

**Dress and Grooming: Employee Standards (Professional Appearance)**

The Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) believes that appropriate dress and grooming by its employees contribute to a productive learning environment and model positive behavior. During school hours and at school activities, employees shall maintain professional standards of dress and grooming that demonstrate their high regard for education, present an image consistent with their job responsibilities and assignment, and not endanger the health or safety of employees or students. All employees shall be held to the same standards unless their assignment provides for modified dress as approved by their supervisor.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to outline basic standards expected of SCOE employees at all worksites.

2. Philosophy

SCOE employees are expected to present a positive public image. The standards below provide for a consistent approach to positive public relations.

3. Specific Standards

a. Work Hours

- (1) Employees are expected to be at work on time and not leave early except for approved medical or dental appointments or for other reasons approved in advance by the immediate supervisor.
- (2) Employees are entitled to two breaks per day of no more than 15 minutes each. Break times are to be coordinated by the immediate supervisor. (In the main office secretarial area, break times will be coordinated by the Office Manager.)
- (3) All employees are entitled to a lunch break not to exceed one hour, dependent upon terms of employment.

b. Food

- (1) During working hours, food is to be consumed only in designated break areas or during organized meetings. Employees are not to eat in their work areas.
- (2) It is recognized that food and drink may be part of classroom educational activities. Therefore, food and drink are permitted in classroom areas when part of an instructional activity.

c. Beverage

- (1) During work hours, appropriate and nonalcoholic beverages (including coffee) may be consumed in the work area if done in a discreet fashion following normal rules of etiquette.
- (2) Beverages are not permitted on school buses while students are present. Appropriate, nonalcoholic beverages may be consumed on school buses when students are not present.

d. Appearance of Work Area

The goal is that books, binders, and other materials (not being immediately used for work) be neatly stored in bookcases or other accessible storage areas. It is understood that administrative support is needed to exercise this standard. Needs or problems in this regard should be directed to the immediate supervisor.

**Policy 4119.22 (Continued)**

- e. Tobacco-Free Workplace  
Consistent with the Solano County Board of Supervisors Ordinance No. 1307, the Solano County Office of Education policy is to require a tobacco-free workplace for employees, students, and visitors.
- f. Drug-Free Workplace  
See Policy 7110.2.
- g. Staff Bringing Children or Others to Work  
Staff members are not to bring their own child/children or others to the workplace during employee's working hours. Any exceptions (which shall be emergency and nonroutine) must have prior approval of employee's supervisor. If a staff member's child is to work as a volunteer in the program, she/he must abide by the volunteer application procedure established.
- h. Courtesy  
A polite, courteous, service-oriented approach is expected of all employees in our relationships with others. This applies to communication by telephone, in the office, in the school, or in any County Office facility or while on any County Office business regardless of location.
- i. Team Atmosphere
  - (1) All County Office employees are expected to be supportive of the organization, of each other, and are to help each other to achieve the best possible results. Well-intended staff input is welcome. Everything we do is a group effort. We are all part of one team.
  - (2) All County Office employees are also expected to foster and build upon positive team relationships with the school districts and other agencies we work with. It is up to us as County Office employees to take the lead and be a model for others in this regard.
- j. Professional Appearance
  - (1) Employees shall report to work dressed in a manner that is appropriate and consistent with their job assignments (Exhibit A). No clothing shall be worn which:
    - (a) Creates a health and/or safety hazard  
Examples: jewelry, shoes, hair, fingernail length, baggy/loose clothing, strong perfumes/colognes, anything that prohibits the employee from wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).
    - (b) Is excessively revealing  
Examples: low-waist pants; undergarments that show between top and bottoms when standing, bending, stooping or sitting; clothing that is too tight; tops with spaghetti straps; strapless tops; halter tops; sheer clothing.
    - (c) Displays any words, pictures, or designs which would be considered by reasonable standards to be vulgar, profane, or otherwise inappropriate for the workplace.  
Examples: slang/swear words; gang colors and/or symbols; drug, alcohol, or tobacco words and/or pictures.

**Policy 4119.22 (Continued)**

- (2) Employees are expected to follow the above policy as well as any policy established by another agency at your worksite (Exhibit B).

Example: school district, job site, Juvenile Detention Facility.

4. Application to Administrators and Supervisors

Administrators and supervisors are expected not only to abide by these standards but more importantly to model the standards; set a positive example for others; and monitor, encourage, and help others to maintain the standards.

5. Review and Feedback

- a. The above standards are a part of our jobs. Therefore, all employees will be held accountable for standards along with all other aspects of job performance.
- b. Administrators and supervisors are responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and providing feedback to employees regarding the County Office standards. These standards are important and will be treated as such.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

- 35160 Authority of governing boards
- 35160.1 Broad authority of school districts

GOVERNMENT CODE

- 3543.2 Scope of representation
- 12949 Dress standards, consistency with gender identity

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

- 80331-80338 Rules of conduct for professional educators

COURT DECISIONS

- San Mateo City School District v. PERB (1983) 33 Cal. 3d 850
- Domico v. Rapides Parish School Board (5th Cir. 1982) 675 F.2d 100
- East Hartford Education Assn. v. Board of Education (2d Cir. 1977) 562 F. 2d 856
- Finot v. Pasadena Board of Education (1967) 250 Cal.App.2d 189

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS BOARD DECISIONS

- Santa Ana Unified School District (1998) 22 PERC P29, 136
- Inglewood Unified School District (1985) 10 PERC P17, 000

Policy Cross-Reference:

- 4020 Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace
- 4118 Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
- 4119.25 Political Activities of Employees
- 5132 Dress and Grooming
- 7110.1 Tobacco-Free Environment
- 7110.2 Drug-Free Environment

OFFICE OF THE SOLANO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

This format is to be used by employees and supervisors to assist in determining appropriate attire for the work site. The list is neither inclusive nor exclusive.

**PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE STANDARDS**

EXAMPLES	OFFICE	SCH. SITE OFFICE	CLASSROOMS	OTHER	
Clothing with spaghetti straps					
Halter and/or strapless Tops					
Midriff tops					
Clothing that allows skin and/or undergarments to show between the top and bottom when standing					
Clothing that allows skin and/or undergarment to show (front or back) between the top and bottom when bending or stooping					
Skirts, dresses and shorts should be no shorter than your fingertips when arms are extended straight down sides.					
Clothing with holes					
Clothing with stains					
Clothing with inappropriate (for work location) wording and/or pictures, gang colors & clothing					
Shoes that do not have a heel strap					
Open toed shoes (flip flops allowed in pool area only)					
High heel shoes					
Tattoos with inappropriate wording or pictures must be covered					
Clothing worn while swimming must be appropriate for working with children in the pool. Non Sheer in/out of water					
Piercing jewelry that can be distracting to a student (eyebrow, nose, lip, tongue, cheek, ears)					
Strong perfumes/colognes and/or body odor					
Jewelry that can be distracting to students – necklaces, bracelets					
Cell Phones					
Headsets					
Fingernails					
Skin Tight Clothing or Baggy Clothing					
Head Coverings					
Hair					

**If you're not sure if the clothing item is appropriate, then it probably isn't.**

**PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE STANDARDS**

Types of Locations

**Offices:**

Main Office  
Larsen Administration  
Golden Hills Administration  
Transportation

**School Site Offices:**

Larsen Center  
T.C. McDaniel Center  
Golden Hills  
Community Schools

**Classrooms:**

Larsen Center  
Special Education  
Community Schools

T.C. McDaniel Center  
Special Education

Golden Hills  
Community Schools  
TPP/WAI

Juvenile Detention Facility

K-12 School Sites  
Special Education

**Other:**

Swimming Pool  
Maintenance – (Uniforms)