

■ HR 5.01 – STANDARDS OF APPEARANCE

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Summary

As professionals of Carolinas Healthcare System, we will present an image that reflects our commitment to quality care. Employees are expected to present themselves in accordance with the guidelines established for their profession and project a professional image through actions and appearance as required under the CHS Standards of Excellence.

Applicability

All employees of Carolinas HealthCare System.

Standards

This policy contains a set of core standards that applies to all employees. Standards are then further defined based on the following categories:

- Patient/Resident Care – Clinical
- Patient/Resident Care – Non-Clinical
- Support Business Units in Non-Patient/Resident Care Facilities

The following suggestions for dress and grooming provide guidelines. Management must communicate the expected Standards of Appearance as a part of the employee's departmental orientation.

Management may more clearly define work attire requirements in certain areas (ex., scrub color). Exceptions to this policy are permitted at the business unit level if approved by the accountable Senior VP, but must be put in writing and communicated to all employees with copies provided to the appropriate Human Resources Center.

Modifications may also be necessary for medical or religious accommodations reasons.

All Employees

- Good judgment, which includes being well groomed and neat, is the main guideline to follow in dressing appropriately for work.
- Business dress is the default standard and is always appropriate. When visiting another facility or business unit, follow or exceed their standards versus those of your home location.

- It is important you wear your photo ID badge at all times when on duty. The badge must be displayed at chest level or above with photo facing out so it is visible and readable to patients, patients' families, physicians and other employees. CHS Administrative Policy ADM 270.06 outlines restrictions on what may be placed on ID badges. For this and other information on ID badges, see CHS Photo Identification Policy, ADM 270.06, CHS Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual.
- If a uniform is required by the department, it will be worn according to unit/facility guidelines.
- All clothing will be clean, correctly sized, wrinkle free, and in good repair.
- Clothing should not expose bare mid-ribs or display cleavage.
- Undergarments must not be visible.
- Unless part of an approved uniform, hats will not be worn.
- Jewelry and other accessories must be conservative and not interfere with the performance of job duties or pose a safety hazard. Visible body piercings, other than earrings, are not allowed. Earrings are limited to two per ear and the top earring must be a post. Earrings should not exceed one and one-half inches in diameter and should not extend more than one and one-half inch below the bottom of the ear. Dental jewelry should not be worn while working.
- Tattoos should be completely covered or must be smaller than one inch in diameter and must not be offensive to our patients, visitors or other employees. Examples of offensive tattoos include designs that are violent or threatening, sexual in nature, desecrate religious symbols, etc.
- Excellent personal hygiene is expected of all, including keeping hair and nails well groomed. Nail length will not interfere with job performance. Nail designs are not permitted and colors must be moderate. Extremes in hairstyle and color are not acceptable. Facial hair should be neatly trimmed if worn. Excessive use of colognes or perfumes must be avoided. Employees are not to have a recognizable odor of tobacco smoke when on duty.
- Dresses or skirts must be conservative in style and length, i.e., no more than one-two inches above the knee.
- Use of chewing gum is not permitted at any time in the presence of patients, visitors or guests or while on the telephone.
- Use of tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, etc., is not allowed on CHS campuses or facilities or by employees during work time (HR 5.15, Tobacco-Free Workplace). Nicotine replacement products including gum, lozenges, nasal spray and inhalers may be used during work hours, but usage should be discrete and in accordance with physician and product manufacturer directions.

For examples of acceptable and unacceptable clothing choices, use the links within the sections below.

Patient/Resident Care Facilities

Clinical Employees

- Uniforms, shoes and socks must be of the color and construction designated by the respective department. Colored and/or patterned socks are permissible if they match the color scheme of the uniform and are not offensive in nature.

- Scrub suits, masks, shoe covers, and gloves are to be worn only in areas designated by department policy and only by those designated to wear them. Hospital scrubs are not to be worn off the premises. See CHS Administrative Policy ADM 270.05, System Provided Scrub Wear.
- Footwear for clinical areas must be appropriate for the work area. Safety will be a primary consideration when selecting footwear for work. Shoes must have a solid top surface and closed toes. Socks must be worn with Professional style Crocs.
- When caring for patients/residents, hair must be pulled away from the face and not hang into the patient care area.
- Nails must be clean, neat, trimmed and moderate in length. If polish is used, it must be one solid color and not chipped. Nail designs are not appropriate. Acrylic nail tips are not permitted in some work areas. If applicable, see Infection Control Policy # H71 (CMC) *Artificial Nails/Nail Length in the Facility* Policy and Clinical Practice Manuals (also in the Appendices section below) for additional restrictions.
- Patient and employee safety also dictates moderation in jewelry in clinical areas as hands must be adequately cleaned and numerous rings and bracelets may hinder safety. No jewelry is to dangle into the patient care space or hang over the patient in the delivery of care. See Appendix section for examples of **Clinical Attire**.
- When attending meetings or events out of the clinical environment, follow the standards for the area you are visiting. Example: When attending training sessions at the Airport Training Center (non-patient/resident care area), business casual is acceptable.

Non-Clinical Employees in Patient/Resident Care Areas

Generally, appropriate dress for non-clinical areas is professional business attire. Extremes in style must be avoided. Questions or clarifications on what would be considered appropriate attire for your specific area are to be directed to your department supervisor. See Appendix section for examples of **Business Attire**.

Members of CHS management are asked to dress in the minimum standard of business casual (see below) when conducting CHS business at a care facility during off hours. This would not apply when visiting as a patient or guest of a patient.

Support Business Units in Non-Patient/Resident Care Facilities

Generally appropriate dress for support, non-patient areas is business casual attire. This is defined as comfortable attire appropriate for the workplace, but specifically excludes denim, sandals/flip-flops, athletic shoes and revealing tops or skirts/dresses. See Appendix section for examples of appropriate **Business Casual Attire**. Business casual attire is only permitted in the employee's regular work area and not when visiting a patient/resident care facility or if the employee interacts with customers face to face as a part of their responsibilities.

Special Events

There are times when the regular Standards of Appearance may be relaxed or modified based on a specific event or occasion of brief or limited duration. Examples could include a reward for campaign participation, during severe weather events when Code

Green is activated, physical work location move, or off-site or after hours events. Any exceptions under this provision must be approved by the accountable Senior VP.

Failure to Comply

Employees who make inappropriate clothing or accessory choices will be counseled by their immediate supervisor and may be **sent home without pay** to change into acceptable attire. Repeated violations will result in counseling up to, and including, termination of employment.

Supervisors or managers should contact their assigned Human Resources Center for assistance with policy interpretation, counseling, etc.