



Department of
**Labor & Workforce
Development**

Date: April 3, 2017

TO: All TDLWD Employees

FROM: Burns P. Phillips, III *Burns P. Phillips III*
Commissioner

Subject: Dress Code

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) expect employees to dress appropriately in business attire. Business attire is not an invitation to take our dress code to extremes or to simply underdress. The TDLWD work environment is a business setting that allows employees to dress comfortable but remain professional.

Our continued goal is a workplace environment that values all employees. We expect that your business attire will exhibit common sense and professionalism. Employees are expected to demonstrate good judgment and should never wear any clothing that could be perceived as offensive or cause others to feel uncomfortable. Attire that is too revealing, too tight, and too short is unacceptable. Clothing with profane language, statements or clothing that promotes causes will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, politics, religion, sexuality, race, age, gender, and ethnicity.

Courtesy and the professional image you project with your clothing must be the guiding factors that you use to assess whether or not your dress appropriately fits as business attire.

Employees who wear attire that is deemed inappropriate in this workplace will be dealt with on an individual basis rather than subjecting all employees to a more stringent dress code for appropriate business attire. Employees must have a current medical certification noting the medical condition and why there is a need to wear athletic shoes or any shoe other than business professional. Employees are required to update this medical exception twice per year.

The department recognizes that tattoos and body art are more common today; however, no visible tattoos (except for religious purposes), body art or body piercing are permitted during business hours. The piercing of holes in parts of the body other than the ear in order to insert rings, studs, or other pieces of jewelry is prohibited during business hours.

Basic guidelines for appropriate attire

Basic elements for appropriate and professional business attire include clothing that is in neat and clean condition. Basic guidelines **for appropriate workplace dress do not** include tight or short pants/skirts or dresses, tank tops, halter tops, low-cut blouses or sweaters, or any extreme style of fashion in dress, footwear, accessories, fragrances or hair.

Although it is impossible and undesirable to establish an absolute dress and appearance code, TDLWD will apply a reasonable and professional workplace standard to individuals on a case-by-case basis. Management may make exceptions for special occasions or in the case of inclement weather, at which time employees will be notified in advance. An employee unsure of what is appropriate should check with his or her manager or supervisor beforehand.

If a supervisor or manager decides that an employee's dress or appearance is not appropriate as outlined in this policy, he or she may take corrective action and require the employee to leave the work area and make the necessary changes to comply with the policy.

Employees who must leave work to change clothes for business reasons will use annual time to do so. When meeting clients, business dress guidelines must be observed, unless the client has specifically requested otherwise. Violations of this policy will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Business casual is defined as follows:

Casual shirts: All shirts with collars, business casual crewneck or V-neck shirts, blouses, golf and polo shirts. Examples of inappropriate shirts include T-shirts, shirts with inappropriate slogans, tank tops, muscle shirts, camouflage and crop tops. In specified circumstances, T-shirts may be approved and provided for specific events only.

Pants: Casual slacks and trousers without holes, frays, etc. Examples of inappropriate pants generally include cargo pants, capris, shorts, jeans, camouflage and pants worn below the waist or hip line.

Footwear: Casual slip-on or tie shoes, dress sandals preferably with heel straps. Examples of inappropriate footwear include sneakers, thongs, floppy sandals, flip-flops, construction boots, athletic shoes or hunting boots.

Hats: Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are allowed.

Personal Hygiene: Maintaining well-kept hair, good personal hygiene, and general neat grooming is expected. Cologne and perfume should not be used in excess.

Hair: Hair should be clean, combed, and neatly trimmed or arranged. Unkempt hair is not permitted. Sideburns, mustaches, and beards should be neatly trimmed. Non-traditional hair colors are not permitted.