



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

Policy # Appearance and Grooming	Related Policies:
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
<b>Applicable Oklahoma Statutes:</b>	
CALEA Standard:	
Date Implemented:08/22/2022	Review Date:05/22/2023

**PURPOSE**

To establish standards governing personal appearance and grooming for sworn members while on duty, when representing the Sheriff's Office in an official capacity, or when engaged in law enforcement secondary employment. Personal appearance and grooming shall reflect a professional and favorable image upon the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office and shall instill confidence in the office and its members among the public.

**STANDARDS**

**I. FACIAL HAIR**

A. The face shall be clean-shaven, except that mustaches are permitted. When a mustache is worn, it shall be kept neatly trimmed and may extend one-half inch below the corner of the mouth. Goatees and beards are prohibited, but maybe allowed by written permission by the Sheriff which may be rescinded at any time.

B. Sideburns are allowed to the bottom of the ear opening. Sideburns should not be so full as to hide the ears from the front.

C. If there is a medical reason that an officer cannot shave their face regularly, the Sheriff will consider accommodation.

D. If a beard is approved, it must be neatly trimmed, not exceeding 1/4th of an inch in length. Approved cases will be evaluated yearly.

**II. HAIR STYLES**

Hairstyles should not distract from a professional appearance in uniform with emphasis on officer safety.

A. Hair color, if used, must appear natural.

B. When the officer is standing erect, the length and/or arrangement of his or her hair shall not extend below the top of the shirt collar or cover the outer edge of the ear. Hair on the forehead shall not obstruct vision. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved, and straight hair are recognized. Natural hairstyles are permissible if the officer's vision is not obstructed and the length and/or arrangement is compliant. Braided hairstyles, if neat and worn close to the head, are permissible.

C. Hairpieces for sworn personnel are authorized to cover natural baldness or physical disfigurements. When worn, they shall conform to standard hairstyle criteria.

D. Sworn female employees must wear their hair up in a bun, ponytail, or braid.

### **III. TATTOOS AND BRANDINGS**

A. A tattoo is any design, letter, scroll, figure, symbol, or any other mark made under the skin or upon any person with ink or any other substances, resulting in a permanent or temporary discoloration of the skin.

B. A branding is a type of scarification, a body modification that permanently transforms the skin by causing a visible scar, often made by burning.

C. Tattoos and brandings on the scalp, face (front of a person's head from the forehead to chin), and the front of the neck shall be prohibited.

D. Cosmetic tattoos such as eyeliner, eyebrows, and lips are permitted so long as they are natural in appearance.

E. Tattoos and brandings that detract from the mission of law enforcement shall be prohibited. Prohibited tattoos and brandings include, but are not limited to, those which incorporate profanity; promote racism; discrimination; indecency; obscenity; lawlessness; violence; illegal drug use; hatred or intolerance; and depict sexually explicit or anatomically correct nude images.

F. The Sheriff and the Undersheriff have the authority to order personnel to cover tattoos deemed to be inconsistent with the mission of law enforcement. Members shall cover such tattoos by utilizing commercially available cosmetics or fabric covers made for the purpose of covering tattoos. If commercial products are used, they must be of a skin-tone color and be neutral in appearance. This policy shall apply while the member is on-duty (including training or outside events), representing the Sheriff's Office in an official capacity, or when engaged in law enforcement secondary employment; regardless of whether the member is in uniform or otherwise attired.

### **IV. BODY ORNAMENTATION**

A. Members shall not wear any item of ornamentation or jewelry on their hands, ears, head, face, nose, eyebrow, tongue, or any other body part that is visible when clothed. Prohibited ornamentation includes, but is not limited to, body-piercing jewelry.

B. Members are permitted to wear the following jewelry:

1. One ring per hand or three rings on the ring finger;
2. One wristwatch;
3. One necklace not visible outside the uniform, civilian, or business attire;
4. Medical alert bracelet.
5. Female deputies are permitted to wear on the ear lobes a pair of ball or stud earrings having a diameter of no more than 10mm.

C. This policy shall apply while the member is on-duty (including training or outside events), representing the Sheriff's Office in an official capacity, or when engaged in law enforcement secondary employment, regardless of whether the member is in uniform or otherwise attired.

### **V. DENTAL ORNAMENTATION**

The use of gold, platinum, or any other unnatural-looking veneer or cap on a tooth or teeth for ornamental purposes is prohibited. No tooth, whether natural, capped, or veneered, may be ornamented with any designs, marks, jewels, or initials.

## **VI. BODY MUTILATION**

Intentional mutilation of the hands, ears, head, face, nose, eyebrows, tongue, or any other body part that is visible when clothed is prohibited. Examples of prohibited mutilation include but are not limited to split or forked tongues, piercing(s) (other than ear piercing), foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design or pattern or for purely cosmetic reasons unrelated to any reconstructive surgical or prosthetic treatment and enlarged or stretched holes in ears or earlobes.

## **VII. CONTACT LENSES**

A. Contact lenses shall be of a natural eye color. Lenses which are red, orange, silver, or any other unnatural-looking color which when worn creates an unnatural appearance to the eye, or any lenses with a visible graphic design or marking, are prohibited.

B. This policy shall apply while the member is on-duty (including training or outside events), representing the Sheriff's Office in an official capacity, or when engaged in law enforcement secondary employment, regardless of whether the member is in uniform or otherwise attired.

## **VIII. EXCEPTIONS**

A. Personnel whose current assignment may require deviation from the standards set forth in this directive may make a written request to the Sheriff for an exception. Any approval for an exception shall automatically expire upon change of assignment.

## **IX. UNIFORMS AND APPEARANCE**

The uniform policy Pawnee County Sheriff's Office is established to ensure that uniformed members will be readily identifiable to the public through the proper use and wearing of department uniforms. Members of the department shall be recognizable as such and shall always give the impression of a public servant. Pawnee County Sheriff's Office members SHALL NOT give the appearance of the military or as a member of a tactical team while on standard duty. The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office is not a military organization and shall not give that appearance or impression at any time.

Members' uniforms, at the starts of each shift, shall be clean and free of any offensive odor, stains, dirt, debris, rips, holes, or any other damage.

### **A. WEARING AND CONDITION OF UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**

Members wear the uniform to be identified as the law enforcement authority in society. The uniform also serves an equally important purpose to identify the wearer as a source of assistance in an emergency, crisis, or other time of need.

- (a) The uniform and equipment shall be maintained in a serviceable condition and shall always be ready for immediate use. Uniforms shall be neat, clean, and appear professionally pressed.
- (b) All peace officers in this department shall possess and always maintain, a serviceable uniform and the necessary equipment to perform uniformed field duty.
- (c) Personnel shall wear only the uniform specified for their rank and assignment.
- (d) Civilian attire shall not be worn in combination with any distinguishable part of the uniform.
- (e) Uniforms are only to be worn while on duty, while in transit to or from work, for court, or at other official department functions or events.
- (f) Employees are not to purchase or drink alcoholic beverages while wearing any part of the

department uniform, including the uniform pants.

- (g) Mirrored sunglasses will not be worn with any Department uniform.
- (h) Visible jewelry, other than those items listed below, shall not be worn with the uniform unless specifically authorized by the Sheriff or his/her authorized designee as must be done in writing.
  - Wristwatch
  - Wedding ring(s), class ring, or other ring of tasteful design. A maximum of one ring/set may be worn on each hand.
  - Medical alert bracelet
  - Studded earrings ( for females only)
  - Support bracelets

#### B. DEPARTMENT ISSUED IDENTIFICATION

The Department issues each employee an official department identification card bearing the employee's name, identifying information and photo likeness. All employees shall be in possession of their department issued identification card at all times while on duty or when carrying a department issued weapon off-duty or acting in an official capacity representing the department, employees shall display their department issued identification in a courteous manner to any person upon request and as soon as practical.

#### C. UNIFORM CLASSES

The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office has adopted several different uniform classes for the use of its members. Members SHALL NOT deviate, add to, or subtract from the approved uniform classes unless given authority to do so by the Sheriff and or his/her designee.

##### (a) POSSE CLASS - DRESS

This uniform shall consist of a white, long sleeve western style button-down shirt, blue jeans, tan cowboy boots, tan belt, tan leather duty gear, and a canvas, straw, or felt cowboy hat. The cowboy hat shall be white or tan in color.

##### (b) POSSE CLASS – STANDARD

This uniform shall consist of a tan uniform or western shirt which will display department patches, badge (either sown on or metal), and name tag (either sown on or metal). Blue jeans, tan belt, brown leather duty gear, tan cowboy boots, and a canvas, straw, or felt cowboy hat. The cowboy hat shall be white or tan in color. A navy-blue outer carrier vest may be worn with this uniform as needed.

(c) CLASS A

This uniform shall consist of a tan, long sleeve or short sleeve uniform shirt which shall display department patches, navy-blue slacks, a navy-blue tie (for long sleeve), a concealable bullet proof vest, black duty gear, black boots, a metal badge and name tag, and collar brass. Boots and brass should be shined.

(d) CLASS B

This uniform shall consist of a tan uniform shirt, long or short sleeve, which shall display department patches. This shirt may be either a polo shirt or a button up. Navy-blue tactical pants, black duty gear, black boots. Deputies may choose to wear an outer carrier with this uniform. The outer carrier must be the department issued carrier or a navy-blue carrier of similar design. The carrier must display in gold or yellow lettering deputies last name, a badge patch or metal badge, the word "SHERIFF" across the back, and the carrier shall have ballistic panels. Deputies may choose to attach pouches to their outer carriers. The use of pouches is authorized. However, deputies **SHALL NOT** attach more than five (5) pouches to their vests. Firearms and knives **SHALL NOT** be attached to the outer carrier for any reason.

(e) CLASS C

This uniform shall consist of a navy-blue or like colored polo shirt, long or short sleeve, khaki-colored pants, black belt, black footwear, firearm, and badge.

(f) CLASS D

This uniform shall only apply to administration and investigations and shall only be worn with the expressed consent of the Sheriff and or his/her designee. This uniform shall consist of plain clothing. All clothing worn must be clean and neat and **SHALL NOT** consist of anything deemed offensive. The clothing **SHALL NOT** display any image or text depicting and the following but not limited to drugs, gangs, violence, antigovernment or anti-law enforcement, political statements, hate speech, or anything sexually explicit.

D. DUTY GEAR

Members of this agency **SHALL** always wear a duty belt and duty gear while on duty in a POSSE style, CLASS A, or CLASS B uniform. Members may wear several different types of duty gear. However, black or brown basketweave are the preferred duty gear of the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office.

1. Black leather or nylon.
2. Black leather or nylon basketweave
3. Brown leather
4. High-gloss leather with class A only.

E. PROHIBITED ITEMS:

Deputies and members of this department **SHALL** refrain from wearing any of the items listed in this subsection. Some items may be allowed with expressed written consent of the Sheriff, but only with justifiable reasons, and a written request submitted through chain of command. Any violation of this subsection may result in disciplinary action up to termination of employment.

1. Any text or image of following but not limited to drugs, gangs, violence, antigovernment, anti-law enforcement, political statements, hate speech, or anything sexually explicit.
2. BB/ pellet guns Paint Ball guns.
3. Unauthorized stun-guns.
4. Slappers or black jacks.
5. Homemade batons
6. Pistols or knives attached to the outer carrier.
7. Shoulder Holsters.
8. Drop leg/ thigh Holsters. (unless assigned to a specialty unit or with written consent of sheriff)
9. Non-Department approved hats or caps of any type.
10. Hoodies, shirts, or t-shirts which do not conform with the uniform classes.
11. Any text or images with profanity, obscene, or vulgar language.
12. Items which are designed for use by the military and do not have a civilian application.
13. Sidearm caliber other than, 9mm, .40 SW, .45 APC, .357MAG, or .44 MAG.
14. Fully automatic pistols.
15. Unauthorized patches or insignia.