



HORRY COUNTY
FIRE/RESCUE DEPARTMENT
PROUD * PREPARED * PROFESSIONAL



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

APPROVED BY GARRY B. ALDERMAN, FIRE CHIEF:

DATE: August 12th 2011

SOP 404
GROOMING POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide each employee and volunteer member with the official Horry County Fire/Rescue Grooming Standard.

1. BACKGROUND:

- A. Federal regulations require that fire and rescue service personnel conform to a standard that provides for proper use of respiratory equipment (29CFR 1910.134). The following policy establishes standards to help ensure the safety and grooming standard for all fire and rescue service personnel.
- B. In addition several court cases have upheld the right of each employer to set safety and grooming standards (Kelly vs. Johnson, U.S. District Court). These proposed standards are based on several elements that include safety, neatness, cleanliness, image and another key element, which is the appearance in uniform of members of the fire service.

2. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Conservative: Traditional in style.
- B. Protective Hood: A National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) listed protective hood for firefighting.
- C. Natural: To be of a color commonly found in the population.
- D. Uniform: Issued duty clothing as outlined in the Horry County Fire/Rescue Policy 406 entitled, "Uniform Policy."

3. **APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to all Horry County Fire/Rescue uniformed personnel.
4. **POLICY:** The following grooming policy standards are based on the use of a protective hood and breathing apparatus. Both male and female personnel must be able to conceal all hair within a protective hood, and still maintain proper fit of headgear and breathing mask.

A. Male Hair Standards:

- 2) The hair on the head must be clean and neatly groomed. The length of the hair at the back of the head must not fall below the lower edge of the collar of a uniform shirt, buttoned at the collar, with the member standing at attention. Hair on the sides of the head must not exceed a length that approximates the tragus (middle) of the ear, but does not cover the entire ear. Hair must not show under the front brim of fire service headgear. The hair is not to interfere with proper wearing of headgear. Bulk of the hair must not exceed 2 inches. Bulk is defined as the distance the mass of hair protrudes from the scalp (as opposed to the length of the hair). The primary consideration remains a neatly groomed appearance for the hairstyle and the type of hair the individual has. . Unnatural hair coloring such as green, purple, blue, etc., is not permitted. (See Note 1 on last page).

B. Female Hair Standards:

- 1) Hair must be clean and neatly arranged. When in uniform, back of the hair must not fall below the lower edge of the collar of a uniform shirt, buttoned at the collar, with the member standing at attention. Hair must not show under the front brim of fire service headgear. Afro, natural, bouffant, and other similar hairstyles are permitted, but exaggerated styles, including those with excessive fullness or extreme height are not authorized. Bulk of the hair must not exceed 2 inches. In no case is the bulk of the hair permitted to interfere with the proper wearing of headgear or protective hood.
- 2) Only pins, combs, or barrettes similar in color to the individual's hair color may be worn to meet requirements of this regulation. Hair coloring must look natural. Unnatural hair coloring such as green, purple, blue, etc., is not permitted. (See Note 1 on last page).

C. Hairpieces and wigs: Shall be of good quality and fit, present a natural appearance, not Interfere with the proper performance of duty.

D. Headgear: Must fit properly and in no case must the bulk or length of hair interfere with the proper wearing of any headgear

E. Sideburns:

- 1) Sideburns shall be kept trimmed and not be bushy or shaggy. They shall not extend beyond the tragus (middle) of the ear.
- 2) Sideburns shall not be wider than 1 1/4 inches

F. Facial Hair: The face shall be clean-shaven, except as specified below.

- 1. Mustaches shall comply with CFR 1910.134, which states that facial hair shall not come between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or interfere with the valve function of the respirator.**
- 2. Mustache length shall not fall more than a 1/2 inch below the lower lip, and no wider than a 1/2 inch on either side. And neatly trimmed so as not to cover the top lip or protrude out over the top lip more than a 1/2 inch.**
3. Beards or goatees shall not be permitted, in any form. Facial hair beneath the lower lip is not permissible. Career or Volunteer!
4. Personnel suffering from Pseudofolliculitis Barbae (PFB) or related dermatological conditions may wear a beard if the member has written certification from a dermatologist, at the member's expense. Any member who is allowed to grow a beard because of PFB may, at the discretion of the Assistant Chief, be required to return to a dermatologist for further consultation. Personnel suffering from this condition will not be allowed to wear the breathing apparatus face piece, therefore, they would have to be removed from operational activities and assigned to light duty in accordance with the Horry County Personnel Department.

G. Cosmetics: Shall be conservatively colored and moderately applied. (See Note 1 on last Page).

H. Fingernails: Must be neatly trimmed and clean at all times. Fingernail polish shall be neutral or conservative in color. (See Note 1 on last page). Ornamentation associated with fingernails is prohibited. And no artificial nails are to be permitted of any kind or type.

I. Jewelry:

1. The only jewelry that may be worn while in uniform as long as it does not present a health or safety hazards are wristwatches, wedding bands and a single chain necklace worn inside the uniform shirt. The employee should note that the wearing of these items might pose a safety hazard.

2. All other jewelry is prohibited. Class/Service rings may be worn at formal / ceremonial departmental functions.

NOTE: Words such as natural, and conservative are subjective terms that may be interpreted differently by individual supervisors. Therefore, supervisors shall seek the opinion of the appropriate Assistant Chief if there is a disagreement between the officer and the member in question about what constitutes neutral, natural, or conservative.