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OPERATIONS MANUAL

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 08, SECTION 01

PERSONAL APPEARANCE (REVISED 10/2014)

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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of these regulations is to accommodate safe performance of duties, good public image, reasonable flexibility, neat appearance and parameters which recognize physical differences.

**II. SCOPE**

This Standard Instruction shall apply to all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department personnel (excluding Lifeguard Services and Civilian Administrative staff).

**III. AUTHORITY**

The Fire Chief authorizes the information within this policy.

**IV. POLICY**

A. Personal Appearance of Emergency Service Personnel

Uniformed Members of the Department, while on duty, shall at all times be neat and clean. Clothes shall be clean, properly maintained, and in conformity with the uniform guidelines contained in Standard Instruction 07, Section I and II of the Operations Manual. All personnel shall comply with the following grooming standards.

B. Grooming Standard (Revised)

1. Policies listed in Section B are applicable to both males and females.
2. The hair of all personnel will be kept in a neat, clean manner. If dyes, tints, or bleaches are used, the colors must be natural to human hair. Lines or designs will not be cut or dyed into the hair or scalp.
3. The length or style of the hair shall not:
  - a. Preclude the proper wearing of the uniform hat
  - b. Preclude the proper wearing of the helmet
  - c. Preclude the proper wearing of the self-contained breathing apparatus
4. Extreme hair styles are prohibited.
5. Facial hair shall not touch any portion of the seal of the breathing apparatus face piece.
6. Tattoos shall be in good taste and not violate the City of San Diego's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. Any tattoo that is determined to be in violation of the EEO policy must be covered while on duty.
7. The wearing of visible jewelry, tongue/nose rings/bars, plugs, visible body modifications, scarification, or visible necklaces is expressly prohibited, with the exception of pierced ears and rings as defined below.
8. Rings shall be limited to one per hand. An engagement ring and wedding band count as one ring if worn together on one finger.

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C. Male (Revised)

1. The hair on the top of the head will be neatly groomed. Hair will present a professional appearance and not fall below the middle of the ear, eyebrows, or extend below the bottom of the uniform shirt collar when standing erect.
2. Hair shall meet with the specified grooming standards without being mechanically restrained.
3. Facial Hair:
  - a. Employees shall be clean-shaven when reporting for duty.
  - b. Facial hair shall in no way interfere with the seal of any respiratory protection PPE.
  - c. Sideburns will be neatly trimmed. The base will not be flared and will be a clean-shaven, horizontal line. Sideburns will not extend below the earlobe.
  - d. If a mustache is worn, it will be kept neat, tidy, and trimmed. The mustache will not extend downward or laterally more than ½ inch beyond a horizontal line drawn from the corner of the mouth.
  - e. Lower lip hair shall be neat, tidy and trimmed.
4. Earrings are expressly prohibited.

D. Female (Revised)

1. Hair will be neatly groomed. When in uniform, hair will present a professional appearance and not fall below the eyebrows or extend below the bottom edge of the uniform shirt collar when standing erect. If hair reaches a restrainable length it must:
  - a. Remain restrained under all conditions of work or activity;
  - b. Not interfere with the safe and proper use of helmets, face pieces, or other required safety equipment;
  - c. Not extend in the rear more than six inches below the bottom edge of the collar of the Class “B” uniform shirt while standing with eyes to the horizontal and not wearing a tie;
2. Hair holding ornaments (such as, but not limited to, barrettes, pins, clips, bands) must be inconspicuously placed, unadorned and plain, conservative, and compliment the uniform. Beads or similar ornamental items are not authorized.
3. Cosmetics will be conservative and in good taste.
4. Fingernails shall be professional in color and shall extend no more than ¼” past the fingertips.
5. When a sports bra is visible while worn with a tank top, it shall be dark blue or black.
6. The wearing of earrings for women is permitted if the following standards are met:  
Earrings must be:
  - a. Plain style, diamond, silver or gold, complimenting the uniform

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- b. Post style only
- c. Maximum 1/4" face
- d. Worn one per ear only

E. Exceptions

- 1. Deviations and/or reasonable accommodations may be permitted when physical characteristics, medical necessity, or sincerely held religious practices make stated regulations impossible or impractical to administer. This exemption, however, must be made only by permission of the Fire Chief or his/her designee.