	THE JOHNS HOPKINS HEALTH SYSTEM CORPORATION AND THE JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY and PROCEDURE MANUAL	Policy Number	HR 612
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## **POLICY**

To foster a positive image appropriate for a healthcare environment, all employees of The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation and The Johns Hopkins Hospital (JHHSC/JHH) will dress in a manner that is appropriate for their position and work performed. Employees will dress in a way that establishes confidence and respect for the Institution, and maintains the health and safety of patients, visitors, and employees.


## **PURPOSE**

In order to establish guidelines for the employees of JHHSC/JHH the following are established as minimum standards. Departmental standards may exceed these guidelines. The following factors have been taken into consideration in defining the appearance standards policy:

- Patient safety
- Staff safety
- Public safety
- Infection Control
- Job responsibilities
- Professional image

The establishment of Departmental standards will be developed in consultation with internal JHHSC/JHH resources (i.e., Human Resources, Legal, EEO, Infection Control, etc.) Standards must be consistent for all employees in a given work area regardless of their department or organization affiliation.

- The employee identification badge issued by the Security Department must be worn above the waist at all times while in the institution with the employee's name and photograph clearly visible.
- No aspect of the staff's dress should embarrass or offend patients, visitors or co-workers. Clothing should be neat, clean, pressed, and appropriate in length.
  - Shirts worn must be free of:
    - Offensive language/pictures /advertising/or political statements
    - Exception: Department approved designs
    - Clothes that are revealing or unnecessarily tight-fitting are not considered appropriate apparel. Unacceptable, but not all-inclusive are low-cut necklines, see-through blouses and shirts, midriff-cut tops, and strapless tops, tight pants, and short skirts
  - Casual dress may be acceptable as defined by individual departmental guidelines and as appropriate within job responsibilities.
  - If an employee has been provided an uniform or career apparel by the hospital, the clothing must be neat and clean at all times and conform to hospital and individual departmental standards.
  - Staff who are issued scrubs are required to follow The Johns Hopkins Hospital Operating Room Attire Policy #PAT 009.
- Designer scrub wear purchased by the staff is permissible if approved by individual departmental standards.
- Footwear should be appropriate and safe for the individual and work environment. Sandals and open-toed shoes are unacceptable for direct care providers due to the potential safety hazard.
- Hair, beards, and moustaches shall be clean and well-groomed at all times. The style of any of the aforementioned should not interfere with the ability of the employee to maintain standard precautions or sterile technique, when appropriate in their work environment.
  - Hairstyle and accessories shall be worn so as to avoid contact with the patient. The staff shall take into consideration any adornments or decorations on their clothing or person that could be easily dislodged and present a safety and/or infection control hazard to patients and the public. Unacceptable examples include, but are not limited to: sequins, glitter, or beads on hair, nails or clothing.
- If makeup is worn, it shall be worn in moderation to enhance natural features and create a natural, professional image.
- Discretion shall be used in the wearing of perfume, cologne, or after-shave lotion; as these products can have adverse effects on patients, visitors, and other employees.
- Fingernails are to be kept clean, presentable, and of a professional length that does not detract from job performance (for clinical staff, refer to Infection Control IFC-001 Policy - see excerpt below).

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“Any individual whose responsibilities include direct, hands-on patient contact may only have natural fingernails. The designation of direct, hands-on patient contact is intended to include those whose hands come into direct contact with the patient’s skin. No artificial fingernails or nail enhancements including, but not limited to overlays, wraps, tips, or attached decorations, are permitted because of documented outbreaks of infection due to Gram-negative bacteria that have been associated with the use of artificial nails. Gram-negative bacteria are known to adhere to the surfaces of artificial nails, and are known to persist there even after the appropriate use of hand hygiene cleansing/sanitization procedures.”

- Jewelry shall be in keeping with the professional image of the employees and should not affect the hygiene or safety of employees, visitors or patients.
  - Earrings must be of a reasonable size and length. Specific standards may be set by the department.
  - Limitations may be set by the department for jewelry worn in visible piercing other than in ears.
- Tattoos shall be covered if prominent and/or offensive.
- Should religious beliefs or practices, conflict with this policy, reasonable accommodation will be made for employees as long as the accommodation does not pose a safety hazard.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Administrators/Managers/Supervisors

- Develop specific written departmental appearance standards
- Communicate process, rationale, standards and consequences to staff
- Serve as a role model of Appearance Standards Policy
- Clarify process for addressing violations
- Monitor and enforce standards
- Work with employees to address any challenges they have meeting standards
- Hold staff accountable for following the Appearance Standards Policy as outlined by the department

### Employees

- Be knowledgeable of hospital and department-specific standards
- Adhere to standards of your department and any other department affiliate in which you work
- Communicate to supervisor any challenges in meeting standards and work cooperatively to address problem

### Human Resources

- Consult with Administrators/Managers/Supervisors on development of appearance standards.
- Support Administrator/Manager/Supervisor in appropriate application and enforcement of the departmental policy

## **REFERENCES**

Infection Control IFC-001 Policy  
 Operating Room Attire Policy# PAT 009


## **SPONSOR**

Vice President, Human Resources

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

3 years


## **APPROVAL**

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 Vice President, Human Resources

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 Date

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**Supplement to Appearance Standard Policy**  
**Guidelines for Developing Departmental Appearance Standards**


**PROCEDURES**

1. Establish a committee whose membership reflects departmental workforce diversity:
  - Representation of affected staff members (i.e., secretary, technician, etc.).
  - Designee from departmental leadership (reflects support from top).
  - Representation from 1199E (when employees are members of the union).

Optional: Representation from internal resources (i.e., Safety, Human Resources, Legal, etc.)  
 Members of the committee should be both volunteers and invited participants

The role of the committee is to:

- Develop Appearance Standards Policy for department.
  - Solicit feedback from the department during the process.
  - Incorporate feedback.
  - Propose departmental Appearance Standards Policy for endorsement.
2. Assess the current environment. It is important for the department to:
    - Identify customer expectations.
    - Identify budget guidelines, business rationale, scope of the charge, current practices, explore options available (i.e., other standards, career apparel and/or uniforms, etc.)
    - Review JHHSC/JHH Appearance Standards.
    - Research lessons learned from others and identify what has been successful.
    - Research lessons learned from others & identify what has been tried & failed.
    - Benchmark industry standards (other institutions).
    - Identify “best practice” models.
  3. Develop standards
    - Develop draft.
    - Consider regulatory requirements (JCAHO, Safety, etc.)
    - Consider Legal and EEO questions.
      - Are the dress, appearance and grooming standards reasonably related to the performance of the job or jobs in question?
        - Since it is impossible to anticipate every basis for asserting an impact claim concerning dress, appearance or grooming standards, an effort should be made to insure that all such criteria bears a demonstrable relationship to the job or jobs to which they apply.
        - Personal or idiosyncratic notions of employees’ personal appearances, dress, etc. should yield to generally accepted standards.
      - Is the code flexible enough to allow for deviations when essential?
        - An employer’s religion may dictate the wearing of a garment prohibited by a dress code. Alternatively, a code requirement that a person wear a particular item of clothing may conflict with an individual’s religious tenets. In both instances, company policy should provide for the determination, by the appropriate person, of whether or not a dress code waiver is appropriate.
        - Where the standards must vary between sexes to take into account socially sanctioned differences, are they nonetheless similar in the degree to which they intrude upon the rights of male and female employees?
        - Employees may prohibit males from wearing earrings and other jewelry which females are permitted to wear. However, imposing very rigorous dress or grooming requirements of females and adopting laissez-faire attitude towards males would, in the eyes of most, constitute unlawful discrimination.
      - Are you willing to fire an otherwise good employee for his/her refusing to abide by
    - Consider consequences and accountability of enforcement.

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- Consult with internal resources.
- Solicit feedback.
- Incorporate recommendations.
- Propose departmental appearance standards.
- Solicit approval of department chair/ director/VP.

4A. Communicate Appearance Standards Policy with Current Employees

- Distribution of written copies of the standards and rationale (include timeline for implementation)
- Verbal communication of standards and rationale.
- In-services.
- Periodic review of standards (i.e., Performance Reviews, etc.)

4B. Communicate Appearance Standards Policy with New Hires

- Inform all candidates of standards and expectations.
- Reinforce standards at institutional and department orientations.