MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing	***Number: 201-N***
Effective Date: 01-22-2004	***Revised Date: 08-31-2026***

Rescinds:	***No. 800-813***	***Dated: 01-03-2002***
	Dress Policy 003	***10-14-1992***
	Uniform Policy 001-A & 001-B	***12-01-1999***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing Policy, 201-A	***12-10-2002***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing Policy, 201-B	***01-22-2004***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-C	***07-05-2005***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-D	***04-01-2009***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-E	***10-20-2009***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-F	***03-14-2011***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing201-G	***11-26-2012***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-H	***02-28-2014***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-I	***04-07-2014***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-J	***10-03-2014***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-K	***02-03-2017***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-L	***04-23-2020***
	Uniform and Plainclothes Clothing 201-M	***05-17-2023***

Approved By:

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and regulations for wearing, care, and control of the Department uniform and attire for plainclothes officers.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. CLASS A UNIFORM

The Class A Uniform for sworn personnel will consist of the midnight blue uniform pants and a midnight blue long-sleeved shirt with tie or turtleneck shirt.

B. CLASS B UNIFORM

1. The Class B Uniform for sworn personnel will consist of the midnight blue uniform pants, midnight blue short-sleeve shirt, and dark blue or black T-shirt.

    a. The Class B Uniform for Special Operations Waterfront Unit will consist of midnight blue uniform pants or midnight blue cargo shorts (weather permitting or officer's / supervisor's discretion) and current uniform shirt with a black or dark blue T-shirt. While wearing shorts, officers will wear a low-cut or folded-down black sock (plain, no logos or designs) and department-approved tennis-style shoes.

    b. The uniform consisting of cargo shorts and approved tennis-style shoes will only be worn by officers assigned to Waterfront shifts, Beach Patrol, Bicycle Patrol, Community Team, and any other duty if directed by the Division Commander.

2. The Class B Uniform for sworn personnel in the Support Service Division will consist of the following:

    a. Sworn Personnel – Matching midnight blue approved tactical cargo style pants and shirt. The cargo type uniform shirt shall have the approved identifying patches attached. Sworn personnel may opt to substitute the cargo shirt with an approved midnight blue polo-style shirt with the appropriate identifying patches attached.

    b. If the wearer finds it necessary to wear a T-shirt, the T-shirt must be black in color.

C. ATTIRE FOR NON-SWORN PERSONNEL

1. Non-Sworn personnel shall wear appropriate office attire consistent with the professional image promoted by the Department and City. This attire shall represent the City's adopted "First in Service" philosophy while showing separation from official duties associated with law enforcement action. All non-uniformed personnel shall display their city-issued identification card while in city-owned buildings or while conducting city business.

    a. The department will provide non-sworn personnel with black or navy color polo-style shirts embroidered with the city logo that must be worn while on duty. The purchase of all additional clothing is the responsibility of the person holding

this position. Non-sworn personnel shall wear black or khaki color pants.

b. It is to be understood that the City shall bear no responsibility for the replacement of any damaged clothing that occurs while being worn while carrying out any and all identified required job functions. An exception to this would be if damaged clothing qualifies as part of a workers' compensation claim.

c. The Division Commander has the authority to allow employees in specific positions to wear full civilian attire.

D. CLASS C UNIFORM

The Class C Uniform will vary depending upon the needs of specific units, with the exact composition determined by the Division Commander. The Class C uniform will be worn when performing the duties of the unit it is designed for.

E. DRESS UNIFORM

The Dress Uniform will consist of the Class A Uniform with tie (and Dress hat for all sworn personnel).

F. FOOTWEAR

1. Only shoes/boots which are issued or approved by the Department are authorized for wear with the Dress Uniform, Class A, B or C Uniforms.

2. The Captain or his/her designee may give authorization and/or special consideration to a special request to deviate from the footwear offered by the Department.

   a. The employee exercising this option is responsible for the purchase and upkeep of the footwear (if outside of the shoe reimbursement program).

   b. It is to be understood that the City shall bear no responsibility in replacement of any damaged clothing that occurs while being worn while carrying out any and all identified required job functions. An exception to this would be if damaged clothing qualifies as part of a workers' compensation claim.

3. All socks worn with uniform shoes are to be black in color. If boots are worn, the choice of black or white socks is permissible. All socks being worn are to be plain, with no distracting logos or designs.

    a. Low-cut or folded-down socks are to be worn with tennis-style shoes.

    b. No low-cut or folded-down socks are to be worn with long pants or BDU's.

    c. Officers in special units who wear tennis-style shoes are to wear low-cut or folded down white or black socks (plain, with no distracting logo or designs).

4. Footwear which was purchased by an employee and for which the cost was reimbursed by the Department may not be worn off-duty; otherwise, the footwear will lose its tax-exempt status.

III. PROCEDURE

A. UNIFORM AND UNIFORM ACCESSORIES

1. The uniform of the day shall be worn in the intended manner with the badge worn on the outermost garment.

2. The nameplate will be worn on the Class A, Class B, and Dress Uniform. The nameplate will be worn centered above the right shirt pocket. Officers may elect to purchase the "Serving Since" plate to be worn as part of the nameplate.

3. Honor bars (Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, Purple Heart) may be worn at all times on Class A and Class B Uniforms. The bars will be worn centered one-half inch above the nameplate. If wearing more than one bar, the order of wear will be from the officer's left to right, with the highest, the Medal of Honor, followed by the Medal of Valor and Purple Heart. Honor bars will always be considered the highest awards.

4. The Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, and Purple Heart ribbons shall only be worn at the time of presentation, ceremonial functions, or when specified by the Chief of Police.

5. Award bars are authorized for optional wear on Class A and Class B Uniforms. The award bars will be worn centered one-half inch above the nameplate or, if subordinate, to the officer's

right and above the honor bars. If more than one, the bars will be worn in the following order of honor:

Merit, Life-Saving, Veteran's Combat, Honor Guard, Police Shield, Officer of the Year, Military Service, J. P. Strom, Distinguished Graduate, Top Gun Challenge Award, FBI National Academy, and Hurricane/Natural Disaster.

Note: These award bars will be worn from the officer's left to right, with the highest award bars bottom to top.

6. The issued dress hat shall only be worn with the dress uniform.

7. The following items will not be worn on the uniform: ornaments, jewelry, civic pins, fraternity pins, etc. The only exceptions are those pins issued, awarded, or approved by the Chief of Police. An issued pin may be worn centered above the nameplate and/or honor bars or award bars if applicable, on the uniform shirt. A single tie bar or tiepin, in keeping with the professional image of the Police Department, may be worn.

    a. The following special certification pins are authorized for wear, and only two pins may be worn at any one time. If wearing one pin, it will be worn centered directly over the pocket button one-half inch above the nametag or honor/award bars (if applicable). If you are a certified Traffic Safety Officer, you will not be permitted to wear a datamaster certification pin.

        i. Data Master / Breathalyzer Certification Pin

        ii. SWAT Team Member

        iii. Police Motorcycle Operator

        iv. Police Bicycle Operator

        v. Traffic Safety Officer (TSO) certification

        vi. CINT Team Member (Negotiator)

        vii. Patrol Rifle

        viii. CIT (Crisis Intervention Training)

        ix. CERT (Civil Emergency Response Team)

b. Police and Detention Officers who are FTO's will wear the approved PFC patch with Field Training Officer identifier. Telecommunications FTO's will have the designation on a nametape on the polo shirt. Only current and former FTO's who have successfully completed the FTO program and received certification are authorized to wear the FTO insignia.

c. K9 insignias will be worn on shirt lapels. Only current K9 officers are authorized to wear the K9 insignia.

d. Exceptions: During special campaigns such as United Way and/or Blood Donor Programs, the emblem or symbol of participation may be worn during the campaign in addition to the above.

8. Individual officers have the choice of wearing a long-sleeved or short-sleeve uniform shirt year-round. Certain requirements pertaining to both long-sleeve and short-sleeve shirts are specified throughout this policy.

9. Employees wearing long-sleeved shirts will adhere to the following restrictions:

    a. Sworn officers of the rank of Captain and Lieutenant will wear a uniform tie while attending official functions and ceremonies; however, while performing normal daily assignments, the wearing of a turtleneck is permissible if approved by higher command.

    b. Sworn officers on administrative assignments (i.e., light duty, Administrative Division officers, Support Services Division officers, etc.) will wear a uniform or clothing approved by the division commander. This dress will be specific to the assignments given to the individual employee while on this assignment.

    c. Non-Sworn officers below the rank of Lieutenant who are assigned to Detention duties will wear either a uniform tie or approved turtleneck with long-sleeved shirts.

    d. Sworn officers below the rank of Lieutenant who are assigned to patrol duties (street work) will wear either a uniform tie or an approved turtleneck.

e. Note: The approved turtleneck shirt is black in color and can be worn with or without a silver MBPD monogram on the left collar. Turtleneck shirts are purchased by each individual officer if the officer elects to exercise this option.

10. Restrictions for wearing turtleneck shirts for sworn personnel include:

    a. Must be maintained in serviceable condition.

    b. May be worn with BDU uniform by any officer regardless of rank;

    c. May not be worn to General Sessions Court, Family Court, or Municipal Court Jury Trials under any circumstances. Officers expecting to be called to court while wearing a long-sleeved uniform shirt must have a tie available for wear.

    d. Off-duty officers scheduled for Municipal Court, Preliminary Hearings, or any judicial or administrative hearings, including those described in #3 above, who elect to wear a uniform with a long-sleeved uniform shirt are required to wear a tie.

    e. On-duty officers scheduled for Municipal Court, Preliminary Hearings, or any judicial or administrative hearing not described above who elect to wear a uniform with a long-sleeve uniform shirt are encouraged to wear a tie to the proceedings; however, the turtleneck shirt is acceptable.

11. Uniform jackets or Uniform Sweaters may be worn with a short-sleeved uniform shirt without a tie. Neckwear is not authorized for wear with a short-sleeved shirt (i.e., tie, turtleneck, etc.).

12. All employees wearing short-sleeved uniform shirts must have them properly buttoned, to and including the second button from the top, at all times with no exceptions.

13. Employees attending In-Service training shall wear the duty uniform of the day for the section to which they are assigned for all classroom instruction. No uniform shorts or other shorts may be worn to any In- Service training or other training at the Police

Department's training facility unless approved by the training lieutenant or above. The uniform for outdoor classes of instruction and range instruction shall be the BDU uniform with black T-shirt and vest for all sworn personnel unless otherwise directed by Training personnel. Non-sworn personnel will wear the uniform of the day to driving and firing range instruction. Division Commanders may exempt an employee from the above requirement with the exception of wearing shorts to training. The Training Lieutenant or Sergeant may authorize the wearing of shorts for specific training courses.

14. Employees attending the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy or other outside training or any official meeting are considered to be on duty and shall wear specified uniforms or clothing consistent with the image of the law enforcement professional. Clothing such as tank tops, shorts, overalls, etc., is prohibited. Officers are reminded that jeans are not considered appropriate business attire and shall be worn only if directed by the course instructor or if required by their job assignments. Any question pertaining to the proper attire may be answered by the Division Captain.

15. Personnel attending court shall wear either a Class A or B uniform or appropriate professional apparel. Uniform combinations that include shorts are acceptable for Municipal Bench Trials only and only while the officer is on his/her regular duty assignment. All other court appearances will require a Class A or B uniform with the standard uniform shirt and pants or business attire.

16. Guidelines for wearing long- and short-sleeve uniform shirts do not affect those uniformed personnel assigned to special sections or units within their division (i.e., Beach Patrol, Bicycle Patrol, Motorcycle Units, Crime Scene Section, Detention [wearing of sweaters], BDU's for special operations assignments, Animal Control, etc.). Existing SOPs for these uniform items remain in effect.

17. Additionally, any changes such as those created by special weather conditions or special events may be approved by the individual Division Commander or the Chief of Police.

18. Uniformed officers assigned to temporary light duty assignments have the option of wearing the Class A or B uniform (or Class C if approved by the Division Commander due to special

circumstances) or civilian clothing (see #3 Plainclothes section for approved guidelines).

19. Questions concerning details of uniform dress or personal appearance not covered by policy shall be decided by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

20. Restrictions for wearing a knit hat (Beanie/Watch Cap) for sworn and non-sworn personnel include:

    a. Outside air temperature must be at or below 45 degrees while wearing the knit hat;

    b. May only be worn outdoors; officers will make all attempts to remove the knit hat before entering buildings and when dealing with persons indoors if not an emergency situation or doing so could pose an officer safety issue;

    c. May be worn with Class A, Class B, and Class C Uniform by any officer regardless of rank;

    d. Shall never be worn with Dress Uniform;

    e. May not be worn to General Sessions Court, Family Court, or Municipal Court Jury Trials under any circumstances;

    f. Note: The approved knit hat (Beanie/Watch Cap) is black in color with a silver MBPD monogram. Knit hats are purchased by each individual officer if the officer elects to exercise this option.

21. The Patrol ball cap is issued to specified employees and is designed for wear during inclement weather (rain or prolonged exposure to the sun). These hats are not to be worn indoors, nor is it to be worn while in Class A uniform or dress uniforms.

22. All Uniform jackets and sweaters shall have the Department/Division patch attached to each arm. No Uniform jacket or sweater shall be worn without the proper patch.

B. PROHIBITED ACTIVITY WHILE IN UNIFORM

1. Whether on meal breaks or traveling to and from work, uniformed police employees shall refrain from activities that are inappropriate to the professional image, or which might be misinterpreted by the public.

2. An employee is prohibited from wearing a Myrtle Beach Police Department uniform while appearing as a defendant in any court proceeding arising from off-duty activities unless authorized by the Chief of Police.

C. PLAINCLOTHES

1. Officers assigned to plainclothes duty shall wear civilian dress clothing consistent with the image of the law enforcement profession.

    a. Appropriate dress for men will be business suits or sports coats and slacks with a tie. No rope or string ties are permitted.

    b. Male employees may wear any type of dress shoe except sandals, open shoes, platform shoes, or shoes not consistent with business attire.

    c. Female employees shall wear such clothing normally accepted as professional business attire with appropriate footwear.

2. The Division Commander may alter the personal appearance, dress, and equipment requirements of plainclothes officers if needed.

3. Plainclothes officers, including all police personnel of the rank of Sergeant or below assigned to plainclothes duties, shall adhere to the following:

    a. Plainclothes officers shall carry, at a minimum, a department-issued firearm, an extra magazine, and handcuffs while on duty.

    b. If police equipment is not concealed, the officer shall clearly display a police badge on a neck chain or attached to the belt in the vicinity of the firearm.

    c. The equipment requirements do not apply to officers engaged in authorized undercover operations where

carrying such equipment would compromise officer safety, jeopardize operational integrity, or conflict with the operational role or cover identity. Undercover officers shall carry equipment appropriate to the mission as determined by the Unit Supervisor.

d. Plainclothes officers responding to any police emergency including but not limited to critical incidents, rapid response situations, active threat events, or large-scale operations, shall wear readily visible police identification (e.g., POLICE vest, outerwear, or placard) and Department-issued body armor when practical. Identification must be worn in a manner clearly visible to responding personnel and the public.

D. SPECIALIZED IDENTIFICATION CLOTHING

Division Commanders may authorize plainclothes officers to wear Department-issued specialized identification clothing (e.g., outerwear with "POLICE" printed on it) when operational conditions require rapid recognition or to protect other clothing from weather conditions or soiling.

E. IDENTIFICATION

Officers shall carry their driver's licenses and police identification cards at all times, except when impractical, dangerous, or harmful to the progress of a criminal investigation.

F. GENERAL

1. Employees are to keep all issued uniform items clean and in good, presentable condition.

2. If an employee terminates employment with the City, all uniform items issued to them during their employment are to be returned to the Property and Evidence Section clean and in good condition.

3. Employees are to immediately notify their supervisor if an issued uniform is damaged or destroyed. A written City of Myrtle Beach Loss Report shall be completed and forwarded to their Division Captain regarding theft or loss of any issued uniform article.

4. Employees need to contact the Property and Evidence Section to have unserviceable items replaced.