



**PULLMAN  
REGIONAL  
HOSPITAL**

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Owner Bernadette Berney:  
Chief Human Resources Officer

Area Human Resources-Policies

Applicability Pullman Regional Hospital

## Personal Appearance and Uniform Policy

### Objective:

To establish clear standards for professional appearance, uniforms, grooming, and clinical attire that support patient and employee safety, infection prevention, and a respectful, inclusive, and professional environment during working hours and while representing the organization in the community.

### Policy:

- Employees must present a professional appearance appropriate to the work performed. Clothing and uniforms must be clean, in good repair, and appropriate for a healthcare environment.
- Employees must follow department attire requirements, including any required scrubs or uniforms, and must use required personal protective equipment based on task and exposure risk.
- The organization will administer this policy consistently and fairly and will provide reasonable accommodations for disability, pregnancy-related limitations, and sincerely held religious beliefs when required by law, unless doing so would create undue hardship or a direct threat.
- Department leaders are responsible for day-to-day administration of this policy. Departments may implement more restrictive standards when required by a documented risk assessment, manufacturer instructions for use, infection prevention guidance, or accreditation requirements.

- Nothing in this policy limits task-specific personal protective equipment requirements.

# Process for Utilization:

## Applicability and scope

- This procedure applies during working hours and while participating in work-related activities in the community. Leaders must communicate department-specific attire standards to employees, new hires, travelers, volunteers, and students during orientation and on-boarding.

## General appearance standard

- Employees must wear clothing that supports safe performance of job duties and maintains a professional environment. Items that create safety hazards, interfere with personal protective equipment, or present an unprofessional or disrespectful appearance must not be worn at work.
- The organization will not alter an employee's role or assignment based on patient, visitor, or coworker preference related to protected religious attire or grooming.

## Non-patient care and administrative areas (Business Casual)

- Unless a department standard specifies otherwise, non-patient care and administrative areas follow a Business Casual standard. Business Casual includes neat, professional attire suitable for a hospital environment and public interaction. If jeans are permitted by department standard, they must be dark and non-distressed. Clothing that is excessively revealing, torn, or displays offensive messages is not permitted.

## Patient care and other clinical areas

- Employees working in patient care areas may wear scrubs or other department approved professional attire consistent with the role and applicable infection prevention and safety requirements. If a department requires specific scrubs, colors, brands, logo items, or a specific style, that requirement will be treated as a department uniform requirement. When a department uniform is required, the organization will provide the required uniform items or reimburse the employee for the required items, at no cost to the employee.

## Footwear

- In patient care, food service, environmental services, and maintenance areas, footwear must be closed-toe, have a closed heel or heel strap, and be slip-resistant. In non-patient care areas, footwear may include open-toed shoes when consistent with safety requirements and department standards. Leaders may require more restrictive footwear where hazards are present.

## Identification badge

- Employees must wear organization-issued identification visibly above the waist while on duty. Employees must promptly report and replace lost, unreadable, or damaged identification. Contact Human Resources for a replacement badge.
- If a replacement badge is needed, there is a \$25 charge that can be paid for by cash, check, or credit card.

## **Hand and nail hygiene**

- Employees must follow the organization hand hygiene policy and current CDC guidance. For staff who have direct contact with patients at high risk for infection or adverse outcomes, artificial fingernails or extenders are not permitted. Natural nail tips must be kept less than one quarter inch long and should not extend past the fingertip for direct care activities. Departments may set more restrictive requirements based on infection prevention risk assessment.

## **Respiratory protection and facial hair**

- Employees assigned to use tight-fitting respirators must comply with the organization respiratory protection program requirements, including medical evaluation and fit testing when required. Supervisors must not assign a tight-fitting respirator when facial hair or other conditions interfere with the facepiece seal or valve function. If a tight-fitting respirator cannot be safely used, the department must coordinate with Employee Health and/or Infection Prevention to determine safe alternatives when available.

## **Tattoos, jewelry, piercings, and accessories**

- Tattoos that depict violence, discrimination, profanity, sexually explicit content, or illegal or intoxicating substances must be covered while at work. Jewelry, piercings, and accessories must not create a safety or infection prevention risk or interfere with hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, or job duties. Leaders may require removal or modification of items that interfere with safe work.

## **Hair, beards, and grooming**

- Hair and beards must be clean and maintained in a manner that supports safety, food service sanitation, infection prevention, and safe equipment operation. When needed to meet these requirements, hair and facial hair must be secured or covered to prevent contamination, entanglement, or interference with required job duties. Where a tight fitting respirator is required, facial hair must not interfere with achieving and maintaining an effective seal and must meet the organization's respiratory protection program requirements.
- Grooming standards will be applied consistently and in a nondiscriminatory manner. This policy does not prohibit natural hair texture or protective hairstyles, and it will be administered in compliance with nondiscrimination requirements.

## **Fragrance and odors**

- Employees should avoid strong fragrances and must report to work free from odors. Leaders may address fragrance or odor concerns when they affect patients, visitors, or coworkers, or when they interfere with safe care and a professional environment.

## **Personal protective equipment and clinical barriers**

- Employees must use required personal protective equipment based on task and exposure risk and must wear and remove personal protective equipment consistent with training and infection prevention guidance. The organization will complete hazard assessments, select appropriate personal protective equipment, ensure proper fit, and provide required personal protective equipment at no cost to employees, consistent with applicable state and federal

requirements.

### **Uniforms, scrubs, and laundering**

- Employees must begin shifts in clean attire and change clothing that becomes visibly soiled as soon as feasible. Clothing or linens contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials must be handled as little as possible, bagged or placed in a designated container at the location of use, and transported in a manner that prevents leakage. Departments must follow the organization bloodborne pathogens and infection prevention procedures for handling and laundering contaminated items.

### **Accommodation requests**

- Employees who need an exception to an attire or grooming requirement because of disability, pregnancy-related limitations, or religion must request an accommodation through Human Resources. Human Resources will coordinate an interactive process with the employee and leader and, when needed, Infection Prevention, Employee Health, or Safety to identify a safe, reasonable accommodation. Leaders must not deny or approve accommodations outside this process.

### **Compliance and corrective action**

- Leaders must address concerns promptly through coaching, clear expectations, and problem solving. When further action is necessary, corrective action will be administered in accordance with the organization's accountable discipline process.
- If an employee's attire, appearance, or accessories do not meet this policy or create a safety or infection prevention concern, the leader may require the employee to remove or secure the item, change into compliant attire, or obtain replacement identification or required protective equipment. Leaders must apply this policy consistently and without discrimination or retaliation. For uncertain situations, and before taking action involving a potential accommodation, leaders must consult Human Resources to ensure consistent application and compliance with the interactive process.

## **References:**

DNV GL. NIAHO Accreditation Requirements, Interpretive Guidelines and Surveyor Guidance for Critical Access Hospitals, Revision 18 (February 20, 2018), Infection Control standard SR.3 including hand hygiene compliance and monitoring.

DNV GL. NIAHO Accreditation Requirements, Interpretive Guidelines and Surveyor Guidance (Hospital) (2018), Surgical Services guidance includes acceptable operating room attire.

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Washington Administrative Code Chapter 296-842 (Respirators), WAC 296-842-18005 Prevent sealing problems with tight-fitting respirators.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. 29 CFR 1910.134 Respiratory Protection, facepiece seal protection requirements for tight-fitting respirators (including facial hair).

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Washington Administrative Code Chapter 296-800 (Safety and Health Core Rules), WAC 296-800-16010 and 296-800-16015 (hazard assessment and selection of PPE) and employer responsibility for providing PPE at no cost.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. 29 CFR 1910.132 General requirements, payment for personal protective equipment.

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Washington Administrative Code Chapter 296-823 (Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens), WAC 296-823-14065 (handling contaminated laundry) and WAC 296-823-15005 (PPE provided at no cost).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings (MMWR 2002;51(RR-16)), recommendations on artificial nails for high-risk patient contact and natural nail length.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Infection Control, Isolation Precautions: Summary of Recommendations (updated November 27, 2023), recommendation IV.A.5 regarding artificial fingernails or extenders for contact with high-risk patients.

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Americans with Disabilities Act (October 17, 2002).

## Keywords:

Personal Appearance, Uniform, Dress Code

| Approval Signatures |                                                  |         |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Step Description    | Approver                                         | Date    |
|                     | Bernadette Berney: Chief Human Resources Officer | 01/2026 |
|                     | Bernadette Berney: Chief Human Resources Officer | 01/2026 |

## Applicability

Pullman Regional Hospital

## History

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