



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



National Ambulance Service (NAS)

Workforce Support Policy

Dress Code and Personal Appearance at Work

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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 It is important that the National Ambulance Service (NAS) maintains an image which reflects its values and standards whilst delivering the best possible service to the public. Generally, all staff are expected to present a neat and tidy appearance, observing dress code and proper standards of decency at all times, though clearly the standards expected may vary according to the nature of the work involved. If there is likely to be contact with the public, there is a clear need to present an image consistent with their expectations of an efficient and effective organisation.

2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 To provide guidelines concerning dress and appearance at work, aimed at ensuring standardisation across the NAS, and where necessary, compliance with any legal requirements e.g. under Health and Safety legislation.
- 2.2 Rules cannot be provided for all situations, therefore, Managers have authority to determine what does or does not constitute acceptable standards.

3.0 SCOPE

3.1 Applies to all Managers, Supervisor and Staff in the NAS

4.1 LEGISLATION/OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- B. Policy – NASP001 - Control of Infection and Communicable Diseases

5.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 None applicable

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Senior Managers are responsible for monitoring the application and implementation of this policy within their area of responsibility.
- 6.2 Line Managers are responsible for operating the relevant parts of this policy.
- 6.3 All employees are responsible for adhering to this policy

7.1 PROCEDURE/GUIDELINE

7.2 UNIFORM

- 7.2.1 Where a uniform is issued and required to be duty dress, only such authorised issue uniform must be worn. No other items of clothing should be displayed or be visible.
- 7.2.2 Items of the uniform which have been issued to staff must not be altered except where alterations may relate to the sizing of a garment.
- 7.2.3 Uniforms must be kept clean and neatly presented at all times. However, it is understood that at times, occupational demands may prevent staff from this required uniform maintenance. On these occasions, staff members are responsible to ensure any required uniform maintenance is completed as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- 7.2.4 In special circumstances Ambulance Officers may, on written application by an individual staff member, authorise the wearing of additional items of clothing on the basis of religious or medical need. Such items of clothing must be of a similar colour and material as that of the uniform issue.
- 7.2.5 Staff members should ensure that a second clean uniform is available to them at their currently assigned location, for instances where their uniform may become soiled or damaged during the course of their duties.
- 7.2.6 All issued uniform items remain the property of NAS. Staff are responsible for ensuring all items are returned to their Line Supervisor or Manager on leaving NAS.
- 7.2.7 Staff members are not permitted to wear the NAS uniform whilst off duty, except in circumstances where they may be representing the service in an official capacity.
- 7.2.8 No unauthorised badges or insignia may be worn by staff, unless agreed by NAS.
- 7.2.9 For reference the uniform is considered in “operational” and in “non operational” terms. The operational uniform, which should be worn at all times, unless indicated otherwise, will include the following items: Short sleeve shirt, T-Shirt, Trousers with belt, Black socks, Safety footwear. These items, as a minimum, must be worn. Additional Health and Safety control measures will determine when additional uniform items are to be worn e.g. Soft shell jacket, Hi Vis garments, Helmet etc.

7.3 ATTENDANCE AT FUNCTIONS

- 7.3.1 The wearing of a non operational uniform will be dictated by the event in which staff are attending. For example, it may be appropriate for staff to attend a particular function in their operational uniform. Clear instructions will be issued prior to any particular function which will indicate the level of uniform to be worn for that occasion.
- 7.3.2 If staff are representing the NAS or have been invited to attend a function, they will be given guidance from the office of the Director as to the appropriate uniform to wear.

7.4 NON UNIFORM CLOTHES

- 7.4.1 All members of staff who are not issued with or not expected to wear uniform must ensure that their standards of dress and appearance reflect the standards expected concerning neatness and decency.

7.5 JEWELLERY

- 7.5.1 Apart from the general reason of image, limitations on jewellery are also necessary in the interests of safety and hygiene.
- 7.5.2 A discrete watch and no more than two rings are the only items of visible jewellery which may be worn by Operational and Control staff and those uniformed operational staff in contact with the public. Rings worn must be of a flat design without raised surfaces or projections that might tear gloves or a patient's skin. Rings worn must not display political or religious symbols. Such staff should not wear earrings on duty (for safety reasons) but may insert a small 'sleeper' stud to prevent natural healing. Neck chains if worn must not be visible, must remain under clothing at all times and be justified e.g. for medical advice and religious reasons.
- 7.5.3 Other staff, subject to any specific requirements regarding safety or hygiene, are expected to ensure any jewellery worn is within 'conventional limits' e.g. nose, lip, etc. studs are not acceptable.

7.6 TATTOOS

- 7.6.1 Tattoos and other forms of body art which have the potential to cause offence to either members of the public, patients or to work colleagues should be covered during working hours.

7.5 HAIR

- 7.5.1 Operational and Control staff in the course of their duties should ensure that hair is worn in a clean and tidy condition.
- 7.5.2 Hair that falls below the collar or onto the face should be tied back, so as not to impede in the effective wearing and use of safety helmets. For all other staff, hair should be clean and neatly styled. Where appropriate for safety reasons, long hair should be tied back.

7.6 SUNGLASSES

- 7.6.1 The wearing of sunglasses is only permitted for the purpose of driving duties and/ or as a medical necessity.
- 7.6.2 Sunglasses are not to be worn while engaged in patient care.
- 7.6.3 Sunglasses are not to be propped on the top of the head while engaged in patient contact.
- 7.6.4 Sunglasses are not to be worn while at the scene of incidents or in and around hospitals and medical facilities.

7.7 SHIRT

- 7.7.1 Shirts must be buttoned fully at all times.
- 7.7.2 Shirts must be tucked into trousers at all times.
- 7.7.3 Shirts collar must be turned down at all times.
- 7.7.4 T-shirts are issued as an undergarment and must be worn under shirt by the wearer and not as a single over garment.

7.8 EPAULETTES

- 7.8.1 Only Epaulettes issued as part of the NAS Uniform issue should be worn and must not be modified in any way.

7.9 CAP/ HAT

- 7.9.1 Only the cap/hat issued as part of the NAS Uniform issue should be worn and not modified.
- 7.9.2 This cap must be worn with the peak facing forward.
- 7.9.3 The wearing of the cap/hat can be at the discretion of the staff member.

7.10 SOCKS

- 7.10.1 Only black socks issued as part of the NAS Uniform issue or similarly self-purchased black socks should be worn.

7.11 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

- 7.11.1 The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires that equipment be supplied and used at work wherever risks to health and safety cannot be adequately controlled by other means. Such equipment, including safety helmets and boots, goggles and gloves to protect against extreme temperatures and adverse weather conditions, should be worn at all appropriate times.
- 7.11.2 The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires employers to maintain a safe system of working, consequently staff must wear a personal protective helmet in all hazardous situations to avoid injury to the head and eyes. Protective Helmets are provided as part of a personal issue of P.P.E to all staff whom may encounter such situations in the course of their duties.
- 7.11.3 Where safety helmets are issued as part of the uniform, they must be worn at all times where there is a risk of injury. This is especially important for safety reasons e.g. at the scene of the incident or in confined spaces, to help avoid staff sustaining injury in the course of their duty.
- 7.11.4 Protective equipment should only be used for the purpose for which it is intended, maintained in good condition, checked regularly and in accordance with the manufacturer instructions.
- 7.11.5 For the personal safety of staff it is important all personnel wear the protective helmet when carrying out relevant operational duties. The helmet must be carried with staff at all times when on operational duties.
- 7.11.6 Hi Visibility Jackets – Protective clothing should only be used for the purpose intended. It must be maintained in good condition and checked regularly. Staff must ensure that they make full and proper use of the protective clothing provided at all appropriate times.
- 7.11.7 Issued safety footwear must be worn at all times. Such footwear must comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety legislation and best practice principles.
- 7.11.8 Where it is a condition of employment that staff use safety equipment or clothing, then this must be complied with at all times.

7.12 UNIFORM REPLACEMENT/REPAIR – FAIR WEAR & TEAR

- 7.12.1 All NAS staff are expected to maintain their uniform in a good state of repair however, the principle of Fair Wear and Tear is recognised in that NAS are allocating a uniform issue for garments that would require to be replaced regularly. Fair wear and tear applies to out of the ordinary occurrences for example, Hi Vis Jacket where it is damaged to the extent that it requires to be withdrawn for a period of time to be refurbished, recycled or replaced.
- 7.12.2 The rationale behind replacing uniform items on a Fair Wear and Tear basis is for the NAS to ensure that:
- A. The appearance of NAS staff is professional on an ongoing basis
 - B. The approved uniform is worn in its entirety throughout the NAS in accordance with their uniform allocation.
 - C. That NAS staff have access to obtaining replacement/ repaired items where necessary.
- 7.12.3 For further guidance, see the Fair Wear and Tear Procedures at Appendix II.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 8.1 This Policy will be circulated electronically to all Managers, all Supervisors and Staff
- 8.2 This Policy will be available electronically in each Ambulance Station and Ambulance Control for ease of retrieval and reference
- 8.3 Each Operational Support and Resilience Manager will ensure that the Manager/Supervisor responsible for updating Policies and Procedures will return the Confirmation Form to NAS Headquarters to confirm document circulation to all staff

9.0 REVISION AND AUDIT

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed whenever necessary following changes in procedures, legislation and/or a relevant event.
- 9.2 The Fleet, Logistics and Support Manager has the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy. Relevant stakeholders can initiate a review by written request.

9.3 Revisions, amendments or alterations to the policy can only be implemented after consideration and approval by the NAS Leadership Team, following consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

10.0 REFERENCES

10.1 Noneapplicable

11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix I – Policy Acknowledgement Form

Appendix II - Fair Wear and Tear Procedures

APPENDIX II

FAIR WEAR AND TEAR PROCEDURES

- A. When a uniform is considered by an employee to be damaged/ soiled or in need of repair, the employee should approach their Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) (or nominated alternative) to assess if a garment replacement or repair is required.

- B. If agreed, the Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) will organise for the garment to be returned to the issuing company for repair/ industrial cleaning together with a signed approval from the Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) approving the repair/ cleaning of the item.

- C. The staff member will be issued with a replacement garment in the interim while awaiting return of their personal issue. This replacement must be returned once the staff member is in receipt of their repaired item.

- D. In certain cases, a Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) may deem the garment not suitable for repair in which case, the employee will be issued with a replacement. The Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) will obtain a replacement by making arrangements with the company and forwarding a signed approval from the Line Supervisor or Line Manager (as appropriate to the grade) approving replacement of the item.