

Stowe Police Department

General Order: 1.16	Related General Orders:
Personal Appearance	
This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.	
Applicable Vermont Statutes:	
Issued By: Donald B. Hull, Chief of Police	
Date Implemented: 06/11/2012	Date Revised: 06/08/2020

I. PURPOSE:

1. To provide grooming and appearance standards for Department personnel.
2. To enhance community respect and acceptance.

II. POLICY:

1. The Police Department recognizes the important relationship between public confidence in the police and the successful accomplishment of the police function. The Department member's appearance in public is a part of the Department's effort to maintain public acceptance and maximize public confidence. It is the policy of this Police Department to establish standards necessary to maintain a professional and neutral image to promote acceptance and respect.

III. PROCEDURE:

1. Full-time police officers, part-time officers and civilian personnel will conform to the following standards:
 - A. Members shall appear neat and well-groomed while on duty to include, but not be limited to, regular duty, court appearances, in-service training, and department functions.
 - B. Beards and mustaches will be neat and trimmed.

- C. Hair will be neatly trimmed, combed or brushed, and worn in a neat style at all times while on duty. The length of the hair or style shall be worn in a manner so as not to interfere with the proper wearing of the uniform or the performance of duty.
- D. Jewelry, chains, necklaces, and other ornamental jewelry must not interfere with the performance of duty or the safety of the officer. Any other jewelry worn should not present a hazard to the officer.
- E. While on duty or in uniform, male officers are not allowed to wear ear ornaments.
- F. Female officers may wear ear studs or small hooped ear rings while on duty or in uniform as long as they are not obscene, offensive, distract from professional appearance, or interfere with on-duty actions and responsibilities.
- G. Except for ear studs worn by female officers, no officer (male or female) may wear any other facial jewelry or visible body piercing while on duty or in uniform.
- H. The use of make-up shall be conservative. Fingernails will be inconspicuous and not too long.
- I. Tattoos, which reflect poorly on the image of the Department and/or are ethnically, racially or religiously offensive or inflammatory must not be exposed (e.g. swastikas, naked bodies, vulgar or socially offensive words). Visible body tattoos or decals cannot be obscene, indecent, sexist, offensive, incite lustful thoughts, distract from professional appearance, or interfere with on-duty actions and responsibilities.
- J. Officers may not appear on duty or in uniform with any visible facial, head, neck, or full body tattoo or branding, or decal.
- K. Final determination of inappropriate or unprofessional body art shall lie with the Chief of Police.

IV. DISCIPLINE:

1. Any violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement, statute, Department policy or Town policy.