

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
Dress Code		
Effective: June 2014	Revised: May 2024	Due to Review: May 2026

POLICY

It is the policy of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) that all staff, contractors, and volunteers, hereafter referred to collectively as employees, dress safely and professionally for work in a hospital environment.

PROCEDURE

How employees dress can reflect their attitude towards their work, clients, and organization and what employees choose to wear can either serve to increase or reduce the risk that is assumed while working in the hospital setting.

It is expected that VPCH employees are accountable for adhering to the following standards for professional appearance:

- Employees shall present a neat, clean, well-groomed appearance and with good personal hygiene.
- All employees shall wear a hospital issued/approved identification badge while in the workplace. Badges shall be visible and worn above the waist, using a hospital-approved lanyard or clip. If the employee chooses to cover part of their name on the badge, the employee must state their full name when asked.
 - This policy provision may be temporarily suspended if doing so is believed to exacerbate a bona fide safety concern.
- Keys shall be carried in a secure manner. Badge and keys shall not be attached together.
- Clothing shall be clean, in good repair, and fit such that the employee can perform work duties safely with ease and comfort.
- Street clothing and scrubs are permitted.
- Clothing shall cover from the neck area to below the knees. Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, or shirts with sleeves rolled up in such a way that they appear sleeveless and shall not be worn. Under garments shall not be visible.
- Items of clothing not permitted in the workplace include, but are not limited to: sweatpants, skirts or dresses that do not cover the knee, tank tops, tube tops, and garments with strings or cords.
 - Scarves, neckties, and similar neckwear shall not be worn in the presence of hospitalized individuals.
 - Apparel with straps or chains shall not be worn in the presence of hospitalized individuals.
- Clothing with art and/or written messages referring to alcohol, smoking, drugs, sex, weapons, and/or violence shall not be worn. Should there be concerns that clothing is

discriminatory toward race, religion, color, gender (including, in the case of a woman, on the grounds that the woman is pregnant), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or age, the corresponding department head, nurse supervisor, or designee shall determine whether the item should be covered or removed.

- Fingernails shall be clean, not longer than a quarter inch in length at the tip, and neatly trimmed. Artificial nails, including gels, fingernail jewelry, and other fingernail decorations shall not be worn by employees who provide direct care due to increased risk of transmitting infection.
- Head and facial hair shall be clean and well-groomed.
- Tattoos that contain references to alcohol, smoking, drugs, sex, weapons, and/or violence must be covered in the workplace. Should there be a concern that a tattoo is discriminatory toward race, religion, color, gender (including, in the case of a woman, on the grounds that the woman is pregnant), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or age, the corresponding department head, nurse supervisor, or designee shall determine whether the tattoo should be covered.
- Footwear shall be such that it protects and stays on the foot and allows the wearer to move quickly and safely during an emergency. Footwear worn in the designated care and food/preparation areas shall have a non-slippery material on the sole, cover the toes, and the height of the heels may not be greater than one inch.
- Head coverings may pose increased safety risk and may only be worn inside the hospital for documented religious or medical reasons or where may be required by regulation (*i.e.* hardhats, hair nets, etc.).
- Any strong fragrance or odor determined to negatively impact the care or work environment may be considered a violation of this policy and may be addressed as such.
- Direct care staff shall wear or have access to a timepiece (other than a cellphone) that displays time in seconds to capture time accurately in documentation (vital signs, safety checks, *etc.*).
- Employees are generally discouraged from wearing/carrying with them any article of clothing, jewelry, or personal property that may have emotional/sentimental meaning.

Employees are encouraged to routinely consider the following as they prepare for work:

- How their chosen attire may affect the ability to respond safely during an emergency.
- How their chosen attire may affect the client group or other individuals with whom they work.

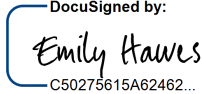
Application of the Dress Code Policy and Procedure

- A copy of the Dress Code Policy and Procedure shall be reviewed with new employees during orientation.
- Any concerns regarding staff attire shall be brought to the attention of VPCH department heads, nursing supervisors, and/or designees who may determine whether attire is out of compliance with this policy.
- An employee whose appearance or attire is out of compliance with this policy may not be permitted to work until the necessary corrections are made.
- If an employee is not permitted to work due to violations of this policy, that

employee's time away from work shall be charged as vacation, personal, comp time, or may be considered unauthorized off payroll.

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REFERENCES

ProACT Manual

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Mental Health	 C50275615A62462...	5/14/2024