

**Brody School of Medicine  
East Carolina University  
Policy and Procedure Manual**

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| Topic: Dress Code – Minimal Standards for Dress and Appearance - #HR15 |  |
| Section: 2   | Section Name: Human Resources  |
| Approval Date:<br>02/07/01   | Approval:<br>Peter J. Kragel, MD<br>Interim Dean, Brody School of Medicine |

**I. Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistency among the various departments of the Brody School of Medicine in developing and enforcing standards for dress and appearance. Within the three mission areas of the Brody School of Medicine (teaching, research and clinical), there are various levels of patient and public contact that require attention to appearance. It is the intent of this policy to address basic expectations relating to safety and professionalism, recognizing that clinical and patient care needs and research and teaching departments need to implement policies consistent with the work and public contact specific to them.

**II. Policy:**

This policy outlines the minimal acceptable standard for dress and appearance expected and required of all Brody School of Medicine employees (including student workers), contract employees, volunteer personnel, and students in the clinical sites. Employees will also adhere to dress standards established for categories of services specific to job duties and profession (i.e., clinical personnel, research and medical laboratory technicians).

This policy has been written in the positive interest of our staff, patients and customers. This policy exists to:

- Promote a professional impression on our customers and the public by portraying a positive image of the school and its missions.
- Promote employee, patient and customer safety and comfort.
- Frame the professional image required for medical school employees; an image appropriate to today's quality health care work place environment.

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|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 1 of 7          |

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|  |  |
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**III. Compliance and Enforcement:**

- Standards of dress and personal appearance will be communicated during new hire orientation programs.
- When an employee's dress does not comply with established standards, the normal response should be for the immediate supervisor and/or department administrator to discuss the matter with the employee. If counseling fails to bring the desired response, appropriate progressive discipline up to and including corrective action will result.
- Supervisors are responsible for teaching, role modeling and enforcing the guidelines outlined in this dress code.
- Consistent application of these policies is expected of all department personnel.
- These guidelines are not meant to be all inclusive. Employees who have questions or seek clarification should consult their supervisor or manager.

**IV. Special Circumstances and Occasions:**

Standards of dress and personal appearance are to be followed by all staff during work hours and are to be maintained in the following circumstances:

- When traveling on work time in public areas of University Health Systems, Inc.
- When participating in meetings, educational seminars, in services, or any time an employee is officially representing the organization. Certain educational seminars and in services may permit more comfortable attire.

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 2 of 7          |

**Brody School of Medicine  
East Carolina University  
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|  |  |
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Exceptions may be permitted for such occasions as moving/relocation, special inventory, snow days, hurricanes, or other emergencies, including emergency call back. Department managers will exercise judgment and discretion when appropriate to permit exception.

**V. Guidelines**

A. Identification Badges

The ECU One Card photo ID badge is recognized as the principal basis of identification for our patients, visitors and fellow employees.

- Employees will be furnished a photo ID badge. This ID should be worn while on University property. Badges must be worn with the photo side visible and displayed at chest high level. Tape, stickers, pins or ornaments are not allowed on badges.
- ID badges are necessary for access into buildings. If an employee does not have a badge to gain access into the work site, they must report to the Police Department on the Ground Floor of the Brody Building.
- Employees may be prohibited from reporting to their work area until an ID badge is presented. Progressive disciplinary action may be taken for failure to wear the photo ID badge.
- Any lost, misplaced, stolen or worn out badge must be reported to the supervisor and replaced.
- The ID badge is the property of the university.

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 3 of 7          |

**Brody School of Medicine  
East Carolina University  
Policy and Procedure Manual**

|  |  |
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| Topic: Dress Code – Minimal Standards for Dress and Appearance - #HR15 |  |
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**B. Appropriate Grooming and Hygiene**

- Attention to the principles of hygiene is critical to the professional appearance and perception of a health care professional. Particular attention should be given to skin, fingernails, hair, bathing, proper oral hygiene and use of deodorant as needed.
- Hair should be clean, well groomed and away from the face so that it does not present a safety hazard. Beards, mustaches and sideburns are to be neatly trimmed and groomed.
- Proper hand-washing techniques are important for personal safety and control of infection.
- The use of excessive makeup and strong fragrances should be avoided.
- Offensive or inappropriate tattoos must be covered. (For the purpose of this policy, inappropriate means any tattoo deemed by management to be inconsistent with the standards of a professional, quality health care workplace.)

**C. Appropriate Personal Behaviors**

- Gum chewing and the use of smokeless tobacco products may be prohibited in certain areas or departments.
- Sunglasses indoors are not permitted unless worn for medical reasons.
- The use of earphones, headphones or Walkmen are not permitted, unless the use is a necessary part of the job (i.e., dictation/transcription).

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 4 of 7          |

**Brody School of Medicine  
East Carolina University  
Policy and Procedure Manual**

|  |  |
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| Topic: Dress Code – Minimal Standards for Dress and Appearance - #HR15 |  |
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D. Uniforms

- Staff may be required to wear uniforms appropriate to the position or work duties.
- When reporting to work, the uniform should be complete and consistent with the category or department standard.
- Uniform short pants and uniform hats may be appropriate for some departments and positions if part of an overall approved uniform.

E. Appropriate Attire

- All clothing should be clean, fit properly, be in good repair and pressed or ironed as needed.
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn to avoid an unprofessional appearance.
- Dresses, skirts, walking shorts, and split skirts should not be too revealing and should be professional in appearance, length and fit.
- Shirts/tops should be comfortable and professional in appearance. Sleeveless blouses and dresses that are professional in appearance are acceptable. Shirts with tails should be tucked into pants.
- Slacks and pants should be clean, pressed as needed, and professional in appearance and fit.
- Shoes should be clean and in good repair. Footwear appropriate to the duties being performed must be worn at all times.
- Jewelry and accessories should be kept to a minimum.

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 5 of 7          |

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- Belts should be worn with pants designed for belts; suspenders are permitted.
- Head coverings may only be worn when associated with professional or religious affiliation or as they relate to state and/or federal legislation. Uniform hats are permitted if part of an approved overall work uniform.

F. Inappropriate Attire

The following attire is not permitted:

- Clothing more appropriate for sports, lounge or social wear.
- Clothing with large printed messages or offensive message.
- Mini skirts, dresses or skirts with excessively high slits.
- Sheer or revealing clothing and dresses with cut out backs (unless worn with a jacket).
- Casual beach or athletic wear.
- Revealing shirts and tops.
- T-shirts (unless approved by the administration for special occasions), tank tops, halter tops and spaghetti strap blouses.
- Shirts/tops with large printing or pictures that are not appropriate to the professional work environment.
- Top/blouse with revealing neckline or bare midriff.
- Denim jeans and all other jeans are not permitted unless indicated for certain job categories (ie., research labs or physical plant).

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 6 of 7          |

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East Carolina University  
Policy and Procedure Manual**

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- Sweat pants, stretch pants/warm up pants, tights (when worn as pants) and leggings.
- Under no circumstance is an employee to go without shoes while on the grounds of the medical complex, unless prescribed by a health care provider. Heel height must not interfere with work performance or pose a threat to the individual's safety. Socks or non-decorative hosiery may be required in certain areas or departments. Very casual foot wear and beach foot wear is not permitted. Examples of inappropriate foot wear include slippers, thongs and beach shoes, excessively high spiked heels.
- Excessive jewelry and accessories can create an unsafe working environment. Jewelry and accessories that are distracting in size and number are to be avoided. Offensive jewelry and accessories are not permitted (i.e., jewelry that sends profane, inflammatory or bigoted messages). Examples of inappropriate jewelry and accessories include excessively large or heavy earrings or an excessive number of earrings in one ear and wearing several heavy visible necklaces.
- Visible body piercing, except for earrings is not permitted in patient care or other areas where public contact may occur
- Headgear (caps, bandanas, etc.) not part of an approved uniform is not permitted in patient care or other public areas.

**VI. Job Specific Dress Codes**

Additional standards are necessary for the following work categories:

**A. Clinical Personnel (nursing, medical laboratory, clinical professionals)**

**B. Personnel Assigned to Research Laboratories**

|                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Effective Date:<br>04/01/01 | Contact Person/Reference Source:<br>Director Quality Programs | Extension:<br>4-3690 |
| Revision/Review Date:       | Revision/Review Person/ Source:                               | Page 7 of 7          |