

Human Resource Manual

	Policy Name	Professional Business Attire
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	Responsible for Content	Human Resource Division

I. Description

This policy is about how employees must present themselves while at work and is often referred to as the dress code.

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II. Rationale

Neatness and cleanliness are evidence of concern for our patients, their families, the public, and each other. Personal neatness and appropriate attire provide an atmosphere of professionalism and inspires confidence in our ability to deliver services. This policy supports and promotes work place safety, creates a standard for professional appearance and fosters a positive working environment. The policy applies to all employees including contract employees, residents, volunteers, students, Medical Staff of UNC Hospitals, and School of Medicine, and research personnel utilizing UNC Health Care facilities.

Employees arriving at work and clocking in must present themselves in accordance with the Professional Business Attire Policy. Department policies may specify additional requirements as appropriate for employee and patient safety.

III. Policy

A. Identification

All employees, staff members, volunteers, and visitors, while on UNC Health Care premises, shall be required to wear appropriate identification as defined in the [Identification and Access Control Card Policy](#) in UNC Health Care Policy Manual. An employee's name and picture must be visible at all times.

B. Uniforms

Department managers may require staff to wear uniforms as appropriate for the department, position, or work duties. Employees for whom uniforms are required for the job must wear the appropriate uniform. Uniform short pants and uniform hats may be appropriate if part of a department's overall approved uniform. Alterations to the uniform or alternatives to uniforms are allowed only if prior approval has been obtained from a Department Head and if the intent of this policy, as stated above, is not violated.

C. Scrub Suits

A scrub suit is defined as a hospital provided, hospital laundered top and bottom apparel that is worn in specific departments of the hospital as prescribed by Infection Control. It is to be worn as a set of jade green shirt and pant as specified by the relevant departmental policy. Scrub suits, masks, shoe covers, and gloves should be worn only in areas designated by relevant departmental policies and only by those designated to wear them as part of their personal protective equipment. These items are not to be removed from the hospital.

D. Non-Uniform Clothing

Clothing should fit properly and be clean, pressed, and in good condition.

The following is a list of attire that is inappropriate in the workplace at UNC Health Care:

1. Clothing that is non-professional in appearance, length, and fit of clothing, such as:
 - Backless dresses or tops
 - Skirts above the knee or which have high slits.
 - Pants shorter than mid-calf.
 - Clothing that is excessively tight or revealing.
2. Casual beach or athletic wear (such as sweat pants, stretch pants/warm up pants, and tights or leggings worn as pants).
3. T-shirts with logos unless the logo identifies UNC Health Care or units within UNC Health Care.
4. Shirts with revealing necklines, bare midriff tops, and clothing bearing any type of unauthorized message, including but not limited to offensive messages, or offensive images.
5. Spaghetti strap blouses, unless worn with a jacket.
6. Denim unless part of an approved uniform component
7. Shorts or skorts (or similar attire) unless a part of an approved uniform.
8. Hats unless a part of an approved uniform

E. Safety

As required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act, UNC Health Care shall provide appropriate personal protective equipment for employees who perform hazardous work. The equipment will protect the face, eyes, head, and extremities. The Infection Control policies and the Employee Handbook must be used to guide departmental dress requirements where appropriate. Reference [UNC Health Care Infection Control Manual](#) and the Employee Handbook for specific guidelines.

F. Protective Equipment

Protective equipment, shields, and respiratory devices shall be used whenever the employee has the potential of being exposed to a hazardous environment, chemical, radiation, or mechanical irritant capable of causing injury or impairment in the function of any part of the body through absorption, inhalation, or physical contact. The use of protective glasses and shoes is covered in the [Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#) in UNC Health Care Safety Policy Manual.

G. Footwear

For safety reasons, all employees must wear shoes that are appropriate to their job. Shoes should be clean and in good repair.

OSHA Standard 1910.136(a) mandates that the employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses protective footwear when working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, or objects piercing the sole, and where the employee's feet are exposed to electrical hazards. (OSHA standard 1910.1030(d) (3) (i) Closed-toed shoes are required in departments and areas in which the above hazards exist including all patient care areas. In addition OSHA requires that protective clothing/covering be worn that will prevent blood or other potentially infectious materials from reaching the skin.

The following are not appropriate footwear for the workplace at UNC Health Care:

1. Flip-flops
2. Slippers
3. Excessively high-heeled shoes

Employees serving in non-patient care areas may wear open toed shoes but are encouraged to wear close-toed shoes in accordance with the above provisions.

H. Grooming Standard

Cleanliness is an essential part of providing high-quality service to our customers. A neat, clean, business-like and professional appearance is a requirement for all jobs. In most instances, an employee may wear his or her hair the way he or she chooses while working, as long as it remains well trimmed, well groomed, and business-like in appearance.

I. Other Considerations

Supervisors will inform employees if business needs warrant additional requirements for the employee's position.

Visible tattoos and excessive body piercing may offend some customers and co-workers while at the workplace. Therefore, these shall not be visible.

All jewelry and other accessories must comply with OSHA standards in the respective departments. These items present a safety hazard around certain equipment and generally can be disruptive to the work environment.

Chewing gum is not considered appropriate in the presence of patients, visitors, or guests. Chewing gum may be approved on a case-by-case basis for special circumstances such as participation in a Smoking Cessation Program.

The use of earphones, headphones, Walkman or ipods in public or patient care areas is not permitted, unless approved by management or required.

J. Hygiene Standards

Good personal hygiene is required. Other employees, as well as patients and guests, have a right to expect general cleanliness and good dental hygiene from the staff.

Professional Business Attire

Employees shall not use body fragrances such as cologne, perfume, talc powder, and after-shave lotions. Smoke odors are prohibited.

Artificial nails may not be worn by staff involved with direct patient care.

Consideration must always be given to possible adverse effect on patient care, on co-workers, and on visitors.

K. Special Occasion Exceptions

Costumes, holiday specific outfits or other special event outfits are acceptable for predetermined special occasions/holidays upon pre-approval from department managers through their Division Vice President.

Other than the above exception, UNC Health Care does not have “casual” or “dress down” days.

L. Inappropriate Dress Penalty

Inappropriately dressed employees as referred to in the sections regarding identification, uniforms, and non-uniform clothing will be excused from work without pay, and must return to work as directed by their supervisor. Violations of the Professional Business Attire Policy will result in corrective action up to and including termination. Department managers are responsible for ensuring that every member of their department dresses in accordance with this policy, and the Residency Program Directors are likewise responsible for UNC Health Care’s residents compliance with this policy.

Violations of this policy, may result in any of the following Performance related Corrective Actions may occur depending on the severity of the violation:

- 1st Violation Verbal Warning
- 2nd Violation Written Warning
- 3rd Violation Final Written Warning or Suspension Without Pay
- 4th Violation Termination

IV. Related Policies

- A. [Identification and Access Control Card Policy in UNC Health Care Policy Manual](#)
- B. [Personal Protective Equipment Policy in UNC Health Care Safety Policy Manual](#)