Justice Health and
Forensic Mental Health Network

Justice Health NSW Policy

Dress Code and Uniform

Issue Date: 14 May 2024

Together for
Healthier Tomorrows

Dress Code and Uniform

Policy Number 3.043

Policy Function Human Resources

Issue Date 14 May 2024

Next Review Date 14 May 2029

Risk Rating Low

Summary This Policy Framework exists to guide managers and staff on the uniform requirement and the minimum standard of dress across all areas of the organisation that reflects the professional standards of Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network.

Responsible Officer Director, Nursing Midwifery and Clinical Governance

Applies to
☒ Administration Centres
☒ Community Sites and programs
☒ Health Centres - Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells
☒ Health Centres - Youth Justice Centres
☒ Long Bay Hospital
☒ Forensic Hospital

CM Reference POLJH/3043

Change summary
- Paragraph added: NSW Health Property
- Changes include only covering up offensive tattoos, staff can wear descrete stud in ears and/or nose,

Authorised by Chair, Policy Steering Committee

Revision History

#	Issue Date	Number and Name	Change Summary
6	May 2024	3.043 Dress Code and Uniform	• Paragraph added: NSW Health Property • Changes include only covering up offensive tattoos, staff can wear descrete stud in ears and/or nose
5	April 2021	3.043 Dress Code and Uniform	• Updated reference to revisit NSW Health Uniforms Policy PD2019_012 • Updated reference to Justice health and Forensic Mental Health Network (the Network)

			• Updated Information for Allied Health Staff • Inclusion of Virtual Meetings
4	August 2016	3.043 Dress Code and Uniform Policy	• Title change • Updated link to revised Code of Conduct policy • Staff with specific allergies must present a medical certificate • Clarified that wearing a head scarf in clinical settings for religious reasons is allowed; However, staff in the Forensic Hospital must consult with their manager and the Manager, Security and Fire Safety.
3	May 2013	3.043 Dress Code	• New uniform and ordering process implemented • No jeans or clothing made of denim to be worn at work
2	May 2009	3.043 Dress Code	• Minor updates
1	July 2004	3.043 Dress Code	• New policy

PRINT WARNING

Printed copies of this document, or parts thereof, must not be relied on as a current reference document.

Always refer to the electronic copy for the latest version.

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

PO BOX 150 Matraville NSW 2036

Tel (02) 9700 3000

http://www.justicehealth.nsw.gov.au

Table of Contents

1. Preface 5
2. Policy Content 5
   2.1 Roles & Responsibilities 5
   2.2 Exemptions 7
3. Policy Content 7
4. Procedure Content 8
   4.1 Dress Code 8
   4.2 Maintenance of uniforms 9
   4.3 Footwear 9
   4.4 Items NOT permitted to be worn at work 9
   4.5 Virtual Meetings 10
5. Definitions 10
6. Related Documents 10

1. Preface

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (Justice Health NSW) is dedicated to maintaining a professional environment, which includes upholding high standards of dress and presentation among its staff. This Policy serves to outline the requirements and guidelines regarding dress code expectations for Justice Health NSW personnel. Employees assigned to wear a uniform are expected to adhere to the specific uniform designated for their position or department. For those not mandated to wear a uniform, it remains their responsibility to dress appropriately at all times. This Policy Framework is designed to provide managers and staff with a clear understanding of the minimum dress standards applicable throughout all sectors of Justice Health NSW.

These people are responsible for ensuring their staff are in correct uniform:

- All Nursing and Midwifery employees and Cost Centre Managers
- Allied Health Managers
- Cost Centre Managers with relevant clinical staff and or corporate services staff

2. Policy Content

2.1 Roles & Responsibilities

All staff employed in clinical capacities and administration positions within Long Bay and Forensic Hospital, the Medical Appointments Unit, and Adult and Adolescent Health Centres in Justice Health NSW, are required to wear a uniform. Failure of staff to comply with any part of this policy is a performance management issue, which may lead to disciplinary action as per the 7.025 *Code of Conduct*.

These include staff employed in the following roles:

Nursing:

- Nursing Unit Managers
- Nurse Practitioners
- Midwife Practitioners
- Nurse Educators
- Midwife Educators
- Registered Nurses
- Registered Midwives
- Clinical Nurse Specialists
- Clinical Midwife Specialists
- Clinical Nurse Educators
- Clinical Nurse Consultants
- Clinical Midwife Consultants

- Enrolled Nurses
- Assistants in Nursing
- All class of students on clinical placements.

Administration:

- Health Centre Clerks
- Clinical Support Officers
- Ward Clerks

Scientific & Technical Support:

- Aboriginal Health Workers
- Aboriginal Health Education Officers.

Patient Support Services:

- Cleaners, Hospital Assistants
- Hospital Assistant Grades
- Linen Supply staff
- Wards persons
- Catering staff
- Assistants
- Courier/Drivers.

Oral Health:

- Dental Assistants
- Dental Hygienists
- Dental Therapists
- Oral Health Therapists.

Allied Health:

- Allied Health Assistants
- Art Therapists
- Counsellors
- Dietitians
- Pharmacists
- Diversional Therapists
- Exercise Physiologists
- Medical Imaging Professionals (including Radiographers and Sonographers)
- Music Therapists

- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Psychologists
- Podiatrists
- Social Workers
- Speech Therapists

2.2 Exemptions

Medical Staff and Dentists are exempt from wearing the clinical uniform however must comply with Justice Health NSW dress code.

Allied Health Positions based in the Forensic Hospital and in Community Services are also exempt from wearing the clinical uniform. However, there are some Allied Health staff, e.g., Physiotherapists working in a clinical setting, who preferentially choose to wear a uniform regardless of setting. Where it is routine practice for Allied Health staff to wear a uniform in a designated clinical setting, then this is encouraged to continue.

Uniforms should not be worn during therapeutic interventions conducted in the community, such as therapeutic leave, assessments, or community-based intervention and liaison.

3. Policy Content

All personnel, including staff, contractors, agency workers, and contingent workers, are required to maintain clean and presentable attire at all times. Uniform or dress code items must be worn with dignity and kept in a clean and orderly condition. Staff are expected to project a professional and well-grommed appearance while on duty or representing Justice Health NSW.

Managers are responsible for enforcing this Policy and ensuring all staff are informed of its application. It is expected that all staff adhere to this Policy and its objectives while carrying out their responsibilities. Justice Health NSW reserves the right to request any improperly dressed employee or volunteer to return home, change attire, and then resume work. Time spent absent from work due to this issue will not be compensated. Repeat violations of this dress code will be subject to Justice Health NSW Disciplinary Procedures.

Both Managers and staff are responsible for ensuring that attire worn in the workplace adheres to safe work practices. Staff working in clinical areas must not wear long- sleeved garments when performing clinical duties or forearm jewellery or long fingernails as per the PD2023_025 *Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings*.

Justice Health NSW must perform a case-by-case risk assessment in consideration to the risk to patients versus the health worker where bare below the elbow cannot be maintained during clinical care (with the execption of applied risk assessed personal protective equipment) as per PD2023_025 *Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings*.

Staff with specific allergies must provide a Medical Certificate to their Manager, indicating the allergy and requesting an allergen-specific uniform. Managers must email the Nursing and Midwifery Office with the staff members details and Medical Certificate to: [redacted]

[redacted]. The Nursing and Midwifery Office will review the request for allergen specific uniforms and will liaise with Healthshare.

Justice Health NSW Aboriginal Shirts

Justice Health NSW Aboriginal shirts are completely optional and staff should speak with their Line Manager about when they can be worn as part of their role. Staff are encouraged to wear their Justice Health NSW Aboriginal shirt on significant days celebrated by Aboriginal people out of respect.

4. Procedure Content

4.1 Dress Code

NSW Health Property

ID badges and uniforms are the property of Justice Health NSW and should only be utilised for work purposes. These items are essential for maintaining security, professionalism, and the integrity of the workplace. Employees must ensure that their ID badges and uniforms are used appropriately and in accordance with Justice Health NSW policies. Upon resignation, it is the employee's responsibility to return all Justice Health NSW property, including ID badges and uniforms, to their line manager.

Identification badges

All staff, including casual, temporary, permanent, and contractors working within Justice Health NSW, must wear an Identification (ID) Badge visible displaying their name and photograph at all times in the Adult/Adolescent custodial setting. However, ID badges are not permitted to be worn on neck lanyards.

Hair/Nails

To maintain hygiene standards, hair and nails must be clean and tidy.

- Hair must be clean, and tidy in clinical areas and/or food preparation areas.
- Hair must be covered in food preparation areas.
- Clinical staff must tie back hair that is below shoulder length and keep it off their collar and face.
- All staff that have direct contact with patients are advised that artificial fingernails or fingernail extensions present an infection risk and are therefore considered unacceptable during work hours.
- Natural fingernails should be no longer than 0.5cm in length and be free of nail polish to reduce the risk of infection to patients.

Jewellery

Jewellery hinders the effectiveness of hand hygiene and may pose a safety risk for the wearer and the patient.

- Minimal visible jewellery, limited to two ring bands, is allowed

- Staff should avoid wearing expensive jewellery, and certain items like bangles or bracelets are prohibited in clinical areas. Justice Health NSW will not accept liability for any jewellery lost or damaged while at work.
- Ear and facial jewellery must be limited to discrete studs.

Hats/Scarves/Neck Ties

- Head coverings that are required for religious and/or medical purposes or to honour cultural tradition are allowed. However, staff in the Forensic Hospital must consult with their Line Manager and the Manager, Security and Fire Safety in the Forensic Hospital as to the method to secure the head scarf to reduce the risk associated with it.
- Neck scarves must not be worn by staff involved in direct patient contact; and
- Neck Ties must not be worn in Forensic Hospital or the Adult/Adolescent Health Centres.

Justice Health NSW working in clinical areas

Staff working in clinical areas have options to order uniforms through designated channels, ensuring compliance with the dress code. The link to order your uniforms *NSW Health Uniforms*.

Justice Health NSW staff working in a non-clinical setting

Non-clinical staff may wear business appropriate attire or opt for Justice Health NSW supplied uniform at their own expense

4.2 Maintenance of uniforms

Staff receiving uniform allowances must ensure freshly laundered and ironed uniforms are worn each shift, with replacement approval from your Line Manager.

4.3 Footwear

- Clinical staff must wear fully enclosed, non-slip dress shoes in all clinical areas to reduce foot injury risks.
- Certain footwear, like thongs, mules, crocs or high heels are not permitted.
- Special footwear for medical reasons requires a medical certificate.

4.4 Items NOT permitted to be worn at work

All staff must note the following items are excluded from the dress code:

- Caps or beanies whilst inside a building
- Clothing which is soiled, torn or in a state of disrepair
- Ripped jeans
- Hipster and low-cut trousers
- Singlets, tank tops, midriff shirts
- Short skirts (above knee)
- Low cut or skintight dresses or tops
- Strapless or halter neck dresses or tops

- Scarves and other headwear, except when worn for religious or cultural reasons in clinical settings
- Tight fitting or see through clothing
- Track suits, gym wear and sportswear, except during a physical activity program
- T-shirts or shirts with printed or advertised slogans

A staff member may apply a cardigan/jumper during winter or when cold, but these additional items must be removed before providing clinical care to ensure staff abide by infection control principles.

In addition, clothing or accessories that demonstrate a personal point of view or advertising, inappropriate or controversial, commercial, religious or political messages are not permitted. Articles of clothing with sexist, racist or other offensive messages, cartoons or drawings that have illicit, profane, suggestive, biased, sexually related, alcohol related or tobacco related text graphics or logos are not permitted.

Any tattoos that are not covered with clothing must not promote illegal activities, hate speech and/or inappropriate language. An employees' Line Manager must implement a Management Plan to ensure any offensive tattoos are covered.

If clarification or exclusion is needed on any of the above items, staff should contact their Line Manager.

4.5 Virtual Meetings

Staff attending online meetings and webinars via video-link such as Skype, Zoom, MS Teams must ensure they are well-groomed and maintain the Justice Health NSW dress standards in accordance to this Policy. Attire and appearance must be professional, clean, neat and tidy.

5. Definitions

Must

Indicates a mandatory action to be complied with.

Should

Indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

6. Related Documents

Legislations	
Justice Health NSW Policies, Guidelines and Procedures	7.025 *Code of Conduct* 9.041 *Infection Prevention and Control* *Infection Prevention and Control Practice Handbook (2020)*

Justice Health NSW Forms	
NSW Health Policy Directives and Guidelines	PD2023_025 *Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings*
Other documents and resources	*NSW Health Uniforms*