



Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Student Affairs

SUBJECT: Professional Appearance Policy

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INITIATED BY: Office of Student Affairs

APPROVED BY:

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POLICY: Professional Appearance Policy

PURPOSE: This policy is part of the overall emphasis on the importance of professionalism and defines appropriate attire and appearance within that context.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all CMSRU medical students and visiting medical students.

PROCEDURE: This policy is based upon safety, concern for the patient, respect for others, an awareness of cultural competence, and the central importance of professionalism in medicine. Recent trends in clothing, body art, and body piercing may not be generally accepted by your patients. Students must adhere to guidelines surrounding professional appearance, as outlined. Clothing should be clean and neatly pressed. Note that CMSRU ID badges are to be worn at all times.

The following will outline the expectations of CMSRU in matters of professional appearance:

Phase I - During the majority of the first two years of the curriculum, students will spend time in lectures and small group activities where attire should be comfortable, neat and not distracting. Avoid dress or attire that could be perceived as offensive to others. During the WOW weeks, Ambulatory Clerkship, and when interfacing with patients at any Cooper University Health Care (CUHC) facility students must follow the Dress Code Policy of CUHC stated below.

Phase II - During the last two years, all students will adhere to the Dress Code Policy of Cooper University Health Care (8.604 Employee Relations-Employee Dress Code):

I. PURPOSE:

- A. To set forth the standards of appropriate dress, grooming, and appearance for employees and medical students.

II. POLICY:

- A. It is the policy of Cooper University Health Care to establish standards of dress, grooming and personal appearance. Personal appearance should reflect a neat, professional, image and should

be appropriate for the employee's work situation. While Cooper understands that dress and appearance are often a matter of personal taste, Cooper must be mindful of patient and employee safety as well as Cooper's professional image. Therefore, Cooper maintains the right to establish and enforce standards of dress, grooming and personal appearance as dictated by business need, interactions with patients and other visitors. In addition to the traditional work setting, this policy applies to work related functions and events.

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. Dress code guidelines may vary by department, job function and location. Department dress codes may be more restrictive. Cooper recognizes three (3) types of dress: business, business casual and uniforms. Management at all times reserves the right to take appropriate action toward any employee whose grooming or dress violates the letter or the spirit of this policy. Employees that appear for work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed to return to work in proper attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for time away from work and disciplinary action may be taken.
- B. General Guidelines
 1. The Cooper identification badge is required to be worn at collar level with employee name and photo facing forward and clearly visible at all times while working at any Cooper location. Badges must be free of obstacles so patients and others can view the employee's picture, name and job title. Lanyards should not be used unless they have a mechanism to "break" in the back in the case of a safety issue. Lanyards must hang to allow visibility of the badge in the upper chest area. Lanyards that are longer than upper chest area are not permitted. When off duty, the ID badge cannot be worn at any Cooper location unless the employee is in compliance with the dress code.
 2. All clothing should fit properly. Garments cannot be transparent, low cut at the neckline, or form fitting. Clothing should not be unduly revealing or cause distracting or disruptive attention or reaction on the part of others.
 3. Dresses and skirts cannot be excessively short, no more than 4 inches above the knee. Dress/skirt slits must not be excessive.
 4. Shirts/Blouses with lettering or graphics that advertise or promote a product or service or causes distracting attention or reaction on the part of others will not be permitted. Only shirts/blouses with Cooper logo or approved graphics or lettering are permitted.
 5. Shoes must conform to safety and infection control standards by providing safe footing, protection against hazards, and be quiet for the comfort of patients. Examples of inappropriate footwear: canvas tennis shoes, sandals (i.e. open shoes with straps including heels and flats), swim or beachwear, and shoe covers. Leather sneakers may be worn only in direct patient care areas. Socks or stockings must be worn in areas where we deliver direct patient care. Footwear must be clean, polished and in good repair. Color and style of the shoes should be professional (neutral and/or in coordination with clothing). In patient care areas, including ambulatory sites, open-toe shoes are not acceptable. In non-patient care business areas, open-toe business style shoes are acceptable.
 6. Hair, including facial hair, must be clean, neat, professional, and maintained in a manner that does not interfere with patient safety, infection prevention or equipment operation. Hair that is extreme or unnatural in appearance, style or color shall not be permitted. For purposes of safety, infection control, operation of equipment and personal protective equipment, facial hair must be of a reasonable length to enable the performance of job functions.
 7. Fingernails must be clean and professional, and maintained. For purposes of safety, infection prevention, and operation of equipment, fingernails must be of a reasonable length for the performance of job functions. Employees having direct and indirect patient contact or come into contact with the patient environment may not have fingernails in excess of ¼ inch in length and may not wear artificial fingernails, which is inclusive of gel nail polish, wraps,

- acrylics, silks, etc.
8. Tattoos must be modest and may need to be covered while at work in a manner that does not interfere with patient safety, infection control or equipment operation. Tattoos shall be prohibited if they contain nudity, foul language, gang symbols, convey an expression of hate, violate Cooper's Harassment-Free Workplace Policy and/or are inconsistent with a professional environment.
 9. Earrings can be worn on the ears and generally should be no larger than one inch in diameter. Ear piercing will be limited to a maximum of three (3) earrings per ear. Nose jewelry is discouraged and if worn, must be limited to one small stud no larger than three (3) millimeters in diameter. Pierced jewelry and rings are not permitted on any other visible body part (including but not limited to, eyebrows, lip and tongue). No ear gauges/expanders permitted.
 10. Jewelry will be professional and kept to a minimum. Loose fitting jewelry that potentially poses safety issues is not permitted.
 11. The wearing of Cooper issued buttons or pins on a uniform is to be kept to a minimum and cannot be attached to or conceal the Cooper identification badge.
 12. Fragrances, perfumes, colognes, hair sprays, etc. should be kept to a minimum and may be prohibited if they pose a health concern to others.
 13. Head coverings (hats, caps, scarves, etc.) may be worn as part of the uniform when authorized or when required by specific department standards or when required for safety or hygienic conditions. Employees whose religious, cultural or ethnic beliefs require head covering, or employees who have special needs, may request an exemption and such request will be given consideration for reasonable accommodation.
 14. Sunglasses may not be worn indoors unless medically necessary.
 15. The following are not considered appropriate dress:
 - a. Denim clothing of all colors
 - b. All types of shorts
 - c. Leggings/Spandex pants (unless worn under an appropriate dress)
 - d. Sweat jacket, pants, hoodie
 - e. Sweat shirts
 - f. Fleece jackets
 - g. Athletic clothing
 - h. Miniskirts
 - i. Beachwear
 - j. T-shirts
 - k. Tank tops or spaghetti strap shirts
 - l. Flashy, "loud" clothing
 - m. Lingerie-like clothing
 - n. Flip-flops/thong shoes
 - o. Pool shoes
 16. Employees who require accommodation for medical or religious reasons should contact Human Resources.
- C. Guidelines for employees who provide direct patient care, have direct patient contact or who work in patient care areas:
1. Open toe shoes are not permitted. Heels must be of a reasonable height to perform assigned duties. Footwear is of sturdy construction, well fitted and maintained in good repair. Flexible, non-slip soles are recommended in work locations where use of liquids may increase the risk of falls.
 2. Sleeveless shirts, blouses, and dresses are not permitted unless covered by a jacket or sweater.
 3. Stockings or socks must be worn.
 4. The length of pants/trousers must extend to the ankle.
 5. When clothing is soiled with blood or body fluids, the clothes must be changed as soon

as possible.

- D. Guidelines for employees who do not provide direct patient care or do not have direct patient contact but may meet with or be seen by patients/visitors.
 - 1. Open toe shoes are permitted. Heels must be of a reasonable height to perform assigned duties. Footwear is of sturdy construction, well fitted and maintained in good repair.
 - 2. Sleeveless blouses and dresses are permitted.
 - 3. Stockings or socks are optional.
 - 4. The length of pants/trousers cannot be shorter than mid-calf.
- E. Types of dress
 - 1. Business Attire
 - a. In order to meet the expectations of patients and their families, Cooper must project a professional, business-like image. Therefore, business attire is expected to be worn except where department specific dress requirements, casual business attire or uniforms apply as outlined in sections 2 and 3 below. Business attire includes such clothing as suits, ties, dresses, dress skirts and dress pants.
 - 2. Business Casual Attire
 - a. A more casual or relaxed dress code will be permitted during the summer and on Fridays. Business casual attire must still follow the guidelines outlined above and must be appropriate.
 - 3. Uniforms
 - a. Uniforms may be required in specific areas. They will constitute regular business attire when approved by management. Employees should consult with their individual Direct Supervisor for specific guidelines on uniforms. Scrub uniforms may be worn with Departmental approval. Denim like scrubs are not permitted. Uniforms owned by Cooper must be returned upon separation of employment.