

**Purpose Statement****Whom This Affects****References & Related Policies****General Guidelines****Team Member Responsibilities****Leadership Responsibilities****Helpful Definitions****Purpose Statement:**

St. Joseph's Health is committed to providing quality care which improves both individual and community health. Team members have a large, if not the largest, effect on where people choose to come for healthcare. Part of this effect is in the professional image that team members present in their work with patients and the community. How one dresses and presents is part of this professional image. This Standards of Appearance policy balances the diversity and uniqueness of team members while upholding professional image standards.

St. Joseph's Health, in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, will make exceptions to the Standards of Appearance Policy to permit employees to observe religious dress and grooming practices. We may however, ask an employee for information reasonably needed to evaluate the request.

**Whom This Affects:**

All team members, students, contract workers, and volunteers.

**References & Related Policies:**

[Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#)

[Smoke and Tobacco-Free Work Environment](#)

**General Guidelines:**

- St. Joseph's Health is most interested in employees performing their jobs with passion and competency. For that reason, St. Joseph's Health follows a more casual, comfortable dress code overall. How an employee dresses is largely part of the job the employee is doing that particular day and the guidance from their unit or department. Generally, all team members may dress within one of the four categories known as professional attire, business casual attire, scrubs, or job-specific uniforms.
- *Being well groomed, clean, neat, and presenting, an overall professional appearance is the main guideline to follow in dressing for work.* Good judgment is most important when deciding and self-reflecting about these guidelines. Some standard guidelines to follow are:

## Clothing

- All clothing is to be clean, neat, correctly sized (including length), wrinkle-free, and in good condition.
- Clothing is not to show bare midriffs (body between the chest and hips) or be bare over the shoulders. . Undergarments are not to be seen.
- Any item with an image, message, slogan, or logo endorsing a person, place, organization, or cause is to be avoided. St. Joseph Health images, messages, slogans, or logos are acceptable. St. Joseph's Health leadership may approve the wearing of items for certain special company events or sponsorships.
- Casual T-shirts are not to be worn unless they are part of an approved uniform and appear professional (solely at leadership discretion in coordination with Human Resources). If approved, the department may require a cardigan, sweater, organization-logoed jacket, or scrub shirt be worn over the T-shirt and are to be free of any graphics, language, slogans, or affiliation(s) other than St. Joseph's Health-related graphics or language.
- While many forms of dress can be worn and presented as "professional" at times, items to generally avoid wearing include: Fleece/sweatshirt or denim material of any color, casual cargo pants, jogging or athletic wear, tank tops, midriffs, muscle shirts or spaghetti straps (unless covered), strapless or off-the-shoulder items, oversized tops, shorts, , hoodies, jerseys, sweatshirts, cocktail or formal wear, camouflage, leather pants, , see-through fabrics, thigh high boots, and fishnet.

## Accessories

- Hats or bandanas on the head are not to be worn unless they are part of an approved uniform. Head coverings for religious or medical reasons, fashion scarves, and headbands are acceptable if they do not interfere with job performance or patient care.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn inside any building.
- Earbuds, headphones, or other listening devices are not to be worn without leadership permission and/or with a specific job-related function.
- Team members may wear activity trackers and/or medical alert bracelets.
- Jewelry is to be conservative and not interfere with the performance of job duties or cause a safety risk for the team member, patient, or others.
  - Clean hands are a major factor in providing care and working in a care environment. Hands must be able to be easily cleaned. Numerous rings and bracelets could get in the way of this cleanliness.
  - Jewelry is not to dangle into the patient care space or hang over the patient in the delivery of care. For this reason, large hoop earrings, dangling earrings, and long necklaces are to be avoided in patient care areas.

- Dental and tongue jewelry is not to interfere with the ability to speak clearly to coworkers and patients.

### Footwear

- Footwear is to be right for the work area and job being done. Shoes are to be professional, in good condition, clean, polished, tied, and properly fitted. Safety is to be the major factor when selecting footwear for work.
- Team members working in patient care areas and other clinical areas that may pose a safety hazard are to:
  - Have a solid top surface and closed toes. Shoes must have rubber or soft composition heels or lifts for a quiet environment and be resistant to liquids (shoes with mesh must have a liner); open-heel shoes are acceptable.
  - Stockings or socks are to be worn by team members including with professional style Crocs (professional crocs are specified on the store label). Patterned socks that may be unpleasant to patients are to be avoided (Examples are patterns displaying violence, sex, or a defaced religious symbol.)
- Uniformed team members are to avoid decoration and ornamentation that could come loose or fall off while working.
- House slippers, flip flops, light-up shoes, or excessively high platform shoes are to be avoided.

### Fingernails

- Nails are to be clean, neat, and trimmed. Nail length may not interfere with job duties or performance.
  - Team members in the following work areas are to keep nails neatly trimmed (recommended no more than one-eighth (1/8) inch beyond the fingertip): direct patient care jobs, childcare, environmental services, food handling, pharmacy, or in areas handling medications, food, ice, or specimens.
  - Team members outside the work areas listed above are to keep nails trimmed, clean, and groomed.
- Nail polish designs are not to be distracting or unpleasant (to the reasonable person), and polish not chipped.
- Patient safety is always a priority over fashion. Acrylic or other artificial nail tips/ornamentation increase risks of transferred bacteria to patients. This includes acrylic nails, dipped nails, bending, tips, wrappings, jeweled, pierced, lettering, and tapes. These nails and products are not acceptable except for individuals outside of direct patient care, childcare, pharmacy, food handling, environmental services, and for those team members not crossing over into any patient care areas or performing any patient care duties.

### Hair and Body Art

- Body piercings, lengthy false eyelashes, and tattoos are not to cause offense to anyone in the workplace or pose safety or performance issues. If offense or safety is deemed by leadership to be a concern, these items will be addressed on an individual level and in coordination with Human Resources. Some guidelines to keep in mind include:
  - Hair: Hair is to be clean and well groomed. Hair or head decorations such as feathers, tinsel, or tiaras are to be avoided. Facial hair that interferes with the fit of any required respiratory masking is not permitted. Anyone providing direct patient care with shoulder-length or longer hair is to secure hair away from the face. Team members in food service are to secure hair so not to interfere with sanitary food service.
  - Makeup: Extremely lengthy false eyelashes are to be avoided by team members working in direct patient care jobs, childcare, environmental or food handling, pharmacy, or in areas handling patient supplies, medications, food, ice, or specimens.
  - Tattoos: Tattoos that have profanity, are offensive (to the reasonable person), or otherwise disruptive are to be completely covered during work time. Team members are to be thoughtful and cover any tattoo that may cause fear or discomfort to patients or children (skeletons, monsters, and such).

### Odors

- Due to allergies of those in the workplace, including patients, use of colognes, perfumes, or scented lotions is to be avoided (unless there is a medical reason for such).
- Team members are not to have the odor of tobacco smoke when on duty.
- Use of tobacco is not allowed on St. Joseph's Health property (including leased properties). This includes cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, and snuff. Nicotine replacement products, including gum, lozenges, nasal spray, and inhalers, may be used during work hours. Use is to be discrete and in line with doctor or product manufacturer directions. For more details, please see HR Policy, [Smoke and Tobacco-Free Work Environment](#).
- Photo identification (ID) badges are closely governed by our regulating and licensing bodies and are always to be worn when on duty. Badges are to be current with correct information. The badge is to be worn at a team member's chest level or above. The ID badge photo is to face outward so the ID badge can be seen and read by others, including patients. Name badge extenders, if provided by one's unit or department, are to be always worn. Information or certifications may not be placed behind the photo card unless approved. Work-related adornments, tape, pins, stickers, or clips may not be placed on the ID badge itself. Badges are to be kept neat and clean by team members; loose or damaged badges are to be replaced. If lanyards are worn, they are to have a breakaway cord for safety reasons. Lanyards are to have no writing, logos, slogans, advertising, or affiliation(s) on them other than St. Joseph's Health (lanyards may be solid colors with no writing, also). The ID badge, badge card, and badge holders are the physical property of St. Joseph's Health.
- The standards of appearance set forth above apply to all team members. In addition,

team members may have additional standards of appearance and/or job-specific uniforms based on the team member's workplace and the job being performed. Below are some of the considerations a unit or department may have:

- Lab Coats: White lab coats may be worn by physicians, dentists, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, nurse instructors, nurse case managers, nurse managers, and nutritionists. Some departments may require tech/support team members to wear a lab coat/jacket.
- Scrubs: Some units or departments may require scrub suits, masks, shoe covers, head covers, safety shoes, and/or gloves. Patterns on scrubs are to be decided by the Vice President, in coordination with Human Resources, and are not to have monograms, logos, or the name of another healthcare provider. Shoe covers, masks, head covers, and barrier proof covers are to be worn only in areas directed by unit or department policy and must be removed before leaving areas where they are required to be worn. Scrub suits worn outside specified areas must be covered by a white lab coat, and St. Joseph's Health ID badge must be worn on the covering coat. Only team members directed to wear any of these items are to wear them. Hospital issued scrub suits may not be removed from St. Joseph's Health or be worn to and from work.
- Shoulder patches: Shoulder patches may only be worn on uniforms for Paramedics, EMT authorized for MICU, and Security personnel.
- Uniforms: Units or departments may specify uniform, shoe, and sock colors. The unit or department may also specify the material for each. Business Casual is an option for non-uniformed team members and team members sometimes needing to wear professional attire (depending on their work that day). Team members required to wear lab coats may wear business casual attire under the lab coat when determined appropriate for the job being done that day. Team members choosing to dress Business Casual are expected to follow all other standards of appearance as defined by this policy.

### **Team Member Responsibilities**

- Team members are to know, understand, and follow the standards of appearance. Good judgment in clothing and appearance decisions is the team member's responsibility. If there are any questions about this policy, team members are encouraged to ask their unit or department leader for guidance.
- If the unit or department requires wearing a uniform, the uniform is to meet the organization guidelines.

### **Leadership Responsibilities**

- Leaders are to communicate the standards of appearance with new team members. This is to be part of the team member's departmental orientation.
- Leaders may more clearly define the necessary and correct work clothing in a unit or department. For example, a unit or department may require a certain scrub color. Department leaders are to give guidance on occasions where Professional Attire is required – Business Casual is acceptable in most situations.

- Leaders are expected to adjust, whenever possible, the standards of appearance for individual requests based on any medical or religious reasons. Leaders are to coordinate these requests with Human Resources before communicating a decision to the employee.
- The unit or department leader are to informally counsel and develop team members who make incorrect, unprofessional clothing or accessory choices. The team member may be sent home, using Paid Time Off (PTO), to change into correct clothing. If the team member does not have enough PTO in their PTO bank to cover the time away, non-paid time will be used. This process will be applied in accordance with the [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#). If a team member continues to make incorrect standard of appearance choices, this could cause formal counseling, up to the end of employment. To make sure leaders are keeping an open mind, being inclusive and consistent, leaders are to contact Human Resources for assistance with interpretation, counseling, or any other needs related to this policy.

## **Helpful Definitions**

### **Business Casual Attire**

Any of the items listed under Professional Attire, in addition to slacks, khakis and corduroys, polo or oxford shirts with collars, golf shirts, sweaters, sports jackets/blazers, blouses, cardigans, tunics, blazers, turtlenecks, tailored/casual dresses and skirts, split skirts or culottes. Ties are optional. Loafers, dress boots, flats, dress sandals, or deck shoes may be worn.

### **Job-Specific Uniforms**

Certain team members are required to wear only job-specific uniforms.

### **Professional Attire**

Suits and ties, dress pants or skirts with jackets, sport coats, business dresses, dressy two-piece knit suits, or twin sets. Skirts and dresses are to be conservative in length. Professionally owned or supplied white lab coat worn over professional attire. Dress footwear (generally avoid tennis shoes).

### **Scrubs**

Traditional, classic scrubs required by pre-approved locations, departments, or units. The color of the scrubs (both top and bottom) may depend upon the individual's job title and work area. A long sleeve knit or cotton round collar pullover shirt worn under the scrub top for warmth, tucked into scrub pants.