

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: August 21, 2015

NUMBER: 5.10 - PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: UNIFORM, EQUIPMENT, AND WEAPONS

RELATED POLICY: [5.10](#)

ORIGINATING DIVISION: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERSEDES: DP 5.10 – 09/25/2014

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for uniform and equipment specifications for all sworn and civilian uniformed personnel.

II. SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Tattoo – the act or practice of marking the skin with indelible designs, forms, figures, art, etc., by making punctures in the skin and inserting pigment.
- B. Scarification – the act of intentional cutting of the skin for the purpose of creating a design, form, figure or art.
- C. Branding – the act of intentional burning of the skin for the purpose of creating a design, form, figure or art.
- D. Piercing – the act of creating a hole in any part of the body for the purpose of inserting an object, jewelry or ornamentation.

- E. Excessive tattoos, scarifications or brands – any tattoos, scarifications or brands that exceed 30% of the exposed body part, those above the collarbone readily visible when wearing an open collar uniform, and/or any which detract from an appropriate professional image.

IV. PRESCRIBED EQUIPMENT

- A. Required articles not supplied by the Department are to be provided at the employee's expense. Refer to POA or MEA Memorandums of Understanding for further details.
- B. Non-uniformed sworn personnel below the rank of assistant chief are required to maintain and have available at their assigned workplace a complete Class A and Class B regulation uniform.
- C. If there is any doubt as to whether a particular item meets Departmental specifications or if a member wishes to recommend any modifications or additions to uniform apparel or equipment, they must first obtain approval of the Uniform Safety and Equipment Committee, who will obtain subsequent approval from the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- D. Uniform stores have current Department specifications and are obligated to provide officers with that information.

V. WEARING OF UNIFORM, BADGE AND NAME TAG

- A. Personnel shall not wear combinations of uniform and civilian attire except to cover up the uniform while traveling to and from work, or as directed in accomplishing work assignments. Discretion is required to avoid an unkempt, out-of-uniform appearance in view of the public.
- B. On-duty personnel shall be in complete uniform unless assigned to plainclothes duty, or specifically directed otherwise by proper authority.
- C. Uniformed personnel shall keep their uniforms clean and pressed and their badges and name tags clean and bright. Leather accessories and shoes shall be well polished.
- D. Uniforms shall be made of the material, type and style prescribed in the Uniform Specifications Manual. Such style shall not be altered in any manner without authorization of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

- E. Uniformed personnel shall wear the appropriate regulation badge over the left breast pocket on the outermost garment. The regulation name tag (all gold or gold with black lettering for sworn and reserve officers, and all silver or silver with black lettering for cadets and civilian personnel) shall be worn above the right breast pocket on the uniform shirt or outermost garment (excluding rain gear).
- F. Officers shall furnish their name and Department member identification numbers to any person requesting this information when they are on duty or while representing the Department in an official capacity, except when the withholding of such information is necessary for the performance of police duties or is authorized by the proper authority.

VI. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

- A. On-duty uniformed officers, including Reserves, except when assigned to office duties, shall at all times wear a gun belt and holster, carry an approved handgun and ammunition, spare magazines and ammunition, Oleoresin Capsicum (OC spray), approved impact weapon, badge, identification card, whistle, a flashlight (as necessary), and handcuffs. ASP manufactures a tactical handcuff, which incorporates a laminated, heat-treated stainless steel lock set, with a polymer/plastic lock assembly. While on duty, officers shall not carry or use any handcuffs containing polymer/plastic materials. These prohibited handcuffs include all chain link, hinge, and rigid styles of handcuffs containing polymer.
- B. Uniformed officers have the option to carry the PR-24 side handle baton, Orcutt Police Nunchakus (OPNs), expandable side handle baton or the expandable straight baton on their duty belt. Officers must have their PR-24 baton or fixed 26" or 29" wooden straight baton available for field incidents (i.e., crowd control). The expandable straight baton is not authorized for crowd control incidents. The expandable straight baton is authorized for use by non-uniformed sworn personnel as optional equipment. Handcuffs must be carried in a leather case. Uniformed and non-uniformed officers assigned to office duty shall carry a Department-approved handgun when they are required to be armed. Saps and sap gloves are expressly prohibited.

Note: Personnel electing to carry any of these impact weapons, who have not received academy instruction on their use, must complete the Department-approved certification through In-Service Training prior to carrying the weapon. Upon successful completion of the certification, a written authorization form will be placed in the officer's training and Department personnel files. Officers may only purchase and use the Monadnock Expandable Side Handle Baton (PR-24X) 24" model. There are several approved expandable straight baton manufacturers. Officers may only purchase and use the ASP, Winchester, Monadnock, and Casco expandable straight batons in the 16", 21", and 26" lengths.

- C. All field personnel, Sergeant and below, including Reserves and Police Service Officers (PSOs) are required to maintain and carry in the field a Department-issued CPR mask. (See Department Procedure 6.12, Paramedic Procedures and Emergency Treatment.)
- D. Officers, while in uniform, are not to carry extended magazines in holstered semi-automatic pistols. This practice creates a serious safety hazard. Extended magazines may be carried in a pouch for spare ammunition. Extended magazines are defined as any magazine that extends beyond the base of the magazine well, excluding the butt plate of the magazine itself.
- E. While on duty, unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police, officers in civilian clothing shall carry, on their person, a Department-issued badge, handcuffs, identification card and an approved handgun and ammunition. OC spray may be carried at the option of the officer.
- F. Whether on or off duty, officers and reserve officers shall carry, or have in their immediate possession, their Department identification card, except when impractical, dangerous for their safety or when the act would hamper an investigation. The carrying of a badge or firearm while off duty shall be at the option of the officer. If an officer chooses to carry a badge, the Department identification card shall also be carried. If an officer chooses to carry a firearm, both the Department identification card **and** badge shall be carried.
- G. Officers (except while in uniform) shall not wear or carry their firearms in such a manner as to be conspicuously exposed to view.
- H. Officers may purchase and carry flat badges as prescribed in the POA MOU Article 17A. The City agrees to provide flat badges for sale to employees. The flat badge remains the property of City and, at the time of employee termination, the badge must be returned to the Department without reimbursement to the employee. However, if the employee is retiring and eligible for a retired badge, the Department will exchange the flat badge for a retired flat badge.
- I. While on duty and assigned to the field, uniformed personnel shall wear soft body armor beneath the uniform shirt. The front armor panel with side coverage is required. The rear panel is optional, except where the side coverage is attached to the rear panel. In such cases, both front and back armor panels are required.
- J. All serialized Department-issued equipment (e.g., guns, flashlights, vests, etc.) shall be maintained by the officer to whom it is issued. If the item is unserviceable, or for any other reasons replaced, it shall be turned in to Operational Support Administration at Headquarters. Absent exigent circumstances, the item will only be in possession of, or used by, the person to whom it was issued.

VII. CORD-CUFF LEG RESTRAINT

The San Diego Police Department has authorized officers to use the cord-cuff leg restraint as outlined in Department Procedure 6.01, Handcuffing, Restraining, Searching and Transporting Procedures. The cord-cuff is mandatory equipment that may be carried on the officer's gun belt in a Department-approved leather case or in the officer's equipment bag. Officers shall not wear or carry the cord-cuff in such a manner as to be conspicuously exposed to view.

VIII. PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF SWORN AND UNIFORMED CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

Members of the Department, while on duty, shall at all times be neat and clean. Clothes shall be clean and pressed and uniforms shall be in conformity with specifications contained in this procedure. As often as necessary, members shall examine and clean their equipment and keep it in good, serviceable condition. Officers assigned to Investigations shall dress in a manner that is in keeping with good taste, judgment and moderation. Members shall present a professional appearance at all times in dress and grooming standards unless excused by the Chief of Police due to special assignment.

IX. INVESTIGATIONS SECTIONS

- A. Unless otherwise directed, male officers assigned to non-uniformed sections shall wear a suit or sport coat, slacks, shirt and tie at all times while in public and on duty.
- B. Unless otherwise directed, female officers assigned to non-uniformed sections shall dress in a business-like manner. Jewelry shall not be excessive and the hair shall be worn in a neat style.
- C. Skirts shall be no more than three inches above the knee or longer than ankle length. Extreme patterns and designs are prohibited. Conservative necklines will be worn. All clothes shall be neat and present a business-like appearance. Heels shall not be over three inches in height.

NEW

X. UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

Refer to the Uniform Specifications Manual located in the Resource Library.

XI. TATTOOS AND PIERCINGS

- A. Many factors influence the community's confidence in our Department. The image we present to the community must be one of professionalism. Our appearance is of utmost importance. It is the preference of the Department that should personnel obtain any tattoo, scarification, branding or piercing, it should be located in an area that can be covered with a Department-approved uniform or business attire.
- B. This establishes specific guidelines concerning the display of tattoos, scarifications, brands and piercing by members of the Department. It places accountability for compliance not only upon each employee, but also upon their supervisors and commanding officers.
- C. For this specific section, uniformed personnel include sworn police officers, Police Service Officers Parking Enforcement personnel, Code Compliance personnel, Reserves, RSVPs, Cadets, and Special Event Traffic Controllers.
- D. Non-uniformed sworn personnel include investigative, administrative and all other non-uniformed assignments.
- E. Uniformed Personnel
 - 1. Except as previously described, any excessive tattoos, scarifications or brands worn by uniformed Police Department personnel shall not be visible while on duty or representing the Department in any official capacity. Excessive tattoos, scarifications or brands must be covered with a Department-approved uniform including, but not limited to, a long-sleeve shirt, jacket, sweater, turtleneck sweater, Dickie, or pants.
 - 2. No exemption will be granted for any unauthorized tattoos, scarifications or brands considered inappropriate, unprofessional or offensive as previously described.
- F. Non-uniformed Sworn Personnel
 - 1. Any excessive tattoos, scarifications or brands worn by sworn personnel working plain clothes assignments shall not be visible while on duty or representing the Department in any official capacity. Excessive tattoos, scarifications or brands will be covered with approved clothing attire as outlined in this procedure.
 - 2. No exemption will be granted for any unauthorized tattoos, scarifications or brands considered inappropriate, unprofessional or offensive.

G. Non-uniformed Civilian and Volunteer Personnel

Civilian and volunteer personnel may display tattoos, scarifications or brands, except as outlined in this procedure.

- H. The display of any unauthorized tattoo, scarification or brand considered inappropriate, unprofessional or offensive, regardless of its location, by any member of the Department while on duty, or representing the Department in any official capacity, is prohibited.

The following includes, but is not limited to, the types of unauthorized tattoos, scarifications or brands prohibited by this procedure:

1. Depictions of nudity or violence;
2. Sexually explicit or vulgar art, words, phrases or profane language;
3. Symbols likely to incite a strong reaction in the workplace, e.g., swastikas, pentagrams or similar symbols; or,
4. Initials, acronyms or numbers that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations, e.g., AB, KKK, SS, MM, BGF, HA, 666 or any street gang names, numbers and/or symbols.

- I. Any member of the Department who obtains an unauthorized tattoo, scarification or brand considered inappropriate, unprofessional or offensive, shall:

1. Have the tattoo, scarification or brand removed at their own expense;
2. Cover the tattoo, scarification or brand with a Department-approved uniform as described in this procedure or the uniform specifications manual; or,
3. Cover the tattoo, scarification or brand with Department-approved business or casual attire as described in this specifications manual.

J. Piercing

1. While on duty, all members of the Department shall adhere to all sections of the specifications manual pertaining to the wearing of jewelry.
2. While on duty, all uniformed female personnel, sworn and civilian, may only wear one set of stud-type earrings with only one earring per ear. Earrings may only be worn in the earlobes. The earrings shall be plain and

no more than ¼ inch in diameter. The piercing and wearing of associated jewelry in all other visible parts of the body is prohibited.

3. While on duty, all uniformed male personnel, sworn and civilian, will not wear any visible type of jewelry designed for display through the act of body piercing.
4. While on duty, non-uniformed sworn female personnel may wear two sets of earrings per ear. Earrings may only be worn in the earlobes. The earrings shall be no more than one inch in diameter and extend no further than one inch from the bottom of the ear. Earring styles and colors should not be excessive or offensive.

K. Exceptions

1. When deemed operationally necessary, sworn Department members in undercover assignments may display tattoos, scarifications, brands or jewelry otherwise prohibited by this order with approval of their commanding officer.
2. Jewelry, tattoos, scarifications or brands that are a required part of a recognized religious organization or practice.

L. Exemptions

1. Uniformed personnel and non-uniformed sworn personnel may be granted a one-time exemption by the Chief of Police for tattoos, scarifications, or brands already in existence on or before July 14, 2004, that cannot be covered by a Department-approved uniform or business attire, as set forth in this procedure.
2. Members requesting this exemption must submit their request in writing to the Chief of Police with photographs documenting the tattoos, scarifications, or brands for which they are requesting exemption. A decision will be rendered granting or denying the exemption within thirty calendar days from receipt of the request by the Chief of Police. The final authority for granting any exemption will rest with the office of the Chief of Police or an appointed designee.
3. No exemption will be granted for any unauthorized tattoos, scarifications or brands considered inappropriate, unprofessional or offensive.

M. Special Circumstances

Commanding officers retain the authority to further limit the display of tattoos, scarifications, brands or piercings by officers within their command for a specific purpose, special events or assignments, as set forth in this Department Procedure. For example, officers working special assignments requiring regular contact with juveniles, such as JST or Juvenile Administration, are considered role models to youth. As such, the officer(s) could be required to cover their tattoos, scarifications, or brands during their assignment to these units, even if the Chief of Police has previously granted the officer an exemption.

N. Final Authority

The final authority for deciding the appropriateness of any tattoo, brand, scarification, piercing, or jewelry will rest with the Chief of Police.