

**STATE OF MARYLAND
JUDICIARY**

Policy on Appropriate Attire and Appearance

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to ensure that all employees of the Maryland Judiciary present an appropriate and professional image at work.

II. DEFINITIONS

Administrative Official:

1. The Clerk of Court for the Court in which the employee works;
2. The Administrative Clerk or Administrative Commissioner of the District in which the employee works;
3. The director of the respective department or office within the Courts of Appeal, the District Court Headquarters, or Court-Related Agency in which the employee works; or
4. The State Court Administrator for employees within the Administrative Office of the Courts.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Maryland Judiciary, except Judges, Masters, and Law Clerks.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT

The appearance of Judiciary employees has a direct impact on the public's perception of the Judiciary, and State employees in general. Employees are expected to dress in a businesslike manner, with apparel that appropriately reflects the dignity of the Judiciary and is consistent with a productive atmosphere. The Judiciary relies on the judgment and appropriate discretion of all employees to appropriately interpret and apply this policy, and to exercise good taste in their attire and appearance while working in any Judiciary facility.

The supervisor and/or Administrative Official shall have the discretion to determine whether an employee's dress and appearance are appropriate.

V. ATTIRE AND APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

A. Apparel and Appearance in General

Apparel must be professional and businesslike as determined by the Administrative Official. Avoid extreme styles, revealing and excessively tight clothes when selecting work attire. Clothing that is fashionable is not necessarily acceptable professional and business attire. Clothing must be neat and clean. Clothing that is torn, faded, stained, discolored, patched, ripped, frayed or otherwise too casual is not acceptable attire in an office setting. Appropriate attire should not display undergarments or lack thereof, offensive pictures, commercial or political slogans, or derogatory words.

Pierced jewelry (including in the ears, lips, tongue, eyebrows, etc.) may only be worn in the ears while at work. Employees may be required to cover all tattoos.

Personal hygiene is extremely important in an office environment. Employees should present a clean and neat overall appearance and be free of offensive odors. Although fragrances may be worn, some employees may suffer allergic reactions when exposed to another employee wearing fragrances. Staff should be considerate of coworkers in this regard.

B. Exceptions

An employee may be exempted from the guidelines of this policy due to the nature of the employee's work, environmental conditions, for medical or safety reasons, or as a religious accommodation. *See Policy on Religious Accommodation.*

Certain jurisdictions may choose to have a "business casual" dress policy for certain days. Please consult your local "business casual" dress policy, if there is one, or your supervisor and/or Administrative Official if you have any questions concerning appropriate business casual attire.

VI. EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITY

All employees have the right to choose their style of dress within the guidelines established by this policy. If the employee is uncertain whether attire is appropriate, those questions should be directed to the supervisor/Administrative Official.

The supervisor/Administrative Official may refuse to allow an employee to work who is found to be inappropriately attired or whose appearance or hygiene is not appropriate. If the supervisor/Administrative Official requires the employee to change his/her apparel or appearance or to attend to hygiene matters, then the employee's absence from work may be charged to personal, annual, or compensatory leave. If the employee does not have paid leave available, then the absence will be charged to leave-without-pay.

Failure to follow these guidelines may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

VII. SUPERVISOR/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL'S RESPONSIBILITY

The supervisor/Administrative Official is responsible for enforcing the guidelines of this policy consistently and fairly. As stated in Section VI, the supervisor or Administrative Official has the authority to refuse to allow an employee to work who is inappropriately attired or whose appearance is not appropriate.

An Administrative Official may alter these guidelines for his/her unit/department, circuit, or district. Any deviations from the guidelines must be communicated to all affected employees.

VIII. INTERPRETIVE AUTHORITY

The Judiciary Human Resources Department, in consultation with other parties as appropriate, is responsible for the interpretation of this policy.