

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

PERSONNEL POLICY

NUMBER 5.08

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DATE 07/01/11

SUBJECT: DRESS CODE

APPROVED:

Valencia D. Bej, esq.

Objective: To enhance excellent customer service through a professional presentation of each and every employee by defining and providing guidance for the daily dress and appearance expected of employees; in an effort to promote a positive image of County government, its employees and the services which the government provides.

Statement: Employees of New Castle County Government come in contact with representatives of business and industry as well as citizens who are the customers of New Castle County. During these contacts, employees are official representatives of New Castle County Government; in this role, they set an example for all employees of New Castle County. Therefore, the image of New Castle County Government as a high quality, effective and efficient governmental entity is enhanced by their appearance through overall professional office attire which includes clothing, hair, and jewelry.

Policy: All employees shall be neatly attired and well groomed at all times. New Castle County employees shall be broken down into the following categories: (1) employees who work in the office; (2) employees who work in the office but have frequent field responsibilities and (3) uniformed employees. Additionally, "business casual dress" days may be recognized only with the approval of the County Executive or designee.

Coverage: All employees of New Castle County.

Procedure:

A. Categories of Employees

1. Employees Who Work in the Office:

Female Employees

Examples of Acceptable Attire -- Dresses, pant suits, skirts, suits, dress slacks, blazers, blouses, shirts, sweaters, shoes, hosiery and socks well kept for appearance and comfort. All clothing must be clean and neat.

Examples of Unacceptable Attire -- Sweat pants or sweat shirts, jeans, excessively short skirts or dresses, strapless halter tops, overalls, tee shirts (plain or with writing on it), tank tops, tube tops, flannel shirts, shorts, cutoffs; stretch pants, spandex, leggings, mesh or other form fitting garments; sun dresses without a jacket, capris, hanging shirttails, sneakers or flip flops. Hats,

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head scarves or other outdoor head wear while indoors. Any clothing which is not clean and neat.

Grooming -- Hair must be neat and presentable at all times.

Male Employees

Examples of Acceptable Attire -- Dress slacks, shirts with ties, suits, sports coats, sweaters over shirts with a tie, belts or suspenders. Shirts should always be tucked in. Appropriate shoes and socks well kept for appearance and comfort. All clothing must be clean and neat.

Examples of Unacceptable Attire -- Sweat pants or sweat shirts, jeans of any kind, overalls, collarless shirts, tee shirts (plain or with writing on it), flannel shirts, shorts, cutoffs, hanging shirttails, sneakers or flip flops. Unnecessary hats, head scarves or other outdoor head wear while indoors. Any clothing which is not clean and neat.

Grooming -- Hair, mustaches and beards must be neat and presentable at all times.

2. Employees Who Work in the Office But Have Frequent Field Responsibilities:

While assigned to field responsibilities, it will be at the discretion of the department general manager as to the type of clothing permitted depending on the nature of the field work.

3. Uniformed Employees:

Employees who are provided with a uniform are to make sure that the uniform is clean, maintained properly and worn neatly. Employees must be neat and presentable whenever possible. Employees who work in departments with a specific policy shall be expected to comply with such departmental policy. Uniforms which are provided must be worn as a condition of employment and are not suitable for wear while not conducting County business.

B. Business Casual Dress

1. Overview:

The purpose of the "business casual dress" category is to allow for a comfortable, productive and safe work environment. Each of us remains responsible for maintaining the appropriate business

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decorum, notwithstanding this section; all business casual attire must be clean and neat. The County Executive (or his designee) may activate/rescind this section of the policy by email or memorandum. However, on days when the County is operating on a delayed opening schedule, Section B of this policy is automatically activated.

The following listed examples of appropriate and inappropriate attire are not all-inclusive.

2. Examples of Appropriate Attire:

Female Employees

Slacks such as khakis, knits, corduroys, cargos; capris, skirts, dresses, sun/halter dresses with jacket; casual shirts/blouses (including polo-style), t-shirts with New Castle County logo only; turtlenecks, sweaters; shoes, sandals.

Male Employees

Slacks such as khakis, corduroys, cargos; casual shirts (including polo-style), t-shirts with New Castle County logo only; sweaters, shoes, sandals.

3. Examples of Inappropriate Attire:

- Tops/shirts that do not cover the midriff/abdomen/lower back, halters, strapless or t-strap tank/tube tops; t-shirts (except as noted in B.2 above), athletic tank tops/jerseys; excessively long shirts.
- Sun/halter dresses without jackets; excessively short skirts, dresses or shorts; stretch pants, spandex, leggings, mesh or any other form fitting garments (*unless worn under a dress or tunic-style top*).
- Denim shirts, pants (jeans), skirts, dresses.

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- Sweat pants/suits, athletic/recreational wear, jogging suits and/or pants.
- Clothing with suggestive and/or offensive messages, images, large logos and/or is transparent (without appropriate undergarments); slacks that expose the midriff and/or lower back.
- Sneakers/tennis shoes, cross-trainers, flip flops, slippers, athletic footwear, "Crocs," "UGGs," or work boots.
- Headwear, hats, athletic caps.

4. Uniformed Employees:

Business Casual Dress does not apply to uniformed employees. Section A.3 above shall remain in effect, notwithstanding this section.

5. Special Note:

- Business Casual Dress is never appropriate for formal business meetings with customers, county officials or when attending meetings where traditional business attire is expected. Attire, as outlined in Section A, is appropriate.
- "Flip flops." As there are many different styles of flip flop footwear, this policy addresses rubber-soled shoes with a "y-shaped" strap (*including decorative straps*) or other material passing between the toes.
- Friday attire. Notwithstanding prior references to denim and sneakers/tennis shoes, denim attire and sneakers/tennis shoes are permitted on Fridays when the County Executive (or his designee) has enacted Section B of this policy. If a County holiday falls on a Friday, denim attire is permitted on Thursday.

C. Enforcement and Exceptions

1. Enforcement:

Please check with your immediate supervisor or manager if you have any questions about what is considered suitable workplace attire. The Chief Administrative Officer, Departmental General Managers and Row Officers (or their designees) will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. Inappropriately attired individuals may be sent home and requested to change. Compensatory time, personal leave or personal leave without pay shall be used for the absence.

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2. Exceptions:

It is recognized that from time to time the nature of the work clearly justifies a departure from the standards as stated in this policy. An employee may deviate from such standards for the duration of the work assignment, only with prior approval of the department General Manager and the Chief Human Resources Officer. Reasonable accommodations shall be made on the basis of religious based or medically justified attire given a genuine religious or medical basis for the employee to wear such attire.

Established: 09/01/98

Revised: 07/01/02

Revised: 07/01/11