

COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Subject: GROOMING STANDARDS

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I. Purpose

To establish standards of appearance and grooming to maintain the proper image of a police officer/employee.

II. Statement of Policy

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to regulate the appearance and grooming standards of its officers and employees. The department has an obligation and a bona fide right to ensure there is uniformity of appearance, thereby making officers readily recognizable by the public. Grooming standards contribute to the professionalism of the department and its esprit de corps. Whenever an employee presents a non-professional image, the employee may be asked to correct the issue while on duty or relieved of duty until the issue has been corrected. Any employee who fails to maintain a professional appearance will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in this policy.

III. Grooming Standards

The Covington Police Department has an excellent professional image and is often commended for officers' personal appearance. Hair grooming is an important factor in determining personal appearance. Hair appearing generally "shabby" and/or "frizzy" and generally unmanageable will not be tolerated. Hair must be regularly cut and shaped (including regular shampooing).

MALES:

- A. Front - The hair cannot be combed in such a manner that any hair hangs down over the forehead and is exposed under the dress hat. No bangs will be allowed.
- B. Rear - The hair at the back of the head and upper neck surface may be full, provided that the hairline indicates a taper or "feather-edged" appearance at the bottom. No hair will be allowed to extend over the collar or be cut straight in with scissors showing no taper. A square-type hairline is acceptable, but a "bobbed-off" appearance at the lowest point in the back is a violation. Looking from the rear portion of the head, the normal hairline is one-half below the bottom of the ears. Hair cannot be worn so full in the back as to curl upward.

- C. Top regular style – The hair may be worn “full” on the top of the head provided the hat will sit firmly and squarely on the head with a reasonable military appearance. Reasonable military appearance means that the hat cannot be solely supported by the hair and rest at some points supported by the head surface.
- D. Sides-Sideburns_ - The hair may be worn “full” on the sides provided it is combed “sweeping” toward the rear of the head and does not cover any part of the ear while on duty. The hair may touch the top of the ear, but even partially covering any part of the ear is a violation. (With this latitude allowing full sides, an officer may comb his differently while off-duty and in civilian attire and still pass standard when on duty with the hair combed back and off the ears.) The bottom of the ear will be considered the lowest point of the hair under the standards herein set out. Side-burns may extend to the bottom of the ear. Absolutely no “point” or “pork chops” style sideburns will be allowed. The sideburns must be squared off at the bottom and trimmed as neatly as possible in a straight line downward. The sideburn must not be worn so full that they turn up or can be combed over the front part of the ear. “Frizzy” sideburn are a violation.
- E. Afro-style haircuts – A “short to medium” afro is acceptable provided the hair does not cover any portion of the ears or extend in the back or on the sides lower than the normal hairline which is one half inch below the bottom of the ears. Hair covering any portion of the ear is a violation. An Afro on which our normal headwear will not sit squarely and firmly on some part of the head surface is not acceptable. The Afro cannot be the sole supporting base for the hat. Afros will be neatly trimmed to project a full round appearance. The Afro must allow a reasonable appearance with headwear. “Corn rowing” of the hair is not permitted while on duty or in uniform.
- F. Mustache – A neatly trimmed mustache is acceptable provided the following standards are strictly adhered to: the mustache cannot turn upward or downward at the end. (No “Fu Manchu” or “handlebar” styles.) The mustache cannot be worn twisted or waxed on the ends. The mustache must be completely off the top of the upper lip. The mouth must be totally exposed. The mustache cannot be worn so thick that extended outward over 1/16 inch at any point. The width of the mustache may not exceed three-fourth inch maximum at any point. The mustache cannot extend beyond the corner of the mouth by 1/16 inch in length. The mustache cannot be dyed or worn any color different from the hair.
- G. Beards – Beards may be worn as long as the beard is kept at the proper length, trimmed on a regular basis and has a clean shaven edge around the top of the beard and below the beard.
- H. Goatee – Goatees may be worn as long as the goatee is kept at the proper length, trimmed on a regular basis and has a clean shaven edge all around the goatee.
- I. Tattoos – Tattoos will be permitted provided that they are covered up by clothing. Tattoos will not be allowed on the face, neck, or head of the employee.
- J. Facial hair – No facial hair shall exceed 1/16 inch in length. If the individual cannot grow a full or thick beard or goatee, then they will be prohibited from wearing such. The chief of police will have the final decision as to whether an individual’s facial hair meets the standard.

If an employee is found to be in non-compliance with this policy, they will be required to be in compliance before beginning their next shift.

- K. Jewelry - The wearing of an exposed necklace is prohibited as a safety factor.
- L. Sunglasses - As a general rule, sunglasses are permitted with the exception of those with mirrored glass. Sunglasses should project a conservative image. Flamboyant colors or extremely odd shapes are prohibited.

FEMALES:

- A. Hair – Hair will be worn off the face, so that they maintain an unobstructed field of vision at all times. It should be worn in such a manner that it will not touch the uniform collar, except that ponytails are allowed.
- B. Jewelry
 - 1. The use of an exposed necklace is prohibited as a safety factor.
 - 2. The use of earrings is prohibited as a safety factor with the following exception:
 - a. Earring of the post/stud type;
 - b. No larger than 3/8" in diameter;
 - c. No portion of the earring may "dangle";
 - d. Must be silver, gold or a gemstone compatible with the uniform (i.e. diamond, dark blue sapphire).
- C. Fingernails - Fingernails are to be maintained at a moderate length. The use of fingernail polish is prohibited, with the exception of clear polish.
- D. Makeup – Facial makeup is to be used with discretion. Bright colors and extreme eye makeup will not be allowed. False eyelashes will not be allowed.

IV. Uniform / Grooming Standards During Training Sessions

- A. All personnel that are attending training sessions as a student or as an instructor are representing the Covington Police Department and will at all times during such training maintain an appearance that is consistent with the grooming standards of the Covington Police Department.
- B. All personnel participating in training sessions will dress in appropriate attire (e.g. blue jeans, Dockers slacks that are neatly pressed, button or pull over shirts are acceptable. T-shirts and T-shirts with logos are unacceptable). When training will require special clothing such as physical fitness, ESU, firearms qualification, etc., the officer will be allowed to dress accordingly.

V. Exceptions

Officers assigned to duties which require covert operations including, but not limited to undercover work or surveillance will be excused from general grooming standards. Such officer's appearance and grooming will be appropriate for the assignment and will be at the discretion of their supervisor or the Chief of Police.

This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

Stacey L. Cotton

Stacey L. Cotton
Chief of Police