
Section C. Standards

Introduction In keeping with the true spirit of an organization of volunteers, the possession and wear of the Auxiliary uniform by Auxiliarists must be a matter of personal pride. When in uniform, an Auxiliarist is a representative of DHS, the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary, and the U.S. Government. Appearance, uniform fit, and grooming shall reflect the pride of that representation.

C.1. Setting an Example Elected and appointed leaders are expected to wear the uniform properly to set an example. They must help other Auxiliarists develop proper habits of personal appearance, hygiene, and grooming when wearing the uniform.

Uniforms shall be pressed, clean, fit properly, and be in good repair. The nature of Auxiliary uniform policies occasionally warrant the authorized wear of specific items until they are no longer in serviceable condition. A uniform item shall be considered no longer serviceable when any aspect of it is irreparably damaged, soiled, stained, frayed, worn, discolored, faded, or altered. All Auxiliarists, particularly those in leadership positions, have the responsibility to render judgments and take appropriate action regarding adherence to the Coast Guard's high standards of appearance relative to the serviceability of uniform items as worn by themselves and their fellow Auxiliarists.

Although Auxiliarists are not required to closely adhere to Coast Guard appearance standards (e.g., weight standards, grooming standards) on a daily basis, circumstances may arise in which close adherence to standards is expected. For example, assignment to duty at a Coast Guard training facility for recruits, enlisted leaders, or new officers carries an implicit expectation that Auxiliarists closely adhere to Coast Guard standards of appearance in order to sustain and support the examples that are strived and set for these groups. Particular attention shall be paid by Auxiliary leaders to ensure that Auxiliary representatives in such circumstances adhere as closely as practicable to Coast Guard grooming, weight, and overall appearance standards. Considerable deviation from these standards would not be appropriate in such circumstances, and it should give cause to Auxiliary leaders to consider the propriety of allowing an Auxiliarist who does not closely adhere to them to so serve.

C.2. Uniforms, Accessories, and Coast Guard Markings

Uniforms and accessories obtained through recognized sources have been Coast Guard certified. The products are made of modern materials and constructed to precise specifications with care. Cleaning and maintenance of uniforms and accessories should present no problems. Labels frequently provide specific cleaning instructions.

With the exception of authorized Coast Guard unit ball caps, Auxiliarists should avoid wearing uniform items that carry Coast Guard markings, particularly Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), work clothes, and organizational clothing. It is the responsibility of the Coast Guard unit that provides such uniform items to Auxiliarists to provide uniform items that are properly marked for Auxiliarists. Time and circumstances may not facilitate the availability of Coast Guard-provided uniform items that have Auxiliary markings. In such circumstances, Auxiliarists may wear the provided uniform items despite not having appropriate Auxiliary markings. However, all due effort shall be put forth to correct such circumstances so that Auxiliarists are provided uniform items with appropriate Auxiliary markings as soon thereafter as possible.

C.3. Uniformity in Grooming and Appearance

Proper Auxiliary uniform wear parallels commonly accepted professional civilian dress standards. The word uniform implies consistency and conformance to certain standards.

NOTE

Ethnic, religious, other apparel or wearage, or personal display items shall not be considered standard uniform items.

It is impossible to provide examples of every appropriate or unacceptable hairstyle or “conservative” or “eccentric” grooming, therefore, the good judgment of leaders at all levels is key to upholding the Auxiliary grooming policy. Attaining the active duty grooming and appearance standards should always be held as the goal for all Auxiliarists wearing the uniform. Those who choose not to set this example, or wish to express a degree of individuality, shall wear the Auxiliary Blue Blazer outfit in lieu of the uniform.

The following standards may conflict with civilian practices, as they are service-particular and require adherence by the Auxiliarist:

C.3.a. Hats and Caps

Auxiliarists shall wear hats and caps squarely on the head. Cap grommets will be snug against the cap cover.

C.3.b. Shirts, Coats, and Jackets	Auxiliarists shall wear shirts, coats, jackets, overcoats, and raincoats buttoned. Sleeves shall not be rolled up except as authorized for the ODU. When not wearing a tie, only the collar button may be unbuttoned. Military creases are optional on light blue shirts and dark blue dress shirts only. If worn, form creases by pressing two parallel vertical folds in the front of the shirt from the shoulder seam through the center of each pocket to the bottom of the shirt. For men, form three parallel vertical folds on the back, centered between the shirt side seams to the bottom of the yoke. For women, form three parallel vertical folds starting at the center of the shoulder seams and from the middle of the collar seam to the bottom of the shirt. Sewn-in military creases are not authorized.
C.3.c. Ties	Auxiliarists will not wear a tie when it might be a safety hazard.
C.3.d. Trousers, Slacks, and Socks	The bottoms of trousers or slacks without cuffs should touch the shoe tops. The socks must not be exposed when the wearer is standing.
C.3.e. Skirts	Except for formal uniforms, a female skirt hemline will be no higher than the crease in the back of the knee nor lower than 2 inches below the crease.
C.3.f. Handbags	Women's handbags may be carried in the hand or worn over the shoulder with the strap. Women may shorten the strap and carry the handbag over the arm.
C.3.g. Personal Display Items	Members in uniform may wear personal display items such as bracelets, necklaces, wristwatches, ID bracelets and rings. If visible while in uniform, these items must be conservative, non-controversial, and in good taste (necklaces and neck chains must not be visible). There shall be no more than two rings on each hand. Eccentricities in color and manner of wear (for example, rings on every finger, a large number of bracelets, and large chains) shall not be worn when in uniform.
C.3.h. Earrings/Body Piercing/Tattoos	In uniform, men are prohibited from wearing earrings. Women may wear one pair of gold, silver, or pearl earrings which should be small (maximum ¼ inch) and of the round ball style. Women may wear diamond stud earrings (maximum ¼ inch) with the Dinner Dress uniforms. Dangling and hoop earrings are prohibited while in uniform. No articles, jewelry, or studs other than those specified for women shall be through or attached to the ear, nose, tongue, or any other visible body part while in uniform.

	Tattoos, body piercing, brands, intentional scarring or mutilation, or modifications of the head and neck are prohibited unless required for legitimate medical purposes. Any markings on the neck area may not show above the collar line of the Tropical Blue shirt along the back and sides of the neck, nor the line of this shirt at the front of the neck. Furthermore, any markings of the body that are contrary to the published basic core values of the Coast Guard, show political endorsement, advocate or symbolize all types of discrimination, sexual images, supremacist or extremist groups, gangs, drug use, are prejudicial to good order and discipline, or are of a nature to bring discredit upon the service are prohibited (refer to Tattoo and Body Markings Policy for Coast Guard Accessions, COMDTINST 1000.1 (series)).
C.3.i. Cosmetics/ Fingernails	Women's cosmetics shall be of conservative color and worn in good taste. Eccentricities in color and manner of wear shall not be worn while in uniform. Men and women shall keep their nails clean. Women may wear nail polish, but the color shall be conservative and neutral in color. Decorative nail art is not authorized while in uniform.
C.3.j. Necklaces and Neck Chains	Necklaces and neck chains must not be visible when wearing the uniform.
C.3.k. Suspenders	Suspenders may be worn under coats and jackets so as to prevent the suspenders from being exposed.
C.3.l. Additional Jewelry	The only additional jewelry authorized are cuff links, shirt studs, tie clasps, and tie tacs. These items include the tie tac earned at SAR School which may be worn on ties.
C.3.m. Miscellaneous Articles	Many articles should not be worn or carried exposed on the uniform. These articles include pencils, pens, watch chains or fobs, pins, handkerchiefs, combs, cigarettes, cigars, pipes and similar items.

C.3.n. Hair/Facial Hair	The goal is for men's hair to be neat and clean, not touch the collar, and be away from the ears. Beards, sideburns, or mustaches if worn, shall be well groomed and neatly trimmed at all times in order not to present a ragged appearance. No portion of a mustache will extend below the lip line of the upper lip. Handlebar mustaches or other eccentric styles are not appropriate while in uniform. Full and partial beards, van dykes, and goatees are authorized. In uniform, patches and spotty clumps of facial hair are not considered beards and are not authorized. The bulk of the beard (distance that the mass of facial hair protrudes from the skin on the face) shall not exceed 1 inch. The length of individual hair shall be limited to 1½ inches. The wearing of beards and mustaches shall not interfere with the operation of oxygen masks, gas masks, or other safety/survival gear. As such, the wearing of beards and moustaches may be prohibited for those participating in certain operational missions as deemed necessary by the Director or a Coast Guard Commanding Officer supervising that mission. For uniformity during public appearances as a distinctive element of the Auxiliary, personnel assigned to a Ceremonial Honor Guard shall be clean-shaven. Women's hair should not be below the collar or extend below the eyebrows when the hat is removed.
C.3.o. Windbreakers and Jackets	Windbreakers and jackets are authorized for use with the Tropical, Winter Dress, Undress and Working uniforms. When worn, the jacket shall be zipped at least ⅔ of the way up.
C.3.p. Eyewear	Frame and lens styles will be conservative and in good taste. Mirrored lenses are prohibited while in uniform.
C.3.q. Religious/Ethnic Apparel	Religious apparel is defined as articles of clothing worn as part of the doctrinal or traditional observance of the religious faith practiced by the member. Auxiliarists may wear religious apparel while in uniform, provided that the religious apparel, other than religious headgear, is not visible, that the wearing of such religious apparel does not interfere with the Auxiliarist's performance of duty, and does not interfere with the fit of any article of the uniform or the Auxiliarist's appearance in uniform. An Auxiliarist may be asked by anyone in the chain of leadership to provide objective and verifiable information describing the relationship between the article of religious apparel and the doctrinal or traditional observance of the religious faith practiced by the Auxiliarist. Cases in which the relationship between any article of religious apparel and the doctrinal or traditional observance of the religious faith of the Auxiliarist is not clearly established shall be referred to Commandant (CG-5421), via the chain of leadership, for final resolution.

C.3.r. Religious
Headgear

Religious headgear is defined as personal head coverings worn as part of the doctrinal or traditional observance of the religious faith practiced by the member. It is a subset of religious apparel. Auxiliarists may wear religious headgear while in uniform, provided that the headgear meets the following criteria:

- (1) Must be black or match the hair color of the wearer.
- (2) Must be of a style and size that it can be completely covered by, and not interfere with, the wearing or appearance of any uniform headgear, whether or not the uniform headgear is being worn.
- (3) Cannot interfere with the proper wear or functioning of protective clothing or equipment.
- (4) Cannot bear any writing, symbols, or pictures, including writing or images woven into the fabric or the headgear.
- (5) Shall not be worn in place of uniform headgear when such uniform headgear is required in accordance with current Coast Guard uniform regulations.
- (6) Cannot cover any portion of the face or forehead.

C.3.s. Religious
Jewelry

Jewelry bearing religious inscriptions or otherwise indicating religious affiliation or belief may be worn, subject to the generally applicable uniform regulations for jewelry that is not of a religious nature.
