Purpse: The purpose of this policy is to establish appropriate standards of work attire for employees during regular work hours and on designated casual days.

The term “employees” refers to all full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal, grant employees, and interns/volunteers. The terms “dress” and “attire” refer to items worn as well as overall appearance.

Policy: Appropriate work attire should promote modesty, health, safety, and the avoidance of distraction. As representatives of the City of Portsmouth, it is our responsibility to demonstrate a positive image of professionalism, integrity, and respect through our appearance as well as quality of service. Listed below is a general overview of acceptable professional dress for regular work hours. This list is not comprehensive, nor does it apply to employees who wear uniforms or employees whose job duties are inconsistent with the content of this policy. Those employees are to follow uniform standards for their department. The City of Portsmouth recognizes appropriate work attire may vary among departments, job positions, and nature of work performed. Each Department Head shall be responsible for determining the appropriate dress standards for his/her department and educating employees as to those standards. This regulation should, however, serve as a general guideline for employees to make dress choices that are consistent with the City’s professional business image.

Procedure:

A. General Guidelines

The City of Portsmouth wishes to provide a work environment that is free of safety hazards, offensive behavior, and harassment of any kind. Therefore, the following general guidelines should be followed.

1. Clothing should be worn to fit in such a manner that it does not expose the abdomen, chest, or buttocks area.
2. Clothing should be free of sexually related references and should not promote the use of illegal drugs.
3. Clothing should be free of political affiliations or statements with no inappropriate graphics or language.
4. Jewelry, (including body piercings), and tattoos should not pose a conflict with the job or work environment, which includes, but is not limited to safety of self or others, perceived offense on the basis of race, sex, religion, etc., customers’ complaints.
5. Shoes must always be worn.
6. Sexually provocative clothing is prohibited.
7. All clothing should be laundered and pressed with no holes, tears, frays, extreme over/under size.

B. Professional Attire (Monday – Thursday)

Professional business attire will include, but is not limited to:

- Suits
- Sports coat or blazer
- Blouse, dress shirt (long or short sleeve), neck tie, sweater
- Dress pants or trousers
- Dresses, skirts (no shorter than two inches above the knee)
- Dress shoes or dress sandals

C. Casual Fridays

As permitted by the Department Head, Fridays may be casual dress. Departments may establish their own list of casual wear, however, anything more casual than what is outlined in this policy is prohibited. Casual Fridays require that employees continue to portray a professional image while taking advantage of more casual and relaxed clothing. “Casual Fridays” offers an alternative to more professional business attire. In contrast, all casual clothing is not appropriate for the office. Items that may be perfect for leisure activities are not appropriate for the office, nor, are they consistent with the kind of professional image that the City of Portsmouth seeks to convey.

Acceptable Casual Friday Dress:

- Jeans (this does not include torn, faded, form-fitting, low-rise, or patched jeans), Khakis
- Cotton (or other material such as polyester) pants or trousers
- Dress shirt or blouse with collars, sweaters, turtlenecks, pullover shirt
- Dress shoes, loafers, casual or dress boots, dress sandals

Unacceptable Casual Friday or Anytime Dress

- Torn, faded, patched, or ripped jeans, hip-huggers, bib-overalls, spandex or other form fitting pants (including leggings or joggings), shorts, cotton or nylon sweatpants or any other athletic attire or beachwear
- Casual dresses, skirts, (including any that may be more than two inches above the knee)
- Sweatshirts, t-shirts, sleeveless shirts, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps
- Athletic shoes, work boots, flip flops, thong sandals, slippers, or other casual sandals.

D. Uniform Requirements

This policy does not apply to employees who are required to wear uniforms or employees who are involved in other specialized work environments as determined by the Department Head. Employees are required to adhere to uniform standards as set by the respective agency. Employees are required to wear their uniform in an appropriate manner; shirt buttoned and preferably tucked inside of pants, sleeves not
rolled up, clean, and wrinkle-free.

E. Religious Attire

Employees that have a concern with any aspect of the Dress Code policy due to religious beliefs should communicate it to his or her direct supervisor or the Department of Human Resources. If the employee makes a request for deviation from this policy based on religious belief, the City of Portsmouth will attempt to make a reasonable accommodation.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

A. Department Heads or their respective designees are responsible for interpreting and enforcing dress and grooming standards in their agencies. Additionally, Department Heads have the responsibility to inform and advise their employees of appropriate attire when meeting the general public, representing the City of Portsmouth, attending City Council meetings, attending public hearings or any other time the Department Head deems it necessary. Employees should address questions regarding appropriate attire to their Department Head prior to wearing attire to work.

B. Any employee whose appearance does not meet these standards will be counseled by his or her direct supervisor. If the appearance is excessively distracting or the clothing is unsafe, the employee may be sent home to correct the problem. Time spent away from work for this purpose will not be compensable.

C. Reasonable accommodation will be made for employees' religious beliefs and disabilities whenever possible, consistent with the business necessity to present a professional appearance to the public. Questions or complaints that cannot be handled to an employee's satisfaction by his or her direct supervisor should be taken to the Department of Human Resources.

D. Ultimately, the responsibility for appropriate attire falls upon the individual employee. The City of Portsmouth asks that you refer to this policy to determine what to wear.

LaVoris A. Pace  
Interim City Manager  
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