while in service.

22. Personal Hygiene

22.1 Members of staff must be clean and maintain a high level of personal hygiene. The standard of personal hygiene should be appropriate to working in a close environment with others and with due consideration of those with whom they come into contact - both colleagues and public alike. Challenges about personal hygiene should always be done in private and with particular sensitivity.

23. Chewing gum and smoking.

23.1 Members of staff must not chew gum when dealing with the public.

23.2 Smoking on police premises, including inside police vehicles is unlawful and smoking in public view whilst in uniform is unacceptable. This includes smoking around the footprint of police buildings.

23.3 The smoking of e-cigs is also not permitted in the circumstances as detailed in (23.2)

24. Mobile Telephones or other Multimedia Devices

24.1 Members of staff are permitted to carry their personal mobile telephones or other multi-media devices whilst on duty for purposes of emergency personal contact. Personal calls should never be made whilst visible to the public.

24.2 Personal social media should not be updated whilst on duty unless on a designated break.

24.3 Abuses of this section may result in the withdrawal of the permission to carry a personal mobile telephone or other multi-media device whilst on duty.

24.4 If a member of staff chooses to carry their personal mobile telephone or other multi-media device whilst on duty, the force will not be liable for any loss or damage that may occur to that device.

25. Adherence to the guidance:

25.1 It is compulsory for all members of staff to follow the requirements of this guidance. Non-compliance may be considered a breach of Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to Orders and Instructions or Discreditable Conduct. Where appropriate, breaches may result in disciplinary action, particularly in cases where such breaches are intentional, prolonged or repeated. Given the importance of maintaining a professional appearance, it can be considered as part of an individual's ability to competently perform their duty.

25.2 Supervisory enforcement will be guided by the Code of Ethics. A supervisory instruction made correctly and in line with this guidance will be considered a lawful order. Where an officer is required to make adjustments to their appearance in order to meet these requirements, they must do so immediately. The time taken to rectify identified issues may not be considered as part of their rostered duty time if the breach has been deliberate, prolonged or repeated.