UW MEDICAL FOUNDATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Human Resources
UW Health Dress Code and Appearance Policy

Effective Date: 07/01/2011
Supersedes Policy Date: New

I. PURPOSE

To establish a dress code and appearance policy for UW Health employees who work in locations where clinical care is provided, e.g. Clinical Sciences Center, American Family Children’s Hospital, outpatient clinics, etc. This policy outlines the minimum acceptable standard for dress and appearance. Each employer (UWHC, UWMF, UWSMPH) retains the right to extend this policy to employees in non-clinical locations with appropriate notice as may be required.

Departments may adopt department specific dress codes more stringent than the minimum standards. Before adopting such standards, departments must consult with the appropriate Human Resources office.

II. RATIONALE

Employees affiliated with UW Health are representatives of the organization and are responsible for creating a positive experience for our patients, families, visitors, clinical staff, and fellow workers. The described standards of dress and appearance are defined to provide consistent and acceptable presentation, both internal and external.

III. PERSONS AFFECTED

This policy applies to all persons performing work for UWHC (including regular employees, physicians, temporary or contract employees, students and volunteers), all employees of UWMF and those employees of the UWSMPH who work in the hospital or clinical setting. For purposes of this policy, these persons will be collectively referred to as “employees”.

IV. POLICY

While the following guidelines provide information about specific items of clothing and aspects of appearance which are acceptable or unacceptable (as outlined below), the ultimate consideration is whether a professional appearance is maintained. Therefore, an employee may violate this policy by not exhibiting a professional appearance, even though s/he is wearing acceptable items of dress.

A. Identification Badge
1. Employees will be furnished Photo ID Badge that must be visible and properly displayed at chest high level while on duty. Refer to UWHC Hospital Administrative Policy 1.30, Photo Identification Badge and Security Access Systems, and UWMF Photo Identification Badge and Security Access Systems policies for more detailed information.

B. Dress

1. Compliance with these guidelines is expected at all times, including situations where personal attire may be covered by a lab coat.

2. Inappropriate Dress
   a. Caps, head coverings. Head coverings may only be worn when associated with professional or religious affiliation or as they relate to state/or federal legislation. Baseball caps are not acceptable unless part of established departmental uniform such as Food Service.
   b. Shorts (including Bermuda shorts), mini-skirts, culottes, gauchos above the knee.
   c. Leggings or stretch pants.
   d. Blouses, shirts, sweaters, skirts or pants which do not cover the shoulders, back or stomach while standing or sitting,
   e. Flannel shirts,
   f. T-shirts,
   g. Exercise clothes (sweatshirts, sweatpants, jogging suits, etc.) Exception: Sports Medicine personnel are permitted to wear appropriate fitness apparel related to their position,
   h. Sheer, spandex, low cut/slung garments,
   i. Clothing which is torn, faded, stained, frayed or gives an unkempt appearance,
   j. Bib overalls,
   k. Any jean or jean-styled pant (denim jeans, blue jeans, white jeans, color fashion jeans, etc). Exception: Plant Engineering trade workers are permitted to wear denim pants in accordance with local trade practice,
   l. Denim or cargo-style capris or cropped pants.
   m. Pants worn below hip level (“sagging”).

3. Appropriate Dress
   a. Suits
   b. Dress pants
   c. Casual dress pants (i.e., Dockers, chinos, khakis, etc.)
   d. Dress capris or cropped pants
   e. Skirts
   f. Casual dresses
   g. Dress shirts/blouses and collared sports shirts
   h. Sweaters/vests
   i. Sport coats/blazers
   j. UW Health collared shirts, sweaters and khaki pants
4. Clothing should be clean, neat, in good condition and fit properly. Torn, faded, stained or frayed articles of clothing are not acceptable.

5. Shoes should be clean and in good repair.
   a. Direct Caregivers (those staff members that provide hands-on care at any time): Closed-toed shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes should include noise resistant soles and heals.
   b. Non-direct Caregivers: Open-toed shoes may be worn as long as they look professional. Flip-flops are not acceptable.

6. Hosiery and socks:
   Direct Caregivers: Hosiery or socks must be worn at all times.
   Non-direct Caregivers: Hosiery or socks are not required as long as a professional appearance is maintained.

7. Direct patient care staff may have additional organization-specific policies related to use of scrub attire. This policy does not supersede those policies.

8. Uniforms are allowed and will be determined by individual department policies (e.g., Environmental Services and Plant Engineering).

9. Theme dress days will be permitted on a reasonable basis with approval from the respective department director. Examples may include wearing a certain color of clothing to show support for a cause or sports team. Sites observing these days shall continue to follow the guidelines of this policy to ensure a professional environment is maintained.

10. Non-clinical sites may elect to designate periodic days in a month for business casual attire. Sites observing these days shall continue to follow the guidelines of this policy (i.e., no blue jeans) to ensure a professional environment is maintained.

C. Appearance

1. Hair should be clean, combed and professional in appearance. Just as with tattoos and body piercings, hair dyed in non-traditional, vibrant colors can serve as a distraction, and therefore is not appropriate for the workplace. In patient contact situations, long hair must be controlled to prevent contact with the patient, equipment or supplies. Manager and directors will be responsible for addressing any violations of this policy at their own discretion.

2. Control of beards and mustaches will be coordinated by individual departments, if they effect or interfere with job performance and safety.

3. Cologne, perfume, make-up and specific jewelry may be worn sparingly unless precluded by departmental policy, working conditions, or directives. Sites which house individuals with medically-proven allergies to various fragrances may prohibit use of these substances.
4. Other than pierced ears, jewelry worn in pierced body parts (e.g., tongue, nose, gauged ears, lips, eyebrows, etc.) may not be visible or detectable.
5. Tattoos with slogans, graphics, sayings or offensive wording should be covered (e.g., long sleeve shirt, gloves, etc.). Managers also have the discretion to require that an employee cover any tattoo(s) or combination of tattoos that could be considered offensive.

D. Cleanliness
Neat and clean dress demonstrates pride in the job and is a courtesy to those around you. Attention to the principles of hygiene while working is necessary.

1. Each individual employee is responsible for maintaining personal hygiene needs and cleanliness.
2. Proper hand washing techniques are important for personal safety and control of infection. Refer to UWHC Hospital Administrative Policy 13.08, Hand Hygiene and UWMF Hand Hygiene policy.
3. Nails should be neatly trimmed and clean.
4. Employees that provide direct patient care are not permitted to wear artificial nails.

E. Safety
1. Protective shoes with reinforced toes are required when specified by individual departments.
2. Non-conductive safety shoes are required where specified by individual departments.
3. All direct caregivers (those staff members that provide hands-on care at any time) must wear closed-toed shoes.
4. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is available on all inpatient units and clinics. Employees must use this equipment while a risk of exposure exists.

F. Enforcement
1. Managers and supervisors should address this policy in pre-hire interviews, job descriptions, during annual performance appraisals, and on an ongoing basis as needed.
2. Managers and supervisors are responsible for employee orientation and enforcement of this policy. Non-compliance with this policy may result in counseling or appropriate progressive discipline.
3. Employees arriving at work inappropriately dressed or without their ID badge may be directed to clock out for the day, and may also be subject to disciplinary action according to appropriate institutional policies and bargaining agreements.

G. Managers and supervisors, in consultation with Human Resources, will make the final decision if there is any question regarding proper attire and cleanliness.

H. Exceptions
1. Requests for exceptions for medical (e.g., foot surgery requiring a special shoe), religious reasons or other reasons must be reviewed
with the manager and any deviation from policy, not already identified elsewhere in this policy, must have manager approval.

V. MODIFICATIONS

This Policy creates no rights, contractual or otherwise. Statements of policy obtained herein are not made for the purpose of inducing any person to become or remain an employee of UWHC, UWMF or SMPH, and should not be considered "promises" or as granting "property" rights. Each employer may add to, subtract from and/or modify this Policy at any time consistent with other existing institutional policies and agreements. Nothing contained in this Policy impairs the right of a non-represented employee or the employer to terminate the employment relationship at-will. For represented employees, this policy does not supersede, limit nor grant any rights beyond those provided by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

VI. OTHER

UW Health is not a legal entity. UW Health is comprised of three separate entities: University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics, University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation and University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Each of these three entities is responsible for enforcement of this policy for its own employees.

VII. COORDINATION

Sr. Management Sponsor: UWHC Senior Vice President of Human Resources; UWMF Vice President, Human Resources; UWSMPH Associate Dean 
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