

# Stowe Police Department

<b>General Order:</b> 1.18	<b>Related General Orders:</b>
<b>Uniform Regulations</b>	
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.	
<b>Applicable Vermont Statutes:</b>	
Issued By: Donald B. Hull, Chief of Police	
Date Implemented: 06/11/2012	Date Revised: 03/15/2013, 06/08/2020

## **I. PURPOSE:**

1. The nature of police work and the need for visibility in the basic function require uniformity in appearance. This General Order also establishes the standard for wearing of various uniforms and equipment and sets general guidelines for all personnel.

## **II. POLICY:**

1. All personnel of the Stowe Police Department, individually and collectively, will exhibit a professional appearance in order to:

- A. Gain respect, trust and support from the community;
- B. Maintain discipline and uniformity of the department; and
- C. Promote public recognition of uniformed officers.

2. The official uniform of the Department shall be of such styles, materials, colors, and manufacture as prescribed by the Chief of Police. Any Department official clothing will be that issued by the Department.

3. All members shall wear the prescribed uniform for assignment. Uniforms shall be kept neat, clean and well-pressed at all times. Care should be taken not to wear threadbare or faded items. Shoes and associated leather gear shall be clean and polished.

4. Except for special events or other unusual circumstances as directed by Chief of Police or supervisor, the "Uniform-of-the-Day" for all uniformed officers shall consist of:
  - A. Shoulder patches – shall be worn on both sleeves.
  - B. The police badge - shall be worn over the left breast.
  - C. The issued nameplate - shall be worn centered above the right pocket flap.
  - D. Embroidered rank insignia - for Senior Patrol Officer, Corporals, and Sergeants shall be worn on each sleeve centered just below the department shoulder patch.
5. The badge is required to be worn at all times while in uniform. The department issued metallic badge shall be worn on either the uniform shirt, above the left breast pocket. Cloth badges, if provided, may be worn in lieu of the metallic badge.
6. The issued name tag (metal or embroidered) is required to be worn on the outermost garment of all members when in uniform.
7. Insignia or pins and similar items shall not be worn on uniforms except for those items approved or issued by the Department.
8. A black sweater/fleece may be worn at the officer's discretion. Sweaters/fleece shall have department patches on each shoulder.
9. Black turtleneck or mock turtleneck shirts may be worn under the uniform shirt.
10. Foot gear shall consist of black shoes or boots. A black athletic type shoe is an acceptable alternative to the standard shoe.
11. When appearing in court, all members will wear the prescribed uniform or civilian clothing as they normally wear on duty.
12. Hats are not required as part of the normal patrol function unless directed otherwise by the Chief of Police or a supervisor.
13. Officers working a special event/duty job will wear the uniform of the day. Hats are not required to be worn, unless directed to do so by the Chief of Police or a supervisor.
14. Officers working a special event/detail (traffic, construction) will wear the uniform of the day. Officers may also wear a Stowe Police baseball hat or the Department uniform hat while working a special detail that is for traffic duty or construction traffic duty.

15. The Detective will normally wear business casual clothing or business attire, depending on the specific assignments or his/her schedule of that day.

A. **Business Attire:** Shirt/tie outfit with or without sport coat; or a coordinated business style outfit for female officers, dress, etc., and sweaters. Other visible clothing worn should be professional and coordinated with the rest of the attire.

B. **Business Casual:** Khaki/Docker style or dressier pants, golf shirt or button up shirt with collar, and casual footwear, coordinated casual outfit for female employees, etc. Sweaters or fleece type jackets are allowed for cooler times as well as sport coats. Other visible clothing worn should be professional and coordinated with the rest of the attire.

16. Officers or Detective wearing civilian clothing or plain-clothes on-duty will have authorized weapon and badge/identification readily available.

17. All officers and Detective assigned to non-uniformed functions are required to maintain one (1) duty ready uniform available for use while at the workplace.

18. The Chief may authorize certain plain-clothes members to adjust the requirements if the Chief deems necessary.

19. No Department member may purchase a badge without permission of the Chief of Police.

20. No Department member may possess a badge that has not been authorized by the Chief of Police.

21. Supervisors may prescribe other types of clothing when necessary to meet particular police objectives.

22. Replacement of uniforms and equipment due to normal wear and tear will be handled by the employee submitting a request to the Chief of Police.

23. The Chief of Police will be responsible for the issuance and return of all Department uniforms, equipment, and related supplies. All issued non-expendable items remain the property of the Stowe Police Department and will be returned upon proper notification or as required.

24. There are, of course, times when variations in the normal attire are acceptable. We have all been in situations where the greater portion of a day is dedicated to doing office repairs or renovations, cleaning, vehicle services, or other similar laborious duties. In these situations, there is no question as to the applicability of temporarily wearing work wear or other variations for the day or portion of the day affected. Additionally, because we are very

involved with our community, there are times when shorts and t-shirts or even jeans are worn for recreational activities and/or community social events. Officers are often involved in the execution of search warrants, evidence room inventories, undercover operations, sensitive investigations, etc. In each of these examples, it should be noted that this is the exception to the appearance standards listed above and should be approved by a supervisor first. Issued protection equipment should be readily available and in a reasonable proximity to the officers.

25. While performing raids, warrant service, or other similar law enforcement task, officers not in uniform shall be easily identifiable as police officers during the actual entry. This may be in the form of generic police jackets, shirts, vests, temporarily attached labels, and/or hats that visibly display "POLICE" on them. Situations may dictate that prior to a raid, officers of this department may have to act in a surveillance type mode that dictates that they not be easily identified and therefore are exempted from being identified up to the point of entry.

26. Officers may wear approved "Stowe Police Department" sweatshirts, shirts, jackets for callouts for prisoner transports, assisting at an incident, training, meetings, etc. The "Stowe Police Department" will be an approved logo that is embroidered on the clothing.

27. Any type of shirt, hat, or pant that has lettering, decals, embroidery, or otherwise that is worn by an employee and associates them with the Stowe Police Department must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to it being worn on or off duty.

### **III. 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.