

SOP #103 Uniform Policy

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT <i>Standard Operating Procedure</i>					
SOP #103		# OF PAGES: 9			
SUBJECT: UNIFORM POLICY					
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BY THE ORDER OF: Police Chief Christopher Leusner				Oct. 29, 2010	
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I. PURPOSE

To provide employees with a guideline for acceptable appearance while on duty and/or in uniform and to clearly identify those styles and items that are strictly prohibited.

II. POLICY

The overwhelming majority of state and local police are uniformed. This testifies to the recognition by those who direct those operations that similarity in appearance of a Police Officer is desirable. This is based on a desire to make police officers easily recognizable to the public, and the aspiration to maintain esprit de corps. Therefore it is imperative that members not only maintain neat and clean uniforms and/ or civilian attire, but also employ personal grooming habits that are intended to result in a professional appearance for all members.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Members of this department shall look neat and clean at all times while on duty, in uniform or when working in plain clothes.; This shall include:

1. Neat and clean uniforms or plain clothes every day.
2. Footwear polished.
3. All uniform brass or silver polished.

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4. All leather gear in serviceable condition and polished.

B. Uniforms

1. Uniform Classes for the department shall be as follows:

- a. Plain clothes.

- 1) Attire for personnel assigned to plain clothes assignments shall be suit or sport coat with dress shirt and tie, jeans and pullovers are unacceptable. Dress may be altered only if the assignment warrants different attire.
- 2) Whenever in plain clothes and armed, the issued badge will be worn on the waist belt immediately in front of the holster.

- b. Winter uniform.

- 1) Winter uniforms shall be worn from October 15th through May 14th. They are optional from October 1st through the 14th; however everyone working will wear the same. The Chief shall have the discretion to change the time frame due to weather conditions at that time.
- 2) The duty uniform will include the following: Department issued jacket, long sleeve shirt, turtleneck/dickey, and winter style hat. Only approved outerwear shall be worn.
- 3) For testimony in Superior Court, the uniform will be a long sleeve shirt and tie.

- c. Summer uniform

- 1) Summer uniforms shall be worn May 15th through October 15th. They are optional from April 15th through May 14th; however everyone working will wear the same uniform.

- d. Dress Uniform

- 1) Dress uniforms shall be worn for special occasions such as parades or funerals. Usually a special order will be issued prior to the event.
- 2) Dress uniforms will include blouse and any other issued items according to assignment.

- e. Motorcycle Uniform

- 1) Motorcycle uniforms shall be worn whenever the cycle is being utilized. They shall not be worn for any other assignment.
- 2) Motorcycle uniforms shall include:
 - a) Winter season- motorcycle helmet, leather jacket, turtle neck sweater, riding britches, riding boots and leather gloves.
 - b) Summer- Season — motorcycle helmet, summer jacket, short sleeve shirt, riding britches, and riding boots.
- 3) Motorcycle equipment is not optional and will be worn at all times.

- f. Training Uniform

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- 1) Training uniforms shall be worn for special in house training. Usually a special order will be issued.
- 2) Training uniforms consist of one uniform (with 1 short and 1 long sleeve shirt) that has been removed from service but is still serviceable.

g. Body Armor.

- 1) The department will provide all officers with individual body armor that, at the time of purchase, meets or exceeds specifications established by the department and the bargaining unit. The body armor will be replaced in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- 2) All officers assigned to a non-administrative uniform function, to include regular patrol duties and extra duty assignments, will wear assigned body armor except under the following conditions:
 - a) A medical excuse, updated annually, that has been filed with and approved by the Chief of Police.
 - b) The Operations Commander suspends the wearing of body armor for health reasons due to extremely high temperatures or humidity levels.
 - c) Officers who have been granted a medical excuse and officers who have had the wearing of body armor suspended due to weather conditions must have their body armor immediately available at all times. Immediately available will be as follows:
 - (1) An assigned officer to patrol duties will have assigned body armor in the front passenger compartment of their assigned patrol vehicle.
 - (2) An officer assigned to traffic control, road construction, outdoor security or crowd control will have assigned body armor secured in a nearby building or a vehicle that is readily accessible.
 - d) Officers assigned to administrative positions or who do not normally wear a uniform, such as a School Resource Officer, a member of the Major Crimes Unit or other special assignment are also required to have their assigned body armor immediately available at all times. Immediately available will be as follows:
 - (1) Officers assigned to specific department vehicles will have assigned body armor secured either in the passenger compartment or trunk of that vehicle.
 - (2) Officers not assigned to a specific department vehicle will have assigned body armor secured within the normal work area in such a manner as to be readily accessible.
 - (3) Officers who keep assigned body armor within the work area must take body armor with them whenever they leave headquarters.
 - e) Officers assigned to high risk tactical incidents or pre-planned high risk incidents, such as execution of high risk search warrants, fugitive incidents or hostage rescue incidents, shall be required to wear agency provided and approved body armor. SWAT Team members will have

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body armor provided by the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office.

- (1) It shall be the responsibility of the incident supervisor to ensure that all members assigned to the incident are provided with and are wearing the appropriate body armor.
- 3) Officers who report for duty and are not in compliance with this policy, will be considered unfit for duty and will not be permitted to work until in compliance. Officers who refuse to or otherwise fail to comply will be subject to an immediate suspension and subsequent disciplinary action.
- 4) Retiring of Body Armor
 - a) Body armor that has reached its useful life span may be retired.
 - b) This agency will retire body armor in a responsible manner so as to deny access to it by any criminal element.
 - c) The retirement of any body armor must be in accordance with this policy and must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to it being turned over to an approved new entity or before it is marked for destruction.
 - (1) The Chief of Police approval will be in writing and will be retained in agency records in accordance with the records retention schedule set forth by the State of New Jersey.
 - d) Approved entities that may receive body armor are:
 - (1) Any law enforcement agency in the United States or one of their auxiliaries.
 - (2) Any United States Military, reservists, National Guard, or one of their auxiliaries.
 - (3) The Cape May County Police Academy.

C. Uniform Regulations

1. All members of the Department, regardless of the duty to which they have been assigned shall have at all times in good condition at least one uniform of the season. Uniforms are to be of the proper rank and design and to include the necessary equipment that goes with such uniform.
2. The full uniform, as prescribed, shall be worn when on duty except when authorized to wear civilian clothing and at no time will parts of the uniform and parts of civilian dress to be worn.
3. No member of the Department shall alter in any way any part of a uniform that would conflict with the prescribed style of uniform, nor wear on any outer part of their uniform any badge, button, insignia or other decoration without the approval of the Chief of Police. Any additional articles of clothing necessary for weather conditions shall be consistent with the uniform
4. Should the uniform become soiled, wrinkled or torn from any cause arising out of the Weather or discharge of duty, it shall be cleaned and put in good order as soon as Possible.

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D. UNIFORM ACCESSORIES

1. Hats

- a. Only issued hats are to be worn. A hat badge will be worn centered over the visor and will display the officer badge number and rank. Hats are not to be altered or reshaped and will be worn at all times (except while in station, patrol vehicle or on break time). Should a particular call for service necessitate that the hat not be worn, (i.e. serious MVA, fight call etc) it will be put on at the first opportunity

2. Shirts

a. Departmental Patch

- 1) The departmental patch will be worn on the left sleeve. Placement will be with 1/2 " between the top of the patch and the bottom of the shoulder seam.

3. Chevrons :

- a. Chevrons will be worn on each sleeve with the top of the Left chevron placed 1/2" below the department patch, the Right chevron will be placed an equal distance from the shoulder seam.

4. Hash Marks:

- a. Hash marks will be earned at the rate of one for every 4 yrs. of service. Placement will be on the left sleeve 1" above the shirt cuff.

5. Breast Badges:

- a. The badge will be worn centered above the left pocket. The badge will be pinned in the eyelets provided on the shirt, or pinned so the bottom of the badge is 1" above the pocket.
- b. A badge will be worn on the shirt or on the outer garment.
- c. Plain clothes officers and Detectives shall either affix their badge to the outer most garment visible to the public, or when in an uncover position shall have the badge easily accessible.

6. Name Tag:

- a. Only department issued name tags will be worn. Placement shall be within the right shirt pocket, with the top of the tag 1/8" below the top of the pocket.

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7. Award Ribbons or Pins:

- a. Department issued award ribbons will be worn centered above the right breast pocket. Placement will be with the bottom of the ribbons ¹/₄" inch above the pocket. The award pins should be worn with the highest honor being at the top moving from left to right down to the lower honor.
- b. Awards will be worn at all special events, (i.e. Graduations, Promotions, Funerals etc.). While on duty on a day to day basis officers may wear 1 one award of their choosing centered above their name tag.
- c. No other awards, insignias, pins etc. may be displayed on the uniform without the written approval of the Chief of Police
- d. Award Pin Honors in order of sequence:
 - 1) MEDAL OF HONOR: Awarded to the family of a Law Enforcement officer killed in the line of duty.
 - 2) MEDAL OF HONOR: Awarded for an outstanding act in the line of duty at imminent personal hazard of life with full knowledge of the risk involved.
 - 3) COMBAT CROSS: Awarded for an individual act of heroism in combat with an armed adversary.
 - 4) LEGION OF HONOR: Awarded for permanent injury in the Line of duty including arrest, wounds from a gunshot, Accidents or hospitalization as result of work related Heart condition, etc. thereby preventing an officer from further serving actively for a period of 3 months or longer.
 - 5) WOUNDED IN COMBAT: Awarded for a wound received in the line of duty inflicted intentionally by an armed adversary and resulting in severe wounds or concussion.
 - 6) MEDAL OF VALOR: Awarded for an act of distinguished bravery in the arrest of a person who is a major threat to the welfare of the community and or the officer.
 - 7) MERITORIOUS SERVICE: Awarded for a highly unusual accomplishment under adverse conditions with some degree of hazard to life or where death or injury to a third party is prevented.
 - 8) EXCEPTIONAL DUTY: Awarded for a highly credible accomplishment bringing public acclaim to the officer, their department, of the police profession, as a result of training, devotion to duty or service to the public.
 - 9) HONORABLE SERVICE MEDAL: Awarded for a creditable act in the line of duty which meets some but not all of the requirements for other medals and is unusual in nature showing initiative and accomplishment.
 - 10) HONORABLE DISCHARGE MEDAL: Awarded for recognition of an

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officer who is eligible for retirement and or entering new employment and has served the community in a favorable fashion.

- 11) CHIEF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: Awarded for an act or achievement by a Chief of Police, bringing public acclaim to the department and the police profession through programs to further efficiency.
- 12) LIVE SAVING MEDAL: Awarded for an act performed in the line of duty, which through disregard of personal safety or prompt and alert action, results in saving one's life.
- 13) CIVILIAN SERVICE: Awarded for personal assistance by a civilian in apprehending a criminal or in extending oneself beyond one's own safety to provide prompt action to people in danger.
- 14) EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL Achievement of 65 credits towards a degree at a College or University and or the introduction of a new method or device which is adapted to departmental administration or to improve tactical procedures.
- 15) GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL: Awarded for 4 years service without reprimand or instance of report in any manner.
- 16) THE SAMARITAN OF THE YEAR AWARD: Awarded for an act of humanity as a friend to those in need by attending to them in the time of a crisis, accident, or danger and providing them with understanding and confidence.
- 17) QUEENS HONOR: Awarded for special understanding in sharing the problems of tour duty, a public salute and expression of the officer's love and thanks to the lady in his life.
- 18) DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEER SERVICE: Awarded for voluntary assistance and additional safety measures provided by Auxiliary Reserve and volunteer members which provide services for their community.
- 19) MILITARY: Officers who served in the military
- 20) SWAT: Current members of the SWAT team
- 21) NEGOTIATOR: Current members of the Hostage Negotiation Team.
- 22) Current members of the DIVE team
- 23) HONOR GUARD: Current members of the honor guard.
- 24) DARE: Current DARE officers
- 25) Former SWAT: Former SWAT team members
- 26) Former NEGOTIATOR Former members of the Hostage Negotiations team.
- 27) Former DIVE: Former Dive team members
- 28) Former HONOR GUARD: Former Honor Guard
- 29) Former DARE: Former DARE officer

E. Hairstyles

1. Male Employees

- a. Men's hair should be styled in a conservative manner, cut short enough to prevent hair from interfering with the wearing of the uniform hat. The hair should be evenly tapered from the sideburns around to the back of the

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neck. Hair shall be worn so as not to protrude outward when the uniform hat is worn. Hair should not touch the collar of the shirt when a member is standing erect.

- b. Members who desire to wear a hairpiece or wig may do so provided it fits properly and is of good quality. It should present a natural appearance and not interfere with the wearing of the uniform hat. All wigs and hairpieces must otherwise meet the standards as set forth above.
- c. Specifically prohibited by this directive are hairstyles that would be regarded as unusual, bizarre, or inappropriate for a professional appearance. This would include hair dye that is of an unnatural color and the practice of shaving symbols, letters and related items into one's hairstyle.

2. Female Employees

- a. Women's hair should be styled in a conservative manner that will not interfere with the wearing of the uniform hat. In the interest of Officer Safety, female members are encouraged to wear their hair no longer than the bottom of the collar line of the uniform shirt. If the hair is generally worn longer than this, the female member must wear it in a bun style on top of her head when on duty and in uniform.
- b. When a female member wears her hair up or otherwise places objects in her hair to hold it in place, the objects so employed should also be conservative in color and style.
- c. Specifically prohibited by this directive are hairstyles that would be regarded as unusual, bizarre, or inappropriate for a professional appearance. This would include hair dye that is of an unnatural color and the practice of shaving symbols, letters, and related items into one's hairstyle.

F. Facial Hair

- 1. Sideburns shall not extend below the bottom of the ear and shall be consistent in width and horizontal at the bottom.
- 2. Mustaches must be neatly trimmed and combed and must not extend beyond or below the corners of the mouth.
- 3. Beards, goatees, and other growths of hair on the facial area are strictly prohibited without the express permission of the Chief of Police.
 - a. Members working in specialized assignments where the growth of facial hair

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is practical and desirous may be granted permission upon written request.

- b. Members having a bona fide medical condition that requires the growth of facial hair or prohibits shaving may document from the member's attending physician.
- c. Members shall be otherwise clean shaven when reporting for a scheduled tour of duty.

G. Miscellaneous

- 1. The wearing of earrings by any male member is strictly prohibited.
- 2. The wearing of any items of jewelry (rings, rods, etc.) through any pierced area of skin that is visible or noticeable is strictly prohibited. (i.e., body-piercing)
- 3. While on duty tattoo(s) are not allowed to be visible to the public. In the event an Officer wishes to get a tattoo, he will have to ensure that it is covered while on duty. Options for covering a tattoo will be a skin colored sleeve. This will be purchased by the Officer at his own expense.
 - a. Exceptions: Officers working in plain clothes may be allowed to exhibit tattoos with the approval of the Chief of Police.
 - b. Personnel who are employed as of July 1, 2009 will be exempt from this policy for existing tattoos. Any new tattoos will not be allowed to be displayed and must be covered.
- 4. Members shall not have fingernails that extend more than ¼ inch beyond the tip of the finger. Fingernail polish of any color is prohibited. (clear only)
- 5. Female members may only use lip covering that is clear or neutral in color. Facial makeup shall be flesh tone and conservatively applied.
- 6. Wristwatches and finger rings are permitted; however, they should be conservatively styled and cannot display words or symbols that could be deemed offense to the public. Finger rings shall be limited to one ring on each hand.

The Command Presence that an Officer portrays when they wear the uniform correctly can not be understated. We want to ensure by following the above standards that each Officer presents the professional image a Police Officer should project.