

<b>Directive</b>	<b>Uniforms and Appearance</b>	<b>400-1</b>	<b>1 of 12</b>
<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>November 30, 2009</b>		



## **Wilkesboro Police Department**

### **Electronic Written Directives Document**

#### I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the dress and personal appearance of Wilkesboro Police Department (WPD) employees while at work, on duty, or in uniform, in order to maintain the professional image of the Department.

#### II. POLICY

While in uniform, in plain clothes or on duty, WPD personnel are expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times. Employees are expected to adhere to the guidelines set forth in this directive while engaging in professional police activities.

#### III. DEFINITIONS

A. Employees - for the purpose of this directive, employees are identified in the following groups:

1. Officer: A sworn police officer of any rank.
2. Plain-Clothed Officer: A sworn police officer of any rank assigned to a plain clothes position or wearing plain clothes in an on-duty capacity.
3. Plain-Clothed Employee: A non-sworn employee not provided with a uniform.

B. Uniforms:

1. Class A Uniform: The Class A uniform consists of the blue uniform pants, long sleeve uniform shirt with the issued tie. An approved sweater may also be worn with the Class A uniform.
2. Class B Uniform: The Class B uniform consists of the blue uniform pants and a short sleeve uniform shirt.
3. Specialized Uniform: The Specialized Uniform will be determined by the unit's SOP. The Specialized uniform is worn only when performing the duties of the unit that it was designed for e.g. S.W.A.T., Bike Unit, Training Staff, etc.

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#### IV. PROCEDURES

##### A. Personal Appearance

##### 1. Hair Styles

- a. Employees are required to wear their hair clean, combed and neatly trimmed or arranged. Shaggy, unkempt hair is not permissible regardless of length.
- b. Hair accessories must be in keeping with the professional image of the WPD. Male employees will not wear hair accessories while on duty or in uniform.
- c. Hair color and styles must be of a natural hair color, tasteful, and in keeping with the professional image of the WPD.
- d. All male officers will conform to the following standards of appearance.
  - (1) Hair on top of the head will be neatly groomed. The length/bulk of the hair will not be excessive or present a ragged or extreme appearance. When combed, the hair may extend 1/4 inch below the top of the ears and may not touch the shirt collar in back. An Afro hairstyle will be worn no more than 1 1/2 inches thick at any point on the head. In all cases, the bulk or length of the hair will not interfere with the normal wear of the uniform hat.
  - (2) Sideburns will not extend below the earlobe and will at no point be more than 1 inch wide. Sideburns will not exceed 1/4 inch in bulk, will not flare, and will be trimmed horizontally across the bottom.
  - (3) Officers will be clean-shaven, however, mustaches are permitted. Mustaches will be neatly trimmed and will not exceed more than 1/4 inch laterally beyond the corners of the mouth and will not extend below the corners of the mouth. Mustaches will be professional and neat appearance, and will not cover any part of the upper lip.
  - (4) Beards, goatees, or other growth of hair below the lower lip will not be permitted.

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- e. All female Uniformed Officers will conform to the following standards of appearance.
  - (1) Female officers in uniform will wear their hair in styles that do not extend below the bottom of the shirt collar in back.
  - (2) Hair that extends below the bottom of the collar must be worn pinned up in a neat manner. While worn pinned up, no part of the hair will extend below the bottom of the shirt collar. If it is worn up and begins to become disheveled, it must be put up again or worn down, meeting the length regulations. Hair accessories must be functional, not ornamental, and are restricted to the following:
    - (a) Dark blue or black ribbons or terry-covered rubber bands.
    - (b) Silver, gold, black, dark blue or dark brown barrettes or clips.
    - (c) Black, white, dark blue or dark brown head bands.
    - (d) All other accessories are restricted to black, white, dark blue or dark brown in color.
  - (3) No accessory may have decorations on it and each accessory may be only one color.
  - (4) In all cases, the bulk, length, or style in which the hair is worn will not interfere with the normal wear of the uniform hat.

2. Accessories and Makeup

- a. In order to maintain the professional image of the WPD, jewelry or make-up must be worn in moderation so as not to draw undue attention to the employee and is subject to the following guidelines.
- b. Officers and Plain-Clothed Officers may wear no more than one ring per hand. Plain-Clothed Employees may wear no more than two rings per hand. For the purposes of this directive, a wedding ring set (engagement ring and wedding band) will be considered as one ring.
- c. Male Officers/ Plain-Clothed Officers may not wear earring(s).
- d. Male civilian employees may wear one post earring.

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- e. Female Officers and female Plain-Clothed Officers may wear no more than one earring per ear and it must be worn in the lobe of the ear. Plain-Clothed Employees may wear up to two earrings per ear and they must be worn in the lobe area of the ear. Pierced earrings must have a small post.
- (1) Ball earrings may be gold, silver, or white (pearl) in color and no larger than 6 mm.
  - (2) Disc earrings may be gold or silver in color and no larger than 12 mm.
  - (3) Solitaire earrings may be any gemstone or their facsimile and no larger than 1/2 karat.
  - (4) Officers and Plain-Clothed Officers may not wear hoop or dangling-style earrings. Plain-Clothed Employees may wear hoop or dangling-style earrings as long as they do not exceed one inch in width or 2 inches in length and do not interfere with the employee's duties.
- f. All employees are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, ornamentation, or jewelry other than that which is covered in this directive, through any part of the head, ears, face, nose, tongue, or any visible part of the body while on duty, working off duty or while representing the department in uniform or civilian attire.
- g. Officers in uniform will not wear visible necklaces. Plain-Clothed Employees, Plain-Clothed Officers may wear necklaces that are consistent with professional business attire.
- h. Officers and Plain-Clothed Officers may wear one bracelet on each wrist. Plain-Clothed Employees may wear two bracelets on each wrist. A watch is not considered a bracelet.
- i. Female employees may wear makeup in moderation and in such a manner that does not create an extreme appearance. Additionally, they will adhere to the following guidelines.
- (1) Eyeliner will not extend beyond the outline of the eye.
  - (2) Lipstick will not extend beyond the lip line or corners of the mouth.

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- j. Male employees will not wear makeup.
- k. Female employees may wear nail polish that is professional and does not present an extreme appearance. Male employees will not wear nail polish of any type.
- l. Sunglasses worn on duty will be restricted to those with black, brown, silver, gold, or tortoise shell frames, and must have non-reflective lenses. Sunglass straps are not allowed. (See exceptions)

### 3. Tattoos and Brands

- a. Tattoos or brands cannot be visible on the head, face, chest or neck.
- b. Visible tattoos or brands cannot be vulgar, indecent, sexist, racist, or incite sexual thoughts.
- c. Visible tattoos cannot be more than 2.5 inches in length or 1 inch in width and number more than one per limb, including the hand.
- d. Tattoos that do not meet the above specifications must be covered by clothing that meets the guidelines of this directive, tattoo-covering makeup consistent with the employee's skin tone or by an approved "Tat-Jacket." Any other method for covering tattoos must be approved by the Administrative Staff. These items must be purchased at the employee's expense.

## B. General Dress

### 1. Court

- a. Male employees who are attending court will wear either a Class A or B uniform, a business suit, or a sport coat and slacks with a tie.
- b. Female employees who are attending court will wear either their Class A or B uniform or a blazer with slacks.
- c. When attending district court, Officers have the option of wearing the clothing described above or their uniform of the day. The Specialized uniform will not be worn to court.

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2. Training

Jeans or other denims are permissible during Training classes held at the LEOC provided they are neat, properly fitted and free of holes and tears. Such clothing as tank tops, shorts, overalls, etc., is prohibited. For classes outside of the department employees will wear either uniform or business casual attire.

3. Other Meetings and functions, Employees attending Division meetings or other official meetings are considered to be on-duty and will wear uniforms or business casual attire.

4. Uniformed Dress

- a. Maintenance of the uniforms will be the responsibility of the person to whom they are issued. Uniforms will be maintained and of neat appearance at all times.
- b. Employees will present themselves in an orderly and professional manner. Uniforms will be clean, pressed and worn neatly at all times. Uniform shirts must be tucked in. Faded, worn, damaged, or tight fitting clothing are not acceptable.
- c. Shoes or boots will be black, with no visible logos or colored stitching on instep or toe. Worn out or unkempt shoes/boots will not be permitted.
- d. Black or navy socks must be worn with designated shoes.

5. Sworn Officer Uniforms

a. Protective Vests

- (1) Protective vests are required to be worn by all sworn personnel when engaged in pre-planned high risk activities that include warrant service, raids, searches and other activity deemed to be high risk by the supervisor in charge of the activity.
- (2) The wearing of protective vests is mandatory for all uniformed officers in active field assignments, including patrol supervisors. Body Armor is optional for uniformed officers when the outside heat index reaches 85 degrees on [www.weather.gov/28697](http://www.weather.gov/28697) during the day shift. There is no option for night shift. Body armor is

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required at all times while the officer is on duty unless otherwise ordered by the Chief of Police.

- b. The uniform of the day, Class A, B, or Specialized, will be worn in the intended manner with the badge worn on the outermost garment or embroidered on it.
- c. The nameplate will be worn on the uniform shirt.
  - (1) An appropriate alternative to the nameplate, such as screen printing or embroidering may be used on Specialized uniforms not suitable for wearing of the nameplate.
  - (2) Officers may not purchase the "serving since" plate to be worn as part of the nameplate.
- d. When the Class A uniform, on or off-duty, Officers must wear the issued uniform dress hat while attending formal ceremonies such as funerals and parades.
- e. Only WPD issued or approved coats may be worn. Coats must be closed in the front while being worn.
- f. Officers may obtain, at their own expense and use on duty, approved winter hats.
- g. Department approved baseball style caps can be worn with the Specialized Uniform.
  - (1) Baseball style caps will not be worn to court or while working in a secondary employment capacity.
  - (2) The Chief of Police or his designee may approve the wearing of baseball style caps for special events involving WPD personnel in uniform.
- h. Officers will wear the appropriate standard duty police uniforms (Class A, B, or Specialized) when engaged in uniformed law enforcement related secondary employment. The following units are approved for baseball caps. These are part of a Specialized Uniform:

***Sworn Units:***

*SWAT*

*Training Staff*

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- i. Ornaments, jewelry, civic pins, fraternity pins, etc., will not be worn on the uniform. The only exceptions are those pins awarded or issued by the Department or approved by the Chief of Police.
  - (1) Up to six issued commendation bars may be worn with the appropriate bar holder centered above the name plate on the uniform shirt.
  - (2) A single tie bar or tie pin, in keeping with the professional image of the Department, may be worn.
- j. Officers will wear the Class A uniform from the first day of October until the last day of March. Class B uniforms will be worn from the first day of April until the last day of September. Undershirts worn with the Class B uniform will be dark blue, or black in color with no visible stripes, patterns, or decorations and may be either v-neck or crew style. Uniformed personnel wearing the Class B uniform shirt are prohibited from leaving any buttons below the top button open.
- k. Prohibited Activity While in Uniform
  - (1) Uniformed Employees will refrain from activities which are inappropriate to the WPD's professional image or which might be misinterpreted by the public.
  - (2) Employees are prohibited from wearing WPD uniforms while appearing as a plaintiff or defendant in any court proceedings unrelated to law enforcement activity unless authorized by the Chief of Police.

#### 6. Plain-Clothed Positions

All employees, when not in uniform, will wear their identification card in obvious view at all times when inside LEOC or any WPD facility.

- a. Sworn Officers Assigned to Plain-Clothed Positions
  - (1) Sworn officers assigned to plain-clothed duty will wear professional business attire.
    - (a) Appropriate dress for employees will be polo shirts, non-collared buttoned shirts, slacks and/or 5.11 pants or khakis.

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- (b) All employees assigned to plain-clothed positions will adhere to IV.B.1 of this directive when attending court.
  - (2) Officers in plain clothes must wear shoes that do not impair their ability to carry out the normal duties of their job.
    - (a) Male officers in plain clothes may wear any type of business dress shoes, except sandals, open shoes or cowboy boots.
    - (b) Female officers in plain clothes may wear any type of business dress shoe except sandals, cowboy boots, open toe shoes or any shoe with a heel exceeding 3 inches in height.
  - (3) The Chief of Police, or designee, may alter the personal appearance and dress requirements of Plain-Clothed Officers as necessary.
  - (4) Employees assigned to plain-clothed duties of the rank of Lieutenant and below will:
    - (a) Carry their service weapons and handcuffs while on duty.
    - (b) Wear their badge or police identification cards in obvious view on the outermost garment during a police raid or other police emergency.
- b. Plain-Clothed Employees
- (1) Employee dress and overall appearance should present a business-like image to the public.
  - (2) Business casual or professional business attire will be worn while on duty.
  - (3) Business Casual- While standards of formality in dress are somewhat relaxed; employees are expected to present a professional and business-like appearance. The following standards apply:
    - (a) Slacks – khakis, cotton and other slacks are acceptable if clean and neatly pressed. Denim is not acceptable. Other inappropriate items include sweatpants, stretch pants, shorts,

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bib overalls, stirrup pants, and spandex and other form fitting pants.

(b) Shirts – casual shirts with collars, golf shirts, capped sleeved shirts, sweaters, non-collared fitted shirts and turtlenecks are acceptable. Shirts with small trademarked logos placed on the front pocket area of the shirt are acceptable. Tee-shirts, tank tops, spaghetti strap shirts, tube tops, halter-tops, revealing or midriff-baring tops, shirts with lettering, cartoon characters, phrases, pictures or any tops with bare shoulders (unless worn under another blouse or jacket) are unacceptable.

(c) Skirts and Dresses – casual dresses and skirts that are no higher than 2 inches from the knee are acceptable. Spaghetti strap dresses and mini-skirts are not acceptable.

(d) Footwear – dress boots, loafers, flats, dress sandals, and leather deck shoes are acceptable. Athletic shoes, hiking or climbing boots, tennis shoes, thongs, casual sandals, slippers, and flip flops are not acceptable.

(e) Hats – hats of any kind may not be worn on duty.

## V. EXCEPTIONS

- A. Deviation from the WPD issued uniform is allowed for business purposes when approved by the division/unit manager in consultation with his or her chain of command.
- B. Sworn personnel must present a medical excuse from a physician that facial hair below the lip should be worn. The medical excuse must provide the reason for facial hair wear and, if possible, the duration. Any waiver will be reviewed periodically, forwarded through the employee's chain of command and a copy of the excuse will be placed in employee's personnel file.
- C. Officers operating exposed vehicles, i.e. bicycles, Segways, etc., may wear sunglass straps to prevent loss or damage while in motion.
- D. Officers on special assignment, where their dress, hairstyle and accessories must be conducive to the nature of the assignment and clientele dealt with, are exempt from this policy for the duration of the assignment. For the purpose of this directive, the employee's Division Commander will determine what constitutes a special assignment within the meaning and intent of this exception.

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- E. During special campaigns such as United Way and/or Blood Donor programs, the emblem or symbol of participation may be worn during the campaign.

#### VI. ENFORCEMENT

- A. Supervisors are fully responsible and accountable for ensuring employees are appropriately dressed based on this policy. In addition, supervisors may require business attire be worn in instances where employees are expected to appear in a formal setting such as a hearing, tribunal, or professional community meeting.
- B. If it is determined that an employee is dressed inappropriately, the employee may be asked to leave work to change clothing, and vacation leave will be charged for the missed time.
- C. Questions about uniform dress or personal appearance will be answered by the employee's chain of command.

#### VII. RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. The Quartermaster is responsible for proper storage, inspection, and issuing of all employee uniforms.
- B. Uniforms that are damaged, worn out, or destroyed in the line of duty will be repaired or replaced by the WPD. Employees who need to replace a worn out or damaged article of clothing must first fill out the Equipment request form and have it signed by their Division Commander. They must also turn in the article of clothing to the Quartermaster in order to receive a replacement.
- C. Uniforms damaged or destroyed through negligence or abuse must be repaired or replaced at the responsible employee's expense.

#### VIII. RETURNING UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. Employees taking an approved leave of absence, must return all issued uniforms and equipment to the Quartermaster no less than twenty four hours before the start of the leave of absence, unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police, or designee.
- B. Employees taking Military Leave for more than thirty (30) days will return all issued uniforms and equipment to the Quartermaster no less than twenty four hours before the start of the Military Leave.

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- C. Sworn employees suspended for a period of thirty (30) days or less will turn in their badge, photo identification, service weapons, issued Taser, radio, and any assigned vehicle to their supervisor at the beginning of their suspension. The employee's supervisor will return this equipment to the Quartermaster for storage, pending the officer's return to duty. Sworn employees who are suspended for a period of greater than thirty (30) days, will turn in all issued uniforms and equipment to the Quartermaster at the beginning of the suspension, unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police, or designee.
- D. Upon resignation, retirement, or termination, employees must return all issued uniforms and equipment to the Quartermaster.
1. The Quartermaster will furnish the employee with the Property Return Statement form, which will be signed by the employee's Division Commander, the Quartermaster, the departing employee, stating that all uniforms issued to the employee have been returned to the Department.
    - a. The completed Property Return Statement form will become a permanent part of the employee's personnel file.
    - b. Separation from the Department will not be final until the Property Return Statement has been completed and returned to the Chief of Police.
  2. The Internal Affairs Section will, at the request of the Chief of Police, take necessary and appropriate action to collect all property of the Department remaining in the possession of former employees.

IX. REFERENCES

CALEA 41.3.5 and 41.3.6