



District 2 Public Health

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Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White Counties

DATE: March 22, 2010

TO: All District 2 Public Health Employees

FROM: David N. Westfall, MD, MPH, CPE
District Health Director

SUBJECT: **New Dress Code Policy**

District 2 Public Health has established an image of professionalism and it is important for all employees to continue to reinforce this image with regard to personal appearance. Each employee is responsible for knowing and abiding by the Dress Code. This revision of the code provides some clarification to potentially confusing items in previous editions, and also allows more flexibility with some of the choices to reflect changes in style and culture.

District 2 Dress Code Policy

This policy applies to all employees of District 2, including the employees of each of the respective Boards of Health that comprise this health district. . One of the key aspects of any agency's image is the way the employees dress and the customer's perception of the employee's appearance and professionalism. Because of this, District 2 has developed a dress policy that makes each employee, in conjunction with his/her supervisor, responsible for how (s)he dresses. The general policy allows for the recognition that different styles will be necessary, depending on changes of season, degree of customer contact, nature of work and safety issues. The specifics of this policy may vary with each department and with each county. Department specifics will be determined at the supervisor's discretion with Management Team's approval. If a Department Supervisor or County Manager wishes to vary from the general policy or add specifics due to the nature of the job duties, they may submit an Application for Dress Code Amendment to Management Team for approval. The amendment must then be attached to the Dress Code Policy and distributed to the employees of that department.

Safety Equipment and Identification Badges

As a term and condition of employment, and in accordance with safety guidelines and Department policy, employees are required to wear their issued name badge that is visible regardless of sitting or standing. In certain work environments, employees may be required to wear protective clothing, shoes, aprons, gloves, hats and helmets, and other safety related equipment. Open-toe shoes will not be permitted in the clinic areas and would not be appropriate for field work.

Uniforms and clinical Attire

All clinic based staff must wear approved clinic attire (scrubs or lab coat/jacket and closed-toe shoes) while in the clinic setting. Clinic attire will be determined at the supervisor's discretion with Management Team's approval following the process described above (*Application for Dress Code Amendment*). Any employees who are issued uniforms are required to wear the uniform in compliance with established policies. The uniform may be worn only during scheduled work hours and while in transit to work and home, or as designated by the supervisor. Wearing of Health Department uniforms at any other time is prohibited.

Scrubs are approved for support staff.

Professional Dress

This policy governs the appropriate dress of the employees during normal business hours of the Health Department operation, during training activities, and while attending meetings, conferences or classes where the employee is representing the local Board of Health or the District. All employees are reminded that clothing and shoes should be business casual in style and appropriate for the workplace and the individual work environments. All apparel must be loose fitting, designed in styles and fabrics appropriate for business hours. Each employee must take a level of responsibility for what he or she wears and how his or her appearance can either enhance the professionalism of the job or detract from his/her work. All employees are reminded that if they have a question about the appropriateness of a particular item, it should be discussed with his/her supervisor prior to wearing the item to work. Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the supervisor for those employees who because of religious belief, cultural heritage or medical reasons request a waiver of a particular part of this policy for dress or appearance.

Appropriate attire for male employees shall be a dress or collared sport shirt and slacks, with or without a coat, sweater or sports jacket. A tie may be required, if deemed appropriate to circumstance, by supervisor or department. Shirts designed to be worn tucked in, must be worn as designed. Conservative athletic or walking shoes, sneakers, loafers, boots, sandals and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable. Hats, ball caps or any other head covering are not appropriate while indoors.

Appropriate attire for female employees includes business suits; blouses or sweaters with skirts; blouses, sweaters, or shirts with pants; skorts and capris; business style dresses. All apparel must meet policy standards. Conservative athletic or walking shoes, sneakers, loafers, boots, clogs, flats, dress heels, dress sandals (thong style must have a solid bottom or a dress heel) and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable.

Business dress styles made of colored denim are acceptable outside of dress down days for both men and women. Blue denim is acceptable only as a business suit, business dress or skirt and business style jacket except on dress down days and in the following situations. "Blue jeans" are acceptable for field work and for other activities deemed appropriate by the supervisor where tougher, less formal clothing may be required.

Professional Image and Hygiene

Soiled, stained and rumpled clothing will not be permitted. Sheer, tight, clingy or revealing clothing is not appropriate. Clothing may be considered revealing if too much cleavage, chest, stomach or backside is revealed at any time, i.e. with bending and stooping. The use of excessive amounts of colognes, perfumes, or fragrances and offensive body odor should be avoided. Extreme hair color is not allowed; i.e. blue, magenta, green or any other color not found in human nature. Fingernails are to be kept clean and neat, no longer than one half size longer than the nail bed. It may be appropriate for nails to be shorter for performing certain clinical tasks. Men are to be clean-shaven or facial hair is to be kept neatly trimmed. Any clothing, jewelry, tattoos or other accessories that are vulgar, degrading, and profane or serve as an advertisement for a political candidate or business, excluding normal clothing trademarks, are prohibited. Excessive tattooing will be covered or disguised without drawing undue attention to the area.

Jewelry

Body piercing devices worn on or about the lips, nose, mouth, tongue, or any other exposed body parts other than the ear are prohibited. Ear rings should be limited to 2 per ear.

Blue Jean (Pants) or Special Dress Days

Health Departments can establish a designated "blue jean (pants)/dress down" or "Holiday Dress Up" day to allow employees to wear appropriate blue jean pants or seasonal wear. All employees must be made aware of the designated blue jean (pant/dress) down day or holiday dress up day and appropriate signs should be placed in the Health Department so that customers can be informed of the special dress day. When blue jeans are allowed they must not be torn, dirty, or frayed. Shirts must be long enough to conceal midriff and backside at all times. Employees traveling to other health departments on dress down days must wear attire appropriate to the dress code of that health department.

Inappropriate Work Attire

Pants

Pants considered unacceptable include pants that are torn, dirty or frayed; pants with potentially offensive words, pictures, slogans or logos; sweatpants, exercise pants, shorts, camouflage pants, leggings and any other spandex or form-fitting pants such as those worn for biking.

Skirts, Dresses and Skirted Suits

Very short, tight skirts, skorts or dresses with hems more than three inches above the kneecap, skirts or dresses with the top of the slit more than three inches above the kneecap are not acceptable. Sundresses or spaghetti-strapped dresses are not allowed unless worn over or under a shirt. Dresses that are over revealing or have sheer or cut-out elements through the body of the garment are prohibited.

Shirts, Tops, Blouses and Jackets

Inappropriate attire for work includes shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons or slogans, midriff tops, halter tops, tops with bare shoulders, clothing that reveals too much cleavage, back, chest, stomach or any under garments. Under garments are inclusive of camisoles and bra straps. Tank tops and tee shirts are inappropriate unless worn under or over another appropriate garment. (Appropriate tee shirts are permitted during special events or as directed by the Management

Team). Shirts and blouses shall not have excessive armpit cut outs. Shirts for men and women should be tucked inside if designed to do so.

Shoes and Footwear

Rubber beach style Flip-flops are not appropriate. Flip-flops that do not have a solid sole are not appropriate. A solid sole is defined as a shoe without holes in the sole or does not have the top part of the shoe/sandal threaded through the bottom of the sole. Dirty, tattered or torn shoes are not acceptable.

Conclusion

Determination of the appropriateness of dress shall be left up to the discretion of the immediate supervisor and/or the Management Team. (If an employee feels that the supervisor's determination is unreasonable or unfair the employee may appeal to a member of the Management Team.) If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by the employee's supervisor or the Management Team, the employee will be counseled about the dress code policy and instructed not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If the problem is severe or if the problem persists, the employee may be sent home to change clothes and will receive a verbal warning. All other policies about personal time use will apply. Progressive disciplinary action will be applied if dress code violations continue.

Supplemental Guidelines for Dress Code Policy

The *Supplemental Guidelines for Dress Code Policy* is not a part of the policy but a tool to offer guidance for the appropriate dress of employees during normal hours of the Health Department operation, during training activities and while attending meetings, conferences or classes where the employee is representing his/her local Board of Health or the District. The Dress Code may be modified for certain types of training and to meet the needs of individual departments as approved by the District 2 Management Team. The *Application for Dress Code Amendment* for departments must be submitted to Management Team for approval.

Application for Dress Code Amendment

_____ Health Department requests to amend the District 2 Dress Code Policy as follows:

To be effective (date) _____

- Approved**

- Denied**

Management Team Representative