

POLICY # 320	SUBJECT: Dress code
EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2020 REVISION DATE: August 2, 2021	Page 1 of 2
Approved By: Josette Manning, Cabinet Secretary	

DELAWARE CHILDREN’S DEPARTMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for appropriate attire for Department employees.

II. POLICY

Clothing worn by Department employees should reflect professionalism and inspire public confidence while also enhancing personal safety. Department employees perform their job duties in a variety of settings where there may be different standards of dress. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment when adhering to this policy as well as the dress code policies of our professional partners (Family Court, schools, etc.).

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Professional business attire – a dress shirt, blouse, dress or suit pants, a professional dress or skirt in appropriate length and style, dress shoes or dress sandals. A sport coat, blazer, suit jacket or tie may also be worn, but are not required.
- B. Casual business attire – a collared shirt, dress pants or slacks, capri-length pants, khakis, turtleneck, knit top, sweater/sweater vest, skirt in appropriate length and style, shoes or dress sandals. Leggings may only be worn with dresses, skirts and long, tunic-style tops. Jeans that are clean and in good repair (no holes or rips) may be worn unless appearing in court or attending a professional external meeting.
- C. Uniform – any attire that is division-issued and job specific, such as the blue shirts and pants worn by the maintenance crew.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. The department is committed to employees having a professional appearance and excellent performance in the workplace to which they are assigned. Each employee is responsible for presenting themselves in a professional manner as a representative of the department. Professional conduct and appearance promote a positive response from youth, their families, and the public. The following are standards of appropriate dress and appearance:
 - a. Employees must wear professional business attire or casual business attire when working in an office setting, facility, or in the field.
 - b. Employees must wear professional business attire when appearing in court or attending a professional external meeting (this does not include meetings with clients or family team meetings).

- c. Employees who are issued clothing by their respective division are responsible for maintaining this clothing in a manner consistent with this policy.
 - d. Employees must observe the standards set forth in this policy when attending training, seminars, or conferences unless instructed otherwise.
 - e. All staff must demonstrate good grooming and personal hygiene.
 - f. Hair must be well groomed and portray a professional image. For staff working in an environment where long hair poses a potential health and/or safety risk, hair must be pulled back.
 - g. Footwear must be clean, in good repair, and appropriate for daily job duties. Staff should consider their own safety in selecting footwear.
 - h. The following attire is prohibited for all staff, unless it is part of an established uniform for their specific job:
 - i. Camouflage
 - ii. T-shirts
 - iii. Shirts with writing on them (except department or division-issued clothing)
 - iv. Shorts of any kind
 - v. Warm-ups, sweat pants, hoodie-style sweatshirts, or athletic clothing
 - vi. Shirts that are revealing, low-cut, sheer, halter-style, tube-tops, tank tops or spaghetti straps, or that do not cover the mid-section
 - vii. Skirts or dresses that are shorter than two inches above the knee
 - viii. Clothing that is torn, tattered, or ripped
 - ix. Visible undergarments or thermal wear as outerwear
 - x. Visible tattoos that are risqué or lewd in nature
 - xi. Piercings that could present a safety hazard
 - xii. Stockings with risqué designs such as fishnet
 - xiii. Leggings worn as pants except under a dress, skirt, or tunic-style top as stated above
 - xiv. Casual flip-flops or bedroom slipper-style shoes
 - xv. Hats (except hats worn outside during inclement/cold weather).
 - i. Staff must comply with additional dress code requirements if they are set forth by their respective divisions and/or facilities.
 - j. Certain conditions, situations, or work assignments may warrant exceptions to these standards and must be approved by the employee's supervisor or applicable chain of command.
- B. Staff in violation of this policy may be sent home to change into appropriate clothing, with the expectation that they immediately return to work. Staff will be required to use annual leave, compensatory time or leave without pay for the duration of the absence from the workplace.

V. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY

- A. All department supervisors and managers are responsible for providing guidance on and enforcing of this policy.