



CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE

GENERAL POLICE ORDER



EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 30, 2025	CHAPTER: 1 - Administrative	PAGE: 1 of 6	NUMBER: 1.04.01
SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS			
CHIEF: <i>Dorothy A. Todd, Chief</i>			

Substantive changes are italicized

PURPOSE: To define grooming and personal appearance standards for members of the Division of Police.

POLICY: **It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police** to ensure that all members present a neat, clean, and professional appearance while on-duty, off-duty engaged in secondary employment, or otherwise representing the City of Cleveland or the Division of Police.

DEFINITIONS:

Female Members: generally refers to members of the Division of Police who self-identify primarily as female as that identity is traditionally understood.

Male Members: generally refers to members of the Division of Police who self-identify primarily as male as that identity is traditionally understood.

PROCEDURES:

- I. Grooming Standards for All Members
 - A. Hair shall be neatly groomed, and its length and bulk shall not be excessive.
 1. For uniformed members:
 - a. Hair shall not prevent the eight-point cap from being placed squarely on the head with the center of the visor directly in line with the nose.
 - b. Hair shall not interfere with the wearing of personal protection equipment (i.e., gas mask, helmet).
 2. Wigs or other hair pieces shall present a natural appearance and conform to the same standards as natural hair.
 3. Extreme or faddish hairstyles are prohibited, including but not limited to:
 - a. Styles that incorporate designs or sculptures using the hair and/or cut into the hair, and any style that presents an unprofessional or disheveled appearance.
 - b. Unnatural hair coloring (e.g., purple, green, etc.).

PAGE: 2 of 6	SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS	NUMBER: 1.04.01
-----------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

- B. Fingernails shall be trimmed to present a professional appearance and shall not threaten safety or restrict job performance.
- C. Scents/Odors.
 - 1. Aftershave, perfumes, colognes, or other artificial scents shall not be so excessive as to cause annoyance to others.
 - 2. Members shall maintain appropriate personal hygiene in a manner to prevent body odors from causing offense or annoyance to others.
- D. *All members may wear conservative rings on their fingers, not to exceed a total of three (3) rings worn between both hands.*
- E. Excessive, non-professional jewelry is prohibited, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Multiple and/or brightly colored rings, cocktail rings, costume jewelry, watches, bracelets, pins, and/or large neck chains.
 - 2. Earrings, with the exception of *earrings* of simple stud design, not extending below the earlobe for female members.
- F. Visible body piercings of any kind are prohibited, with the exception of *simple stud earrings worn by female members, not to exceed two earrings per ear.*
- G. Tattoos.
 - 1. Members shall not have visible tattoos or body art on the hands, face, neck and/or head. If visible on these areas, any such tattoo shall be covered while on duty.
 - 2. Members who have tattoos on the hand(s), prior to the effective date of this General Police Order, shall:
 - a. Notify the Chief's office in writing via a Form-1 of the description of all existing hand tattoos.
 - b. With approval from the Chief, be exempt from covering the hand tattoos.
 - 3. Any visible tattoos or body markings that are deemed offensive, profane, unprofessional, inappropriate, or objectionable shall be covered, including but not limited to:
 - a. Those that indicate a criminal gang affiliation.
 - b. Depictions of sexually explicit art, nudity, or violence.
 - c. Words, art, or phrases that are considered vulgar.

PAGE: 3 of 6	SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS	NUMBER: 1.04.01
-----------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

- d. Symbols associated with hate or extremist groups (e.g., swastikas, pentagrams, SS thunderbolts, spider webs).
 - e. Criminal or supremacist group names, initials, acronyms, or numbers that represent hate, criminal, or supremacist groups (e.g., KKK, 666, MS-13, 14, 88).
 - f. Any tattoo that promotes a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
4. Cosmetic tattoos (eyeliner, eyebrows, and lips) are authorized if they are natural, neutral, and/or professional in appearance.
 5. The Chief of Police or their designee will have the final authority in determining if any tattoos are in violation of this order.
- H. Body modifications (i.e., outwardly visible branding, scarring, resection, under the skin implantations, extreme forms of “body art”) other than for medically necessary rehabilitative purposes or common cosmetic procedures are prohibited.
- I. Approved forms of cover and concealment for tattoos, medically necessary body modifications, or body art that are prohibited include:
1. Long sleeve shirts.
 2. Elastic arm bands.
 3. Appropriately sized bandages.
 4. Makeup/concealer.
- II. Grooming Standards Specific to Female Members
- A. Hair shall be kept in a short or medium style and shall not extend below the lower edge of the shirt collar.
1. Longer hair may be brought into compliance by being worn up.
 - a. Pins, barrettes, bands, and clips are permissible to the extent that they are inconspicuously placed for the sole purpose of holding hair in place and are conservative in design and color.
 - b. Hair shall not interfere with the wearing of issued head gear or personal safety equipment.

PAGE: 4 of 6	SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS	NUMBER: 1.04.01
-----------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

2. Bangs shall be neat and maintained above the eyebrows.
3. Braids, twists, and locks are permitted if they are conservative and professional in appearance.
 - a. Hair shall not be sculpted to extend beyond the natural contours of the head.
 - b. Hair that has been styled into locks where the locks exceed one-half inch in diameter (the approximate width of a standard pen or pencil) is prohibited.
4. Female members in civilian dress are exempt from hair length restrictions.

B. Fingernails shall be *clean, neatly trimmed, and well maintained*.

1. *Fingernails shall not exceed one-quarter inch beyond the fingertip.*
2. *Only square or rounded nail shapes are permitted.*
3. *If nail polish or artificial nail coverings are worn, they shall be the same single, uniform, smooth neutral color on all nails.*
4. *Fluorescent, neon, multi-colored, ombré, color-changing, glitter, metallic, textured finishes, or any designs or patterns are prohibited.*
5. *Decorative elements and attachments, including but not limited to decals, gems, rhinestones, or ornamentation, are prohibited.*

C. Makeup shall be subtle and professional in appearance.

1. Excessive, non-professional facial makeup is prohibited.
2. Lipstick shall be subdued and neutral toned (i.e., pink, tan, brown).

III. Grooming Standards Specific to Male Members

A. Hair shall be evenly tapered on the sides and back.

1. The hair outline shall follow the contour of the ear and shall not fall over the ears nor touch the collar except for the closely cut hair on the back of the neck.
2. Hair that has been styled into locks where the locks exceed one-half inch in diameter (the approximate width of a standard pen or pencil) is prohibited as well as any gathering of hair in a tie, clip, twist, ponytail, or braid.

B. Mustaches, when worn alone.

1. Shall be neatly styled and trimmed and may not extend below the upper lip.

PAGE: 5 of 6	SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS	NUMBER: 1.04.01
-----------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

2. Shall not be grown longer than the corners of the mouth.
 3. Shall not be styled or pointed away from the contour of the face.
 4. Shall not be noticeably excessive.
 5. The ends of the mustache shall not be twisted or waxed.
- C. Sideburns, when worn alone.
1. Shall be neatly trimmed and their bulk shall not be excessive nor extend below the bottom of the earlobe.
 2. Shall be of even width (not flared).
 3. The base of the sideburns shall end with a clean horizontal line.
- D. Beards.
1. Shall not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length.
 2. Shall be neatly groomed and trimmed above the neckline at all stages.
- E. Goatees.
1. Shall not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length.
 2. Shall not exceed 1 inch from the corner of the mouth and shall not exceed 1.5 inches below the chin.
- F. Soul patches are prohibited.
- G. Special designs, custom trims, or other beard styles cut into or using facial hair are prohibited.
- H. All facial hair must appear natural in color.
- I. All facial hair shall be neatly trimmed and groomed at all stages of growth.
- J. *Fingernails shall be clean, neatly trimmed, and well maintained.*
1. *Fingernails shall not extend beyond the fingertip.*
 2. *Fingernails shall be natural in color.*
- K. Earrings or ear adornments shall not be worn.

PAGE: 6 of 6	SUBJECT: GROOMING STANDARDS	NUMBER: 1.04.01
-----------------	--------------------------------	--------------------

- L. Makeup shall not be worn unless the member can show cause that it is necessary for:
 - 1. A duty-related function as approved by the member's commanding officer.
 - 2. Is being used as a concealer as described in section I. H. above.
 - 3. Medically valid reasons (e.g., severe acne, injury, scarring, etc.).

IV. Exemptions

- A. Members whose primary duties are undercover in nature may be exempted from the requirements of this order with the prior approval of the Chief.
 - 1. For covert operations, the Officer-in-Charge of the unit involved shall request approval for the member through the chain of command to the Chief's Office.
 - a. Requests shall explain how grooming standards outside of these guidelines will aid the operation.
 - b. Requests shall specify the period of time involved and shall expire after one year.
- B. Any deviation from this policy shall be requested in writing and forwarded through the officer's chain of command to the Chief's Office for review and approval.
- C. The Chief of Police or their designee is the final authority as to the appropriateness of any grooming related issue not specifically addressed in this order.

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.