



**CHEVY CHASE  
VILLAGE  
POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

**GENERAL ORDER: 4-20 GROOMING AND PERSONAL  
APPEARANCE**

DATE: 7/9/2015

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**I. POLICY**

Chevy Chase Village Police Department personnel shall be well-groomed.

**II. PURPOSE**

This General Order establishes grooming and personal appearance guidelines for on-duty personnel.

**III. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Citizens enjoy great freedom in the way that they dress and groom, but the decision to join and serve the Chevy Chase Village Police Department entails certain sacrifices on the part of the officer. One of these sacrifices is the freedom to dress and groom with no concern other than one's own personal preference.

The regulations in this General Order strike a fair balance between the rights of the officers and the legitimate needs of the Department. In the regulations, distinction is sometimes drawn between the grooming required for males and that required for females. This does not reflect any difference in the degree to which it is imperative that female or male officers are well-groomed. Rather, it reflects acceptance of the fact that the public expects different grooming standards to be observed by the two sexes, and it is this public expectation which is central to the recognition of the respect of the officer, cooperation from the public, as well as the absence of antagonism.

This grooming and personal appearance regulation serves two functions: it facilitates instant recognition and fosters quick respectful cooperation by the public; and, it causes officers to project a "neutral" image, thereby minimizing public antagonism from everyday contacts, whether or not cooperation or recognition is needed.

The importance of the first function stems from the fact that it is, on occasion, vital to public safety as well as the safety of all officers that the public be able to recognize, instantly and without doubt, an officer as representing legitimate authority. In some cases, hesitation in either seeking assistance from an officer or cooperating with an officer can have negative consequences.

Moreover, the Police Department's job is made significantly easier if the public believes that an officer will be fair and unbiased. Thus, the second function of this regulation, the assurance of impartiality, is essential to the department's success.

**IV. APPEARANCE**

**A. All Personnel**

At all times when on duty, unless expressly authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee, all Department members shall be well-groomed and clean in their person.

**1. Hands**

Fingernails shall be trimmed not to exceed 1/4" from the end of the finger and free of dirt. Female employees may wear conservative polish or coating on their fingernails.

**2. Eyebrows**

Eyebrows shall be well-groomed to remain in the area defined by the natural hairline.

**3. Jewelry**

Personal jewelry shall be held to a minimum. Bracelets and visible necklaces will not be worn with the uniform, with the exception of medical alert type bracelets.

**4. Sunglasses may be worn. The frames must be black or dark brown in color. Gaudy or colorful frames and lenses are prohibited. Sunglasses shall be removed when speaking to the public or traffic violators.**

**5. Tattoos**

The following visible tattoos are prohibited:

- Those on the face, head and neck.
- Those that are gang-related.

- Those that are insensitive or offensive to a reasonable person due to their references to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, violence, profanity, or other subject matter.
- Those that indicate, to a reasonable person, that the officer may be biased in some way.

## B. Male Officers

### 1. Hair

Hair shall be combed or brushed in such a manner that it does not protrude over two inches in a perpendicular line from the scalp and shall be gradually tapered to the sides in such a manner that the ear lobe is visible and not covered by hair when viewed from the front, side, and rear. Hair shall be evenly trimmed at all times. Hair in the back of the head shall be trimmed in such a manner that it does not extend over the shirt or uniform collar while standing in normal posture. While the officer is on duty, his hair shall not be worn in braids, plaits, pigtailed, ponytails, or drawn together and pinned.

### 2. Sideburns

Sideburns shall not extend below a horizontal line drawn from the lowest portion of the ear. They must be trimmed in such a manner that the ear is visible from the front and that the width of the sideburns does not exceed the area defined by the natural hairline.

### 3. Mustaches

A clean-shaven appearance is required, except that mustaches are permitted. Mustaches must be trimmed so that the upper lip of the officer is visible when viewed from the front. Mustaches must be trimmed so that they do not extend beyond 1/2" from a perpendicular line drawn at the corner of the mouth. Mustaches must also be trimmed in such a manner that they do not extend over 1/4" below a horizontal line formed by the corners of the mouth. Mustaches must not be waxed or otherwise treated to extend them beyond the natural hairline.

### 4. Male personnel may not wear earrings.

## C. Female Officers

1. Hair shall be arranged in such a manner that it does not extend below the bottom edge of the collar. Hair styles used in accomplishing this

goal shall permit the proper wearing of the uniform hat. Wigs or hairpieces of a color close to the normal hair color may be worn if they conform to the guidelines of this regulation.

2. No ribbons or ornaments shall be worn in the hair except for neat, inconspicuous bobby pins or conservative barrettes.
3. Female officers may wear one pair of small, plain, button-type earrings.
4. Make-up will be kept to a minimum.

## D. Other Public Safety Employees

1. Public Safety Employees who are not, because of their assignment, required to wear a uniform, will dress in a manner that reflects a professional appearance.
  - During weekday business hours (8am-5pm) and during monthly Board Meetings, casual business attire is the minimum requirement.
  - During overnight hours and on weekends when the Village Hall is closed to the public, jeans (clean with no holes) are permitted.

Specifically, casual business attire means:

### a. Men:

1. Long pants (no jeans) with a fastened belt. No lettering or graphics on pants are permitted.
2. A collared shirt (e.g. polo or button-down); shirts must be tucked in. No lettering or graphics are permitted except the employee's name and/or an approved reference to Chevy Chase Village.
3. Sweaters and vests are appropriate.

### b. Women:

1. Office-appropriate long pants, skirts or dresses.
2. Office-appropriate tops/blouses. Sweaters (cardigan, crew neck or v-neck) are permitted.

c. Men and Women

1. Office-appropriate shoes (e.g. no flip-flops, etc.) are required.
  2. Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted.
2. Grooming standards for these employees will be the same as those for uniformed police personnel.

This directive voids the previous version dated 5/5/2001 and incorporates language from memorandum 15-12: Dress Code for Communications Staff dated 5/15/2015.