

Policy and Procedure 8-8

Dress Code and Uniforms

Issued By: Robert Farrell, State Forester

Effective Date: January 1, 2021

Codes/Mandates: N/A

References: [Department of Human Resource Management Policy 1.60, Standards of Conduct](#)
[Howard Uniforms](#)
[DuPont Nomex Laundering Guide](#)

Forms: N/A

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PURPOSE

To provide guidance to VDOF employees regarding the appropriate attire for various positions and activities. To prescribe the manner in which Virginia Department of Forestry employees shall wear agency uniform apparel.

POLICY

As members of a public service and emergency response agency, Virginia Department of Forestry employees will maintain a neat and professional appearance that does credit to and supports the reputation of the agency.

Agency employees and other designated personnel shall wear the appropriate agency uniform when they have significant, frequent or recurring contact with the public, or when it is important to establish their authority and identification as agency representatives. This policy and procedure applies to all employees authorized to wear agency uniforms. VDOF shall set the standard for uniform usage and identify all uniform components allowed for wear. Authorization to wear uniforms shall be by delegated authority from the state forester.

Employees granted a uniform budget allowance are obligated to purchase required uniform components for the type of uniform authorized; to wear the uniform in accordance with appearance and uniformity standards; and to show proper conduct while in uniform. The uniform items shall be ordered from the contract uniform provider. Care, maintenance and replacement of uniform components are the employee's responsibility.

The immediate supervisor is responsible for ensuring their employees comply with the dress code and uniform policy and procedure; providing counseling or recommending action for violations of the policy, and setting an example by appearance if the supervisor is approved to wear uniforms.

DEFINITIONS

“Agency” and **“VDOF”** means the Virginia Department of Forestry.

“Business casual” means a style of clothing that is less formal than traditional business wear but is still intended to give a professional and businesslike impression.

“Commonwealth” means the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“Non-Sworn Employee” means a VDOF employee who is not authorized to enforce the forest laws of Virginia.

“Sworn Employee” means a VDOF employee who is sworn in as a Special Forest Warden to enforce the forest laws of Virginia.

PROCEDURES

VDOF Official Dress Code

Our role as a public service employee is to present a professional appearance throughout the performance of our duties or while engaged in any activity that directly represents VDOF. The VDOF official dress code ensures employees are dressed for success when not wearing the official VDOF uniforms.

- ◆ All employees are authorized to wear business casual clothing or VDOF-provided business shirts with a shield when performing office duties or other non-field activities, or attending meetings or more formal activities where VDOF field attire would not be appropriate.
- ◆ While no dress code can cover all possibilities, employees and supervisors must exercise sound judgment when selecting clothing for wear to work. If misunderstandings arise due to a potentially unprofessional attire, please consult the director of human resources.
- ◆ To prevent misunderstandings or unprofessional appearance, official business casual clothing/guidance is found on page three of this policy. The provided guidance shall be used as cross-reference or self-assessment tool prior to reporting to work.

- ◆ Only regional leadership teams or directors may set the requirements for his or her work units for a given day that may require a field uniform use over business casual attire.

VDOF Business Casual Appearance Guidelines

Appearance Item	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Slacks, Pants and Suit Pants	Made of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and dress synthetic pants are acceptable.	Jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for biking.
Skirts, Dresses and Skirted Suits	Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public.	Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for work. Mini-skirts, skorts, sun dresses, beach dresses and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate.
Shirts, Tops, Blouses and Jackets	Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, turtlenecks, suit jackets or sports jackets are acceptable attire for work.	Tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons or slogans; halter-tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts are inappropriate.
Shoes and Footwear	Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels and leather deck-type shoes.	Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops and slippers
Jewelry	Conventional jewelry that does not interfere with the performance of duties.	Offensive or excessive, which may hinder overall job performance.
Hats and Head Covering	Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition.	Hats are not appropriate in the office.

VDOF-Provided Uniform Authorizations and Guidance

Field Uniform

Sworn employees and non-sworn employees who are engaged in field activities are authorized to wear the VDOF field uniform.

- ◆ Sworn employees will wear VDOF-provided field uniforms with the shield when performing field duties. Employees must wear all required items for the approved uniform category {*See Uniform Components – Field Uniform*}. Badges may be displayed on a badge clip affixed to the belt or carried on his/her person.

Dress Uniform

Only sworn VDOF employees are authorized to wear the VDOF dress uniform.

- ◆ Sworn VDOF employees are required to wear the dress uniform when making court appearances and other similar occasions when the dress uniform is deemed appropriate. Wearing of the dress uniform is encouraged for school programs or other occasions where deemed appropriate. Employees must wear all required items for the

approved uniform category *{See Uniform Components – Dress Uniform}*. Dress shoes must be worn with the dress uniform. Badges must be attached to the shirt in the designated area.

Rental Uniforms

Employees whose job duties are extremely dirty in nature, such as mechanics, buildings and grounds staff and facilities staff, are authorized to wear rental uniforms.

- ◆ Employees who are authorized to wear the mechanic uniform shall wear the uniform provided by their uniform contractor during regular business hours as appropriate for the duties performed. These uniforms are contracted for mechanics; buildings and grounds staff and Headquarters facilities staff between the individual administrative unit and the contracting firm. These uniforms are provided via a contract with VDOF and with the understanding that the employee will pay one-half of the total costs of the rental uniform contract.
- ◆ Employees authorized to wear rental uniforms may elect to receive the VDOF field uniform in lieu of a rental uniform. The employee shall bear the cost of cleaning the uniform. If the employee elects to receive field uniforms, the employee is not eligible to participate in the VDOF private rental uniform agreement.

Honor Guard Uniform

Only members of the VDOF Honor Guard are authorized to wear the Honor Guard uniform.

- ◆ The honor guard uniform shall only be worn when appropriate for the position or duties performed, or when they officially represent the VDOF at a formal or ceremonial event. Employees must wear all required items for the approved uniform category *{See Uniform Components – Honor Guard Uniform}*.
- ◆ The Honor Guard captain shall designate the apparel items that will be worn for each Honor Guard detail in order to ensure uniformity in appearance.

Appearance and Uniformity

Appearance

Employees must maintain and wear the uniform in a manner that reflects credit to the VDOF. The uniform should be neat and clean; should not be frayed or untidy, and should not show excessive wear. Employees of the VDOF shall not wear jeans at any time while performing their job.

Employees in business casual clothing should dress in a manner that reflects professionalism. Clothing should be neat and clean; should not be frayed or untidy, and should not show excessive wear.

Uniformity

Mixing uniform components with non-uniform clothing is not permitted except under special circumstances.

- ◆ Field uniform shirts may be worn with Nomex pants while engaged in firefighting or when reasonably expected to respond to forest fires.
- ◆ Safety clothing such as reflective safety vests may be worn with VDOF uniforms.
- ◆ VDOF-provided polo shirts or business shirts may be worn with personal clothing (i.e. pants or skirts).

Badges

Law enforcement badges must always be worn with VDOF-provided dress uniform or as necessary with the VDOF-provided field uniform.

- ◆ When worn with field uniforms it will be placed on wearer's right side using a belt-clip badge holder. The only authorized deviation is if using a recessed or non-recessed Badge Neck Holder w/ Chain.
- ◆ Badges are never to be worn with personal apparel.

Nameplates

Nameplates must always be worn with VDOF-provided dress uniform or as necessary with the VDOF-provided field uniform. Nameplates are never to be worn with personal apparel. When nameplate is worn, the current gold nameplate style with the “Serving Since ____” gold tab must be worn together.

Caps

Only VDOF-issued caps with the shield may be worn with field uniforms. Caps that are not issued by VDOF may not be worn with VDOF uniforms.

Obsolete Uniform Components

- ◆ Effective September 1, 2020 only uniform items with the current VDOF logo are authorized. The wear out date for the “Trees and Stream” logo items was August 31, 2020.



- Apparel with any other logos is not authorized for wear when engaged in VDOF business or representing VDOF in any manner.

Exceptions to Wearing VDOF Uniforms

Supervisors may approve exceptions to wearing the provided uniforms under the following circumstances:

- ◆ When pregnancy, medical conditions, physical disabilities or weather conditions require special consideration;
- ◆ When the visibility associated with wearing uniforms could jeopardize the safety of the employee or adversely impact the employee’s ability to carry out a particular assignment; or
- ◆ When wearing business casual clothing is desired while attending region or division meetings, other meetings, training or classes.

Conduct

When wearing the uniform, employees must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects credit to the VDOF. Employees may wear the uniform during off-duty hours when representing the VDOF in an official capacity. Employees shall use good judgment when wearing the uniform to avoid situations, which may reflect adversely on the VDOF. Inappropriate conduct or behavior of employees while in uniform, whether on or off duty, may result in disciplinary action {See *DHRM Policy 1.60*}.

Ownership, Use and Disposal of Uniforms

Uniform Ownership and Use

Uniform components remain the property of VDOF after being purchased with the employee uniform allowances. When no longer required to wear the uniform or when the uniform component is no longer serviceable, employees must dispose of the uniform or uniform component appropriately.

Disposal of Uniform and Uniform Components

When no longer authorized to wear uniforms, employees and former employees must dispose of their uniform in one of the following methods:

- ◆ **Donation to other employees** – Employees may donate uniform components to another employee who is authorized to wear the same type of uniform.
- ◆ **Turn In** – Turn in to the Regional Office or employee’s supervisor.

- ◆ **Dispose** – Any uniform components that are no longer serviceable must be disposed of. All shields and logos must be removed from any clothing item issued by VDOF before disposal.

Uniform Components

When wearing uniforms, all the required components will be worn. Certain non-uniform personal items may be worn with some uniforms as indicated under the optional components column for each uniform.



VDOF Work Clothes and Protective Equipment

Employees working in hazardous situations must use the approved protective clothing and equipment.

Required and Optional Components of VDOF Uniforms

Field Uniform (with Shield on Shirt)

Required Components	Optional Components
Shirt*, Khaki (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) (must be tucked inside pants)	NON-UNIFORM Undershirt (white, gray or khaki; visible)
Shirt*, Light Duty, Khaki (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) (must be tucked inside pants)	Nameplate (as appropriate) (current gold style with "Serving Since____" gold tab)
Shirt, Polo (short-sleeve) (must be tucked inside pants)	NON-UNIFORM Polar Cap permitted
Pants, Cargo or Dungarees (khaki, green)	NON-UNIFORM Mittens/Gloves permitted (coordinated color, no design)
Belt, Black Leather	NON-UNIFORM Sunglasses permitted
NON-UNIFORM Boots/Shoes (dark footwear appropriate for the uniform and activity)	Jacket or Vest (black or green W/Shield)
NON-UNIFORM Socks (coordinated color, no design)	Hat, Ball Cap (khaki, green; summer/winter styles)
	Orange Stocking Cap W/ Shield
	Winter Coat (black or green W/Shield)
	Belt-Clip Badge
*Any serviceable shirt with current VDOF logo is permitted.	



Dress Uniform

Required Components	Optional Components
Shirt, Silver/Tan Dress (long-sleeve or short-sleeve)	NON-UNIFORM Undershirt (white; not visible)
Trousers, Spruce	Agency-Related Pins
NON-UNIFORM Boots/Dress Shoes (dark footwear appropriate for the uniform)	NON-UNIFORM Mittens/Gloves permitted (coordinated color, no design)
Belt, Black Leather	NON-UNIFORM Sunglasses permitted
NON-UNIFORM Socks/Hosiery (coordinated color, no design)	Jacket (black or green W/Shield)
Necktie, Spruce Green (solid (18", 20", 22"))	
Nameplate (current gold style with "Serving Since ___" gold tab)	
Law Enforcement Badge	



Honor Guard Uniform

Required Components	Optional Components
Shirt, White Dress (long-sleeve)	NON-UNIFORM Undershirt (white; not visible)
Trousers, Green	Necktie (black for funerals)
Belt, Black Leather	Agency-Related Pins
Boots, Black (nine-inch Rockies with shine)	NON-UNIFORM Sunglasses permitted
Socks, Black Dress	
Hat, Campaign	
Jacket, Green	
Gloves, White	
Ascot (red/white)	
Nameplate (current gold style with "Serving Since ___" gold tab)	
Law Enforcement Badge	



Other Optional Items

Components	Allowable Use
Khaki T-shirt with printed shield	Only while actively engaged in vehicle maintenance, yard work or other similar activities not indoors or involving direct contact with the public or stakeholders
Hi-Vis Polo shirt with printed shield	Only while on harvest sites not around the office or any other situation where involving direct contact with the public or stakeholders
Business Casual Dress Shirt (White or Light Blue)	In an office setting or appropriate meeting, conference or similar situation
Polo Shirt (Navy or White)	In an office setting or appropriate meeting, conference or similar situation
Coveralls	Only while actively engaged in vehicle maintenance, yard work or other similar activities not indoors or involving direct contact with the public or stakeholders
Rain Gear	As needed for weather conditions
Wide Brimmed Hat	As necessary, while actively engaged in field work
Blaze Orange Ball Cap w/ Shield	As needed for weather conditions and during hunting seasons
* The state forester or designee may authorize additional items for wear with the uniform as he/she deems appropriate.	

Ordering Uniforms

Vendor: Howard Uniforms <http://virginia.howarduniform.com>

Ordering Uniforms

- ◆ Access the website.
- ◆ If it is your first time ordering, you must "Create a new account"
- ◆ Billing address will be: 900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800 Charlottesville, VA 22903.
- ◆ Once logged in "My Account," both DGIF and Forestry are listed in red on the left side of the screen.
 - Under the Forestry heading, select "Employee Apparel" (not DGIF).
 - All currently available VDOF apparel options will be displayed.
- ◆ In "Employee Apparel," browse and select uniform items, click the "Add To Cart" button to place them in your shopping cart.
- ◆ When you "Check Out" you will go through for billing and shipping information screens
 - Your billing information should already be in the system
 - Items must be shipped to your assigned office.
- ◆ Next, you'll see "Payment Information" options.
 - Select "Purchase Order Number"
 - Enter your first name and last name in the Purchase Order Number box.
- ◆ **NEVER SELECT** "Pay With A Credit Card".
- ◆ Next click "Place Order".

- ◆ An order confirmation email will be sent to you immediately afterwards.
- ◆ Forward the confirmation email to the [Administration program support technician](#).

Receiving Uniforms

- ◆ Complete a Form 3.15 Receiving Report after you receive your apparel items.
- ◆ The Form 3.15 must be signed (electronic or original ink). Keep a copy for your records.
- ◆ Send the completed Form 3.15 with the invoice to the [Administration program support technician](#) by email or mail to 900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

AUTHORITY

This policy and procedure is issued by the Virginia state forester.

INTERPRETATION

The deputy state forester and the director of human resources are responsible for the interpretation of this policy and procedure.

APPROVAL

I certify that this policy and procedure is approved and ready for publication.

Hector Rivera

Director of Human Resources Name (Print)

Director of Human Resources Signature

Ed Zimmer

Deputy State Forester Name (Print)

Deputy State Forester Signature