**U.S. Department of Justice**
Federal Bureau of Prisons

O P E R A T I O N S  M E M O R A N D U M
OPI: HRM/PDB
NUMBER: 001-2023
DATE: September 29, 2023
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023
EXPIRATION DATE: October 1, 2024

# Employee Uniforms

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Title 5 of the United States Code, Section 5901, authorizes agencies to issue a uniform allowance to those employees who are required by the agency to wear a prescribed uniform. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is responsible for issuing regulations pursuant to this authority. The BOP currently limits the allowance for each prescribed uniform to no less than $800 per year, per uniformed employee. OPM may from time to time adjust the maximum allowance by regulation. The allowance for each prescribed uniform must be negotiated with the Union, up to the maximum allowed by law or regulation. Any agreed-upon exceptions or changes in clothing allowance amount will be provided to institutions through Operations Memoranda.

The content of this Operations Memorandum will supersede Section 19 of Program Statement 3300.03, **Employment**, dated May 8, 2017. The union and the agency agree this Operations Memorandum will remain in effect until a formal policy is completed.

**References**
5 U.S.C. 105
5 U.S.C. 5901
5 CFR part 591
Program Statement **Correctional Services Procedures Manual**
Program Statement **Employment**
Program Statement **Property Management Manual**
Program Statement **Food Service Manual**
Program Statement **Management of Staff Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens**
Master Agreement

## 1. DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND CONTROL OF UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

The Director retains authority for prescribing a uniform requirement, authorizing a uniform allowance, and specifying uniform items. A Bureau of Prisons Staff Uniform Committee will convene as directed by the Committee Chairperson to review proposals and formulate recommendations to the Director.

Each Warden is delegated the authority, consistent with this policy and the Program Statement **Property Management Manual**, to prescribe protective clothing. Local procedures will be developed in accordance with the Master Agreement.

A request for a uniform requirement for non-uniformed positions not currently authorized by this policy can be made by submitting (through the local CEO) a proposal to their Assistant Director or Regional Director. If supported, the Executive Team (ET) member will coordinate the request with the Uniform Committee Chairperson who will communicate the request to the ET and request concurrence. If a majority concurrence is obtained the change will be forwarded to the Director for final decision. If requested by the Council of Prison Locals, committee recommendations approved by the Director will be subject to bargaining on impact and implementation.

## 2. BUREAU OF PRISONS STAFF UNIFORM COMMITTEE

The Uniform Committee meets on a regular basis, either in-person or virtually, and normally quarterly to discuss any concerns with the current uniform. This discussion should include the approved vendors as applicable.

a. **Membership.** Standing Committee membership is:

- Executive Team Member (Coordinator) appointed by the Director.
- Chief, Labor Relations Office, or designee.
- Correctional Services Administrator.
- President, Council of Prison Locals (or designee).
- Representatives from all Divisions and Regions.

Ad-hoc members may be appointed by the Chairperson after consultation with the President, Council of Prison Locals.

b. **Committee Functions.** The Committee will:

- Conduct research in reference to the Committee's agenda.
- Review requests and proposals for changes to current staff uniform policies and allowances and develop recommendations for the Director.
- Review proposals and formulate recommendations to the Director concerning uniform clothing items and allowances for new positions.
- Coordinate with the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), recommend and review staff surveys and questionnaires pertaining to uniforms and make recommendations based on survey results.
- Seek solutions to problems and concerns submitted to the Committee.
- Complete other assignments as referred by the Director, the Executive Team, Wardens' Advisory Group, or the Committee Chairperson.
- Ensure continued compliance with uniform requirements by vendors.

c. **Committee Chairperson Functions.** The Chairperson will:

- Receive suggestions, proposals, and concerns as submitted by management or Union officials for direct response or processing through the committee, as appropriate.
- Convene and conduct Committee meetings quarterly unless it is mutually agreed to cancel the meeting.
- Monitor Committee actions and conduct follow-up activities.
- Respond to questions, concerns, and recommendations that do not warrant a full committee meeting for discussion and review.

d. **Committee Coordinator Functions.** The Committee Coordinator will:

- Schedule meetings at the call of the Chairperson, plan for the meeting site, and notify all members.
- Prepare and distribute agendas to committee members.
- Coordinate pre-meeting and follow-up activities.

## 3. ISSUANCE OF UNIFORM ALLOWANCE

a. **Amount.** Each employee who occupies a position for which there is a prescribed uniform requirement will be issued an annual allowance of $800.

b. **Procedures.** Servicing HRM offices will process a uniform allowance for each eligible employee using the Authorization to Receive Uniform Allowance form (BP-A0374), or other form created locally, when eligibility is established. The servicing HRM office will certify the

employee's eligibility date annually.

Any employee detailed to another institution and/or position for more than 90 days due to an emergency and/or assigned to a position requiring a uniform is entitled to a minimum of one-half of the uniform allowance for the detailed position. Any determination of a reasonable allowance over the minimum is to be made on a case-by-case basis by the CEO of the location.

## 4. APPROVED VENDORS

The Staff Uniform Committee is responsible for the selection of vendor(s) to provide uniform clothing items that meet established designs, patterns, and requests. Employees must purchase authorized uniform items from the list of approved vendors. This purchase includes the base uniform, outerwear, and headwear. Staff found to be in uniform clothing not purchased from the approved vendors may be subject to disciplinary action. Institution leadership is responsible for providing employees with information pertaining to authorized uniform items and information (such as brochures, order forms, and price lists) from the approved vendors.

Approved vendors will display and only sell authorized uniform items via their communications platform (e.g., BOP-specific website).

## 5. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Protective clothing and safety shoes/boots are not considered uniform items and will be issued and controlled in accordance with the Program Statements **Property Management Manual** and **Management of Staff Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens**, Master Agreement, and government-wide rules and regulations. Safety-toed footwear will be black or brown/tan in color.

## 6. AUTHORIZED DUTY UNIFORMS

All employees performing duties in the service areas described below are required to wear the approved uniform while performing official duties. Supervisors will ensure employees are aware of the prescribed uniform. Supervisors will monitor staff uniforms (to include issues with wear-and-tear, cleanliness, and official vs. unauthorized) routinely during duty hours to ensure compliance with this policy and the Master Agreement.

Staff who are not in proper uniform will be informed of the uniform requirements. At the time of this initial notice, staff will be made aware by their immediate supervisor that continued failure to wear the proper uniform may lead to disciplinary action.

a. **Positions and Required Wear.** The authorized uniform is to be worn by staff permanently

assigned to the following positions:

- Cook Foreman
- Food Service Warehouse Worker
- Food Service Assistant
- Assistant Food Service Administrator
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Paramedics
- Deputy Captain, Captain, Complex Captain
- Emergency Preparedness Officer
- Lieutenants
- Supervisory Locksmith and Assistant Locksmith
- Tool Room Officer
- SIS Technician
- Correctional Officer, Senior Officer, Senior Officer Specialist
- Captain Secretary
- Time and Attendance Clerk
- Information Receptionist
- Correctional Systems Officer
- Counselor
- Vocational Training Instructors (Building Trades, Welding, HVAC, Auto, etc.)
- Supervisor of Recreation and Assistant Supervisor of Recreation
- Recreation and Sport Specialist
- General Foreman
- Facilities Assistant
- All Facilities Trades Positions
- Safety Specialist
- Recycling Technician
- Trust Fund Specialist
- Warehouse Worker Foreman
- Unicor Foreman

**Health Services**. Health Services employees performing clinical (patient care-related) duties will wear uniforms consistent with community standards, taking into consideration the correctional aspect of the duties and security level.

Approved uniform types include scrub-type tops and pants (usually worn by Nursing Assistants, Medication Technicians, Nurses, Dental Assistants/Hygienists, Therapists, X-ray Technicians, Lab Technicians, and Dentists (when providing direct patient care, etc.) Colors will be determined locally.

The following Health Services employees will wear professional attire:

- Physicians including Psychiatrists
- Advanced Practice Providers such as Physician Assistants or Nurse Practitioners
- Pharmacists
- Health Information Technicians (HITs)
- Health System Specialists (HSS)
- Health Services Administrative Assistants
- Health Services Administrators and Assistant Administrators (HSA, AHSA)
- Social Workers
- All providers providing telehealth
- Central Office / Regional Health Services employees located at an institution, but not actively providing direct, face to face patient care

Exceptions can be made to the professional attire (scrub options) when patient care related procedures (e.g., minor surgical procedures) are being performed or when local agreements permit. No uniform allowance will be provided to those clinical employees who wear professional attire. However, when requested, BOP will provide lab coats to be worn over the professional attire while on duty.

PHS employees will always follow PHS Uniform Policy.

**Staff Training Academy (STA).** STA instructors' required attire is listed within a memorandum signed and approved by the Assistant Director of the Human Resource Management Division.

**High Visibility Posts.** Staff assigned to posts who have primary interactions with the public (e.g., Front Lobby Officer~~,~~ Visiting Room Officers and Escorted Trips, etc.) are required to wear either a short or long sleeve duty uniform shirt.

b. **Uniform Parameters.**

**Top Garment.** The only approved color is Silver Tan. Short and long sleeve duty uniform shirts, as well as short and long sleeve polo shirts are available from approved vendors. In addition, a hybrid option that consists of a moisture-wicking material body and uniform shirt sleeves and collar, is also available. Uniformed supervisors are required to wear either a short or long sleeve duty uniform shirt, or hybrid option. The polo option is not authorized for uniformed supervisors.

Polo and hybrid shirts must be worn in conjunction with the protective outer vest carrier. Should

an employee choose to wear the protective vest without utilizing the outer carrier, the protective vest is to be worn only under the short or long sleeve duty uniform shirt.

**Protective Vest Outer Carrier.** Should an employee desire to utilize an outer carrier for the protective vest, the purchase of this garment is available to the employee. Purchased outer carriers are to match the color of the bottom garment, Ranger Green. Outer carriers are available from the approved vendors with or without compartments/systems made to secure emergency response equipment. It is the employee's discretion as to which style of outer carrier to wear. Employees must secure and maintain any equipment, etc. per applicable policies.

Should a non-uniformed employee desire to wear an outer carrier, the carrier will be supplied by the agency and be black in color. This is the only option for uniformed employees that choose to obtain it from the agency and not purchase an outer vest carrier from an approved vendor.

**Ties.** Authorized black ties are available from the approved vendors.

**Bottom Garment.** The only approved color is Ranger Green. Two styles of pants are available from approved vendors, to include tactical style and duty uniform styles. It is the employee's discretion as to which style of pants to wear. Correctional Supervisors are only permitted to wear the duty uniform pant. Tactical style pants are not authorized for uniformed supervisors.

Uniform shorts are authorized for all non-supervisory employees in the recreation department.

**Boots.** Boots/footwear will be either black or brown/tan in color. Safety-toed footwear for uniformed and non-uniformed employees is acquired locally as outlined in the Master Agreement.

**Outerwear.** Outerwear shall not replace the authorized top garment. A top garment is required to be worn at all times, while in uniform.

**Headwear**. Headwear available from approved vendors is authorized.

**Foul Weather Gear.** Authorized foul weather gear is available from approved vendors for both individual purchase and agency purchase. Institutions will maintain enough foul weather gear to outfit 10 percent of the Correctional Services Department.

## 7. EMBLEMS, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND LETTERING

Bureau of Prisons emblems or lettering may not be sewn, embroidered, or printed on **any** item of clothing unless it is herein approved for that clothing item or specifically approved by the Director.

Unless expressly authorized by the Director, uniforms, uniform items, foul weather gear, and protective clothing will not display slogans, printing, or lettering other than that identifying the Bureau of Prisons. Any protective clothing or uniform item that includes the Bureau of Prisons emblem or lettering must be purchased from an approved vendor, except as provided by the Master Agreement. Approved vendors can be utilized for items purchased by Employee's Clubs, the Union, and for authorized events (e.g., Correctional Workers Week).

## 8. **IDENTIFIERS AND OTHER ADORNMENTS**

Names will be properly embroidered and displayed on all uniform tops and outer protective vest carriers when utilized by the employee.

Supervisors will display/wear approved insignia upon their shirt collars and/or other uniform garments as directed.

In the interest of professionalism, uniformed employees will not wear jewelry that detracts from the overall professional appearance of the uniform while on duty. As a matter of professionalism, personal safety, or institution security, specific items of jewelry or other adornment may be prohibited altogether, consistent with the Master Agreement.

Adornments denoting any agency or organization other than the Bureau of Prisons and the Council of Prison Locals 33, or any cause or belief, must not be worn on or with the uniform unless specifically authorized by the Director or in accordance with the Master Agreement.

## 9. **AUTHORIZED DRESS UNIFORM**

A dignified dress uniform will be available and required from an approved vendor upon approval of the Uniform Committee.

## 10. **AUTHORIZED HONOR GUARD UNIFORM**

An honor guard uniform will be available from an approved vendor upon approval of the Uniform Committee. Institutions will be required to purchase the uniform locally, and outfit selected honor guard members with all garments and adornments accordingly.