

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. 1320

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**APPEARANCE OF OFFICERS & EMPLOYEES OF UPPER MERION
TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT**

I. PURPOSE:

- A. To provide guidelines to all officers and employees concerning the proper wearing of the issued police uniform; to establish a dress code for non-uniformed clothing worn by officers and employees performing police functions and to outline standards for personal hygiene, cleanliness and grooming.

II. OBJECTIVES:

- A. The objective of this policy is to ensure that officers and employees:
 - 1. Project a neat and favorable image of the Upper Merion Township Police.
 - 2. Convey the authority and professionalism of the Police Department.
 - 3. Are immediately recognizable as police officers when in uniform.
 - 4. Wear the police uniform and accessories in a consistent manner and according to approved guidelines.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Uniform of the Day (Officers) – That uniform which is designated to be worn by the on-duty Patrol shift.
- B. Uniform of the Day (Employees) – Issued uniform worn in a manner prescribed by the Chief of Police or his/her designee

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. GENERAL:

1. Department authorized uniforms and accessories will be issued to those officers and employees who are assigned to duties requiring uniforms. These uniforms and accessories, and only these uniforms and accessories, will be worn while on duty.
2. Issued uniforms and accessories will not be altered or changed in any manner that will affect the shape or appearance of the uniform or accessory.
3. Issued uniforms will be worn properly maintained, freshly laundered, and neatly pressed with no holes, rips, spots or stains. Issued accessories will be properly maintained and cleaned or shined, as needed.
4. When reporting on or off duty, officers and employees will not appear in parts of the Township Building visible to the public unless in the full uniform of the day.
5. No uniformed officer may remove their badge or name tag while dressed in uniform. If an officer's badge or name tag is lost for any reason, their supervisor shall be notified as soon as they become aware of the missing item.
6. Non-uniformed and Off Duty Assignments
 - a. Male Officers Assigned to On Duty Non-Uniformed Duties
 1. Generally, detectives and other officers assigned to non-uniformed duties should dress in a suit and tie or sport coat, trousers and tie and present a clean, neat, business like appearance. With prior approval from the Chief of Police or his/her designee, deviation from this general rule is allowed, however, any deviation should tend to lead toward the accomplishment of a police purpose.
 - b. Female Officers Assigned to On Duty Non-Uniformed Duties
 1. Clothing should be neat, clean and present a business-like appearance. Clothing which is too casual or informal is inappropriate. With prior approval from the Chief of Police or his/her designee, deviation from this general rule is allowed, however, any deviation should tend to lead toward the accomplishment of a police purpose.
 - c. Detectives and other officers assigned to non-uniformed duties inside the police station should wear the badge attached to the front of the belt on the side closest to the duty weapon. The badge

should also be worn either on the belt or neck chain during crime scene investigations in view of the public.

d. Off Duty Officers Performing a Non-Uniformed Police Function

1. Same general rules as apply to officers assigned to on duty non-uniformed assignments.

e. Off Duty Officers Performing a Uniformed Police Function

1. Uniform of the day will be worn.

f. Non-Uniformed Civilian Employees

1. Clothing should be neat, clean, and present a business like appearance. Clothing which is too casual or informal is inappropriate

7. The patrol Sergeant/Corporal will be responsible to see that all personnel assigned to field operations are uniformed alike.

8. Any deviation from any of the provisions stated in this policy must be approved in advance by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

B. HAT:

1. The hat will be worn while on duty or off duty under the following circumstances:

a. When an officer is conducting a traffic stop or a selective enforcement detail during daylight hours.

- The hat is not required to be worn on traffic stops during hours of darkness.

b. At all traffic crashes, incidents, and crime scenes once the call has become static.

c. Any time that an officer is directing traffic, including from a traffic box location.

d. When on police business at public locations (E.G. the Plaza, office buildings, etc.) the hat will be worn.

- When on police business at private residences the wearing of the hat is at the discretion of the officer.

e. Any off-duty detail that is open to the public.

f. At all DUI checkpoints, security details for special events, parades, funerals, official ceremonies, etc, where the officer is in uniform.

- g. All officers will follow the lead of direct supervisors and/or command officers. Regardless of the situation, if the supervisor or command officer is wearing his or her hat then all officers will do the same.
2. The hat will be worn straight on the head so that the band creates a straight line around the head parallel to the ground. It may not be tipped or tilted in any way.
3. A hat shield will be issued to all officers and worn on the front of the hat. The physical structure of the issued hat may not be altered in any way.
4. The winter fur hat is to be worn in the manner previously described with the Pennsylvania State Seal hat shield attached.

C. WINTER SHIRTS:

1. All buttons on the collar (unless a mock turtleneck is worn); sleeves, pockets and front of the shirt will be buttoned.
2. The sleeves will not be rolled up.
3. The color of the shirt for Command officers will be different than the color of the shirt for all other officers.

D. SUMMER SHIRTS:

1. All buttons on the front of the shirt and the pockets will be buttoned except the top collar button. When a tie is worn, the top collar button will be buttoned.
2. The sleeves will not be rolled up.
3. Occasionally, on spring or fall days, the jacket or sweater is worn with the summer shirt. When this occurs, a black tie will also be worn.
4. The color of the shirt for Command officers will be different than the color of the shirt for all other officers.

E. TIES / MOCK TURTLENECK SHIRTS:

1. Black ties will be issued and will be worn with the winter shirt unless a mock turtleneck is worn, or with the summer shirt when wearing a jacket.
2. Ties are made with buttonholes on the back loop. This tie loop will be buttoned to the appropriate button on the front of the shirt.
3. When wearing a sweater, a tie must be worn.

4. Only mock turtleneck shirts approved by the department will be worn with the uniform. The mock turtleneck will be worn so that the embroidered logo is visible in the front.

F. TROUSERS:

1. Trousers will be worn in the appropriate manner. The back pocket flaps will be buttoned.

G. MISCELLANEOUS UNIFORM ITEMS:

1. All other issued uniform items including shoes, boots, sweaters, and jackets will be worn in the appropriate manner.

H. ACCESSORIES:

1. Badge – With the exception of the raincoat, the badge will be worn on the outermost garment with a badge tab. The badge tab is located above the left pocket.
2. Nameplate
 - a. On summer or winter shirt
 1. Centered on the right pocket flap with the top edge of the nameplate parallel to and abutting the top seam of the pocket.
 - b. On jackets
 1. If a nametag is not sewn on, the nametag shall be worn over the right pocket affixed to the nameplate tab. This does not apply to the raincoat.
3. Citation Bars
 - a. Worn centered on the left pocket flap of the shirt with the top edge of the bar parallel to and abutting the top seam of the pocket.
 - b. The citation bar may not be worn on any other garment.
4. Special Unit/Group Pins
 - a. Officers assigned to special units or groups within the Department may wear a pin on their uniform. These special units and groups include: Bicycle Officers, Canine Officers, Field Training Officers, Emergency Medical Officers, SWAT Officers, and Traffic Safety Officers.

- b. An officer assigned to more than one of these special units/groups may only wear one pin and may decide which pin will be worn.
- c. An officer shall cease wearing a pin from a special unit/group when he/she resigns from that special unit/group.
- d. The pin shall be worn on the uniform shirt directly above their name tag. It must be centered directly over the right pocket flap with the bottom edge of the unit pin parallel to and abutting the top horizontal line of the pocket.
- e. The special unit/group pin may not be worn on any other garment.

5. Whistle and Chain

- a. Uniformed officers assigned to the Patrol Division and the Traffic Safety Unit may wear the whistle and chain on the shirt. If worn, the chain will be secured to the button on the right shoulder epaulet. The whistle will be carried inside the right shirt pocket entering the pocket on the right side nearest the right sleeve.

6. Tie Tacks

- a. Issued tie tacks will be centered on the tie forming a straight line between the two (2) shirt pocket buttons.

7. Rank Insignia

- a. Command officers will wear rank insignias on the epaulets of the shirts, the jacket and the sweater.

8. Sergeant's and Corporal's Chevrons

- a. Sergeants and corporals will wear chevrons on both sleeves of the shirt, and jacket. The chevrons will be worn on the epaulets of the sweater.

9. Socks

- a. Black or dark gray socks will be worn with the uniform

10. Tee-shirts

- a. A tee-shirt may or may not be worn with the uniform, however, if a tee-shirt is worn, no part of the tee-shirt will be visible unless the tee-shirt is black in color. A black tee-shirt worn with the uniform must not have any visible markings or logos, must not be faded or in poor condition and may only be visible in the collar area of the uniform.

11. Personal Body Armor

- a. All uniformed officers assigned to street patrol functions must wear personal body armor while on duty. Officers working uniformed off duty details must also wear personal body armor. The armor (vest) must be worn with all panels in place. The use of personal body armor by all other officers is strongly encouraged in the appropriate situations. All uniforms must be ordered in a size compatible with the use of personal body armor.

12. Belt

- a. A black belt will be worn through the trouser belt loops under the leather duty belt.

13. Leather Accessories – Uniformed Officers Assigned to Patrol Division

- a. Leather Duty Belt and Buckle
 1. The issued belt and buckle will be worn around the waist over the trouser belt, not through the trouser belt loops.
 2. Issued belt keepers will be worn to hold the duty belt in place unless a Velcro belt is used.
- b. The below listed accessories will be worn on the duty belt. These accessories may be arranged on the belt in the manner that is most comfortable and accessible to the individual officer. All equipment must be carried in the holder designed for it. Nothing may be carried tucked into or looped over the belt.
 1. Holster
 2. Magazine holder
 3. Expandable baton holder
 4. Portable radio holder
 5. Handcuff case
 6. Taser holder
 7. Glove holder
 8. Personal Flashlight holder (at the officer's expense)

14. Second set of handcuffs – Officers may choose to wear a second set of handcuffs on the duty belt. This second set should be worn in a matching handcuff case.
 - a. In cases where a second handcuff case will not fit comfortably on the duty belt the officer may wear a matching handcuff belt clip with the handcuffs exposed.
 1. Handcuffs worn in this manner must be either black or nickel finish and can only be worn while engaged in field operations.
 2. They will be removed when attending funerals, memorial services, public award ceremonies and any other functions as directed by the Chief of Police.
15. Traffic Vests – The traffic vest will be worn while directing traffic.
16. In inclement weather officers should wear either the orange or light green raincoats except in situations where increased visibility could create a hazard to the officer.

I. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. No items will be exposed on the uniform unless issued or approved in advance by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
2. Jewelry
 - a. No bracelets, earrings, piercings, neck chains, medals, charms, or other jewelry may be visibly worn with the uniform. Wrist watches and reasonable rings are allowed.
3. Exposed Items
 - a. Wallets, combs, brushes, cigarettes, cigars, eyeglasses, sunglasses, or any other item will not be carried on the uniform if they are visible or if they cause exaggerated protrusions of the uniform.
4. Pens/Pencils
 - a. Pens and/or pencils may be carried exposed in the pen/pencil division of the left shirt pocket. Pens and/or pencils may not extend more than one and one-half inches (1 ½") out of the pocket. No more than two pens and/or pencils may be carried in the shirt and the exposed area must be black, gray, or match the color of the shirt pocket buttons.

5. Gloves

- a. The wearing of unlined black “arrest gloves” is prohibited except when an officer is effecting an arrest or the probability suggests an arrest may take place. Rubber or leather gloves may also be worn to handle prisoners, process crime scenes, search individuals or vehicles, or in any circumstances which could result in exposure to bodily fluids. During cold weather officers may wear full black lined winter gloves with the uniform. Officers may wear orange gloves while directing traffic.

6. Scarves

- a. During cold weather officers may wear plain black scarves.

7. Sweaters

- a. Officers may wear the issued sweater over the shirt and tie. The jacket may also be worn as an outer garment over the sweater.

8. Black mourning bands: the mourning band will be worn under the below listed circumstances by all police officers displaying a badge. The mourning band shall be clean and worn horizontally over the middle of the badge.

- a. Line of duty death- Upper Merion Township police officer: the mourning band will be worn for 30 days from the time of notification by a command officer until 2359 on the 30th day following the notification.
- b. Line of duty death- outside police department: the mourning band will be worn from the time of notification by a command officer until 2359 on the day of the funeral for any police officer from Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery or Philadelphia counties.
- c. Non-line of duty death- active Upper Merion Township police officer: the mourning band will be worn for one week from the time of notification by a command officer until 2359 on the 7th day following the notification.
- d. Retired Upper Merion Township police officer: the mourning band will be worn for one week from the time of notification by a command officer until 2359 on the 7th day following the notification.
- e. National Peace Officers Memorial Day: the mourning band will be worn from 0001 until 2359 on May 15th of each year.

- f. Line of duty death memorials: the mourning band will be worn by police officers attending any such memorials, such as plaque dedications or National Police Week ceremonies.

J. GROOMING/CLEANLINESS:

1. Personal Hygiene

- a. All officers and employees will maintain a high standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene.

2. Facial Hair

- a. Officers and employees will be clean shaven, except a mustache is permitted so long as it is neatly trimmed and does not extend past the corners of the mouth.

3. Hair and Sideburns

a. Uniformed Females

1. Hair must be neatly groomed and worn in a manner so that it does not extend beyond the bottom of the uniform collar. The length and bulk of the hair will not interfere with the normal wearing of all issued Department headgear. Wigs and hairpieces may be worn but must conform to the previously stated restrictions.

b. Males

1. Hair will be neatly trimmed and not extending over the ears or onto the neck. Sideburns will not extend lower than the tragus of the ear.

c. Hair Color (Males and Females)

1. When on-duty or in uniform, officers may wear hair that has been tinted and/or dyed, provided that the resulting coloration must be a naturally occurring human color.

4. Hands and Fingernails

1. Hands and fingernails will be kept clean at all times.
2. Fingernails for all officers who are on-duty or in uniform will be no more than 1/4 inch beyond the fleshy portion of each finger.
3. Officers, who are on-duty or in uniform, may wear nail polish, provided that the polish is of a uniform conservative neutral color and shade and that all fingernails are polished the same color. No decals or other ornamentation is permitted.

5. Cosmetics

1. Female officers, while on-duty or in uniform, may wear cosmetics that are conservative and professional in appearance, understated rather than overwhelming in application and shall blend with the natural color of the skin.

6. Tattoos

- a. All personnel are prohibited from displaying any tattoo on any part of their body that would be normally visible to the public while wearing any uniform of the day, including the short sleeve shirt.

APPROVED: *Thomas Nolan* DATE: 07/01/2020
Chief Thomas M. Nolan

APPROVED: *Jeremy Johnson* DATE: 07/01/2020
Captain Jeremy Johnson

TO BE REVIEWED: ANNUALLY

DISTRIBUTION: All police officers
All civilian police employees
Township Manager
File