DEPARTMENT OVERSIGHT AND MAINTENANCE: Human Resources

POLICY: 510.1 (Professional Appearance Policy)

Mount Carmel’s Professional Appearance philosophy is that our Associates continuously present a professional, positive and consistent image to those we serve and to the community at large.

Management Responsibilities:
- The following policy provides dress and grooming requirements for all Associates. Directors and Managers are held accountable for educating, applying and enforcing this policy within their departments or business entity.

General Guidelines for all Associates:
- All Associates, through their attire, are required to create a positive and professional impression of and represent the entire organization, regardless of the amount of public contact they have.
- Business casual wear is an acceptable form of attire provided it projects a professional image. Formal business attire is appropriate at any time or may be required by your manager as circumstances dictate. Each day’s dress should be planned according to your schedule for that day.
- Some departments may require a more restrictive dress code or a dress code with additional detail or alternatives based on operational, infection control and safety needs of the department. If a department chooses to adopt a more restrictive dress code than this policy requires, it must be developed with and approved by Human Resources prior to implementation. The more restrictive requirements will be communicated, interpreted and enforced by the manager.
- All Associates are required to be well groomed, practice appropriate personal hygiene and use good judgment in dressing appropriately for their position, within the requirements of this policy.
- Fingernails must be clean and well groomed. Artificial nails are not permitted on Associates in patient care areas.
- All cosmetic products, including make-up, lotions, cologne and perfume should be worn in moderation. Because fragrances may adversely affect those that are ill or have allergies or may be offensive to colleagues and customers, Associates may be prohibited from wearing products with fragrances in specific departments or units or around certain Associates and patients.
- Clothing must be clean, neatly pressed, in good repair and properly fitted, not revealing and appropriate for the type of work performed.
- Hats, caps, head wraps or scarves are not permitted unless they are part of an authorized uniform, are worn for religious or health-related reasons or worn to protect Associate while working in inclement or hot weather.
- Footwear must be professional, neat, clean, safe and in good repair.
- Undergarments should be discreet and not readily visible through clothing or above the waistband. Camisoles or undershirts are required under sheer or light-colored thin fabric blouses or shirts. Bare midriffs are prohibited.
- Hair, jewelry, accessories and ornamentation should be moderate and in good taste. Hair should not fall below the shoulder if patient contact is necessary. Patient care providers should pull hair back if it falls below the shoulder. Hair, facial hair or jewelry that present a hazard in equipment operation or patient contact is prohibited.
• Body piercing (other than ears) should not be visible at work. Oral and facial jewelry is not permitted. Clear spacers to keep piercings open are permitted.
• Tattoos should be covered if practical. The visibility of tattoos should be kept at a minimum. Any tattoo that contains offensive language or symbols must be covered.
• Apparel with sports team logos is not permitted except on Fridays. However, the apparel must meet all other requirements of the Professional Appearance Policy (i.e. no sweatshirts). Small logos of the manufacturer are permitted (e.g. Polo, Nike, and Ralph Lauren). Apparel with the Mount Carmel logo is permitted as long as there is no other wording or advertising on the garment.
• Holiday-themed apparel that meets the dress requirements below is permitted during the respective season (e.g. Christmas-themed sweaters, vests, ties, etc.) Apparel should be tasteful and not offensive. Costumes are never permitted.
• See also policy # 510.2 and 515 regarding proper wearing of ID badges and pins.
• See also policy # 560.0 regarding Solicitation. Collecting money in return for wearing certain clothing on certain days is not permitted unless sponsored by Mount Carmel as a system-wide event.
• Mount Carmel may occasionally approve a “special dress day” which would allow exceptions to the standard policy. Participation may require a donation to a charitable cause.
• Wearing of denim/jeans: Well tailored jeans, and other denim outfits (skirts, dresses, jackets) may be acceptable at non-hospital locations provided the Associate’s position does not require contact with the public or patients. Check with your manager to determine the appropriateness in your area.
• Associates working in offices or other areas that do not require a specific uniform may dress in formal business attire or business casual attire if appropriate.

Specific Guidelines
• The following guidelines are provided to assist Associates in understanding what is permitted. Business casual attire is considered professional dress and is allowed when formal business attire is not required, either due to the Associate’s position or the particular occasion. Proper business casual attire must still project a professional image to our patients, visitors or external customers.
• The following list is a general overview of acceptable business casual attire as well as a listing of some of the more common items that are not permitted. Neither group is meant to be all-inclusive. The following guidelines set the general parameters for proper business casual wear. Questions about appropriateness should be addressed to your manager.

- **Shirts**
  - Permitted: Polo, banded collar, button-down, banded bottom, Henley, turtlenecks, sweaters, cardigans, knit crew neck tops, sleeveless (must be worn with a jacket or sweater), denim shirts and jackets (allowed in certain positions as noted above in general guidelines)
  - Not permitted: T-shirts (those sold as undergarments or those with logos, words or graphics that are not acceptable) tank tops, tops that expose the abdomen or back, plunging necklines, spaghetti straps, sweatshirts, flannel, off-the-shoulder tops or sweaters, even if arms are covered, sleeveless tops without a sweater or jacket.
- **Slacks**
  - Permitted: Dockers, Chinos, khakis, well-tailored denim pants (allowed in certain positions as noted above in general guidelines), cropped pants that are mid-calf in length or longer are permitted for women.
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- Not permitted: Pants with pockets stitched fully on the outside (i.e.; cargo pants, painter’s pants), sweatpants, sport pants (elastic waist, drawstrings), overalls, excessively tight or baggy pants, Capri pants (just below the knee) or cropped pants (that are higher than mid-calf in length), leather, shorts (men and women), short overalls, bike shorts, skirts.

- Dresses and skirts
  - Permitted: Sleeveless dresses, if worn with a jacket or sweater, split skirts (gauchos), denim dresses or skirts (allowed in certain positions as noted above in general guidelines). Skirt and dress length should be no higher than 2 – 3 inches above the knee, including any slits.
  - Not permitted: Mini-skirts, sleeveless dresses without a jacket or sweater

- Footwear
  - Permitted: Shoes or boots that are safe, clean, in good repair, in good taste and appropriate to the rest of your outfit.
  - Not permitted: Thong-type sandals without a heel such as “flip-flops,” running shoes with flashing lights, high top gym shoes, slippers.

Clinical Associates
- Clinical departments may require a more restrictive dress code or a dress code with additional detail or alternatives based on operational, infection control and safety needs of the department. If a department chooses to adopt a more restrictive dress code, it must be developed with and approved by Human Resources prior to implementation. The guidelines will be communicated, interpreted and enforced by the manager.
- Patient Care Services and other clinical departments dress code policies may be more restrictive than the requirements in this policy, but may not be more lenient
- Associates should refer to the Patient Care Services or other clinical department dress code policy that applies to them.

Enforcement
- Department Managers, Directors and Senior Management have the authority to initiate action with any Associate who is in violation of this policy. The Director or Manager of the department in which the Associate works should be notified as soon as possible of any policy violations and they will be responsible for taking the appropriate disciplinary action.
- Associates who are non-compliant with the Professional Appearance Policy may be asked to clock out and leave work to correct the situation and to return to their worksite as soon as possible and not be paid for their time away.
- Repeated violations of the Professional Appearance Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.
- Violating the Professional Appearance Policy is viewed as disrespectful to patients, families and co-workers and is inconsistent with the values of Mount Carmel.
- Associates who cannot comply with the Professional Appearance Policy and feel that they need special accommodations should discuss them with their manager.
- Should there be further questions the manager should consult with Human Resources.
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- Exceptions to this policy cannot be made without approval by the Senior Vice President of Human Resources

RESPONSIBLE
PERSONS:  All Mount Carmel Health System Associates


DEVELOPED BY:  Human Resources, Administration, Planning and Marketing, Trinity Health Legal Counsel, Mount Carmel Associates (Focus Groups – 8/07)

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REPLACES:  Mount Carmel Policy 510.1 Dress and Appearance Guidelines
December 2000 memo to Finance Associates – CSB and Lionmark Facilities
Dress Code
2004 Patient Financial Services Dress Code

REVIEWED BY:  Human Resources, 7/16/07
CEO Council, 7/19/07, 2/4/08
Trinity Health Legal Counsel, 1/08