	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Grooming and Dress Code</i>	Issued: 03/22/2023	TBP: 2.13

Policy

All employees shall maintain an appropriate professional appearance, as determined by the requirements of their work area.

Supervisors shall be responsible for addressing inappropriate attire and safeguarding the professional image of the Department.


Grooming Guidelines for Male Employees (TBP 2.13)

Male employees’ hair shall be cut or styled in a manner that, when standing and looking straight ahead, the hair does not extend below the top of the ear on the sides or over the bottom of the collar in the back.

Wigs shall be acceptable if they meet the prescribed requirements for hairstyles. Ponytails are not permitted for male employees. At no time shall extreme hairstyles, such as spikes, unnatural colors, designs, glitter, etc., be allowed.

Male employees who are not assigned to the Special Operations Division shall report to duty clean-shaven, or with the following exceptions:

- A. Sideburns, if worn alone, shall be neatly trimmed and straight. Sideburns shall not extend past the lower edge of the ear nor shall they be wider at the lower edge or otherwise conspicuous in shape.
- B. Mustaches shall be neatly trimmed. A mustache shall not extend more than ½ inch beyond the corner of the mouth on a horizontal line, or more than ½ inch below the corner of the mouth on a vertical line. A mustache shall not present a bushy or unkempt appearance and shall be no more than ½ inch in depth. A mustache shall not extend below the top line of the upper lip, unless worn in conjunction with a beard or goatee.
- C. Goatees shall be neatly trimmed. If worn, a goatee shall not extend lower than one (1) inch below the employee’s jawline, or more than ½ inch beyond the corner of the mouth on a vertical line. Goatees shall end on a clean-shaven line, shall not present a bushy or unkempt appearance, and shall be no more than ½ inch in depth. A goatee shall be worn in conjunction with a mustache.
- D. Neatly trimmed beards shall be permitted for civilian employees only. If worn, beards shall not extend lower than one (1) inch below the employee’s jawline, shall not present a bushy or unkempt appearance, shall be no more than ½ inch in depth, and shall be worn in conjunction with a mustache.
- E. Supervisors shall use their discretion to assure that employees maintain a professional, business-like appearance while growing or wearing a mustache, goatee, or beard.
- F. Extreme styles, such as unshaven stubble, Van Dykes, soul patches, handlebars, or muttonchops, are prohibited.

	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Grooming and Dress Code</i>	Issued: 03/22/2023	TBP: 2.13

Grooming Guidelines for Female Employees (TBP 2.13)

Female officers in uniform shall wear their hair in a style that permits the proper wearing of any approved headgear. When uniform attire is required for female sworn employees, hair that extends past the top of the collar shall be worn up or back in a bun, single ponytail, or braid. When worn up or back in a single ponytail or braid, no portion of the hair may extend more than twelve (12) inches below the top of the collar.

Female civilian employees shall appear professional at all times and in accordance with the needs of their duties.

Dress Code for Court Appearances (TBP 2.13)

Male employees shall wear one of the following:

- A. Patrol uniform of the day;
- B. Suit and tie; or
- C. Sport coat with slacks and a tie.

Female employees shall wear one of the following:

- A. Patrol uniform of the day;
- B. Dress pantsuit in good taste; or
- C. Dresses and skirts that present a professional appearance.


When on-duty personnel are not suitably dressed, but are urgently needed in court, they may appear as dressed, subject to the discretion of a supervisor and the presiding judge.

Plain Clothes Sworn Employees (TBP 2.13)

Officers assigned to the Investigations Unit shall maintain an appropriate professional appearance, as determined by the requirements of their assignment. If a firearm is visible, the officer’s badge must be displayed on their belt, waistband, or around the neck and clearly visible. T-shirts are not authorized attire, except for officers assigned to the Special Operations Division.

Flip-slops, sandals, and sneakers are not permitted for sworn personnel.

Officers that are assigned to specific duties (i.e., crime scene search, bomb disposal, etc.) may wear work attire appropriate to the nature of their duties, as approved by their Division Commander.

	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Grooming and Dress Code</i>	Issued: 03/22/2023	TBP: 2.13

Dress Code for Training, Travel, and Special Assignment

Employees attending training shall maintain an appropriate professional appearance, as determined by the requirements of their training regimen. If the training or conference is out of town, this policy shall still apply, and all employees shall be mindful to represent the Department in a professional manner. If a firearm is visible when on break and in public, the employee's badge must be displayed on their belt, waistband, or around the neck and clearly visible. Shorts or sweats shall not be worn, except during physical assessments or with prior authorization from a supervisor.

Officers on special assignment should meet the appearance standards outlined for plainclothes officers.

Tattoos, Body Art, Body Modification, Body Piercing, and Jewelry

Definitions

Body Modification – The deliberate alteration or mutilation of the human body for non-medical reasons, or common cosmetic procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, tattoos, branding, body piercings, ornamentation, dental ornamentation, tongue splitting/bifurcation, or the implantation of ornamental objects.

Tattoo – A mark, drawing, or ornamental body modification made by inserting pigment into the skin for decorative or other reasons.


Brand – Any marking on the body made by burning, freezing, or applying heat.

Body Piercing – The piercing of a part of the human body for the purpose of wearing jewelry or another object in the opening created.

Excessive or Extensive Tattoos – Any plainly visible single tattoo, contiguous tattoos, or pattern of tattoos on a single, exposed limb, which is visible while wearing plainclothes or uniform attire. Excessive or extensive tattoos shall be determined by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

Ornamentation – Any discernable body piercing (i.e., tongue splitting, decorative cutting, etc.), ornamental body piercing, ear lobe holes that are large enough for light to pass through, and ornamental implantations (i.e., implants on the face, horns on the forehead, etc.).

Dental Ornamentation – The use of gold, platinum, silver, or other type of veneer or cap for the purposes of ornamentation. Dental ornamentation also includes caps or veneers attached to the teeth that have designs, jewels, logos, or initials.

	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Grooming and Dress Code</i>	Issued: 03/22/2023	TBP: 2.13


Prohibited Body Modifications and Jewelry: All Employees

The following body modifications and jewelry are prohibited for all employees:

1. Any Body Modification that may be considered sexist, racist, eccentric, vulgar, offensive, prejudicial to good order and discipline, political in nature, or expresses an association with illegal conduct, substances, or paraphernalia.
2. Any Body Modification that produces blatant religious discrimination or a discriminatory effect.
3. Any Body Modification that features anti-American content; is associated with an extremist group (i.e., KKK, neo-Nazi, Black Panthers, Skin Heads, etc.), gang, or criminal street gang membership/activity; or discredits the Department's goal of an unbiased exercise of criminal justice.
4. Tattoos, Brands, Piercings, or Ornamentation on the head, neck, and inside the mouth. The head and neck area are defined as any portion of the body that is visible when an open collar shirt is worn without an undershirt.
5. Excessive or Extensive Tattoos
6. Ornamental implants on the hands, fingers, face, neck, or head, or those that do not meet accepted local norms for a professional public service organization.
7. Gauges or large holes in the ears, and Body Piercings on the face (other than the ears), head, or mouth.
8. Excessive or unprofessional jewelry.
9. Dental Ornamentation.
10. Tongue studs or other tongue jewelry.

Tattoos, Brands, Body Modifications, and Jewelry

1. While on-duty or acting in an official capacity, male personnel shall not wear or display prohibited Tattoos, body art, Body Modifications, Body Piercings, Ornamentation, Dental Ornamentation, or excessive or unprofessional jewelry.
2. While on-duty or acting in an official capacity, female officers shall be restricted to one (1) pair of post-type (stud) earrings, one in each ear lobe, and shall not wear or display prohibited Tattoos, body art, Body Modifications, Body Piercings, Ornamentation, Dental Ornamentation, excessive or unprofessional jewelry.

	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Grooming and Dress Code</i>	Issued: 03/22/2023	TBP: 2.13

3. While on-duty or acting in an official capacity, female civilian personnel shall be restricted to jewelry within business norms, and shall not wear or display prohibited Tattoos, body art, Body Modifications, Body Piercings, Ornamentation, Dental Ornamentation, or excessive or unprofessional jewelry.

4. While Tattoos may be a form of personal expression, some may find Tattoos offensive. The public may view some Tattoos as obscene, sexually suggestive, discriminatory in nature, or outside societal norms. While on-duty or acting in an official capacity, employees shall not display Excessive or Extensive Tattoos. Tattoos may hinder the Department's professional image. Therefore, the Chief of Police, or his/her designee, has the final authority on which Tattoos shall be allowed. Employees may be required to cover the Tattoos with a long-sleeve uniform, dress shirt, and/or pants.

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