

BC Conservation Officer Service

Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance Acknowledgement



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A conservation officer's professional appearance, combined with the conservation officer uniform, is the primary means by which the public image of the Conservation Officer Service is built.

A professional appearance promotes public respect for and confidence in a conservation officer and the Conservation Officer Service. Accordingly, conservation officers must abide by the organization's standards of dress and personal appearance.

After reading the policy, Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance, please sign at the bottom of this page and return it to the Officer in Charge of Staff Development, Training and Recruiting.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received a copy of Conservation Officer Service policy, Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance, and that I have read and understood this policy.

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Name of Applicant

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Signature of Applicant

Date Signed

BC Conservation Officer Service

Willingness Statement



## BC Conservation Officer Service Willingness Statement

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Comp. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

The items listed below describe some of the key duties of a member of the Conservation Officer Service. Please consider each item carefully and honestly. Your signature below indicates that you have read and fully understand the information provided in this form and your willingness to abide its terms and conditions if hired.

If you have any questions or concerns about this form, please contact the Officer in Charge of Staff Development, Training and Recruiting at: [COHQServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:COHQServices@gov.bc.ca).

### CONSERVATION OFFICERS MUST BE WILLING AND ABLE TO:

- Abide by the Code of Conduct and all other Conservation Officer Service policies and procedures.
- Apply and uphold provincial government policy and guidelines that recognize and promote a multicultural society, the principles of employment equity and a workplace free from harassment and discrimination.
- Interact fairly and equitably with representatives of diverse cultures.
- Deliver government policy and guidelines objectively, including in those situations where there may be opposition or adverse reaction from members or groups of the public.
- Live/work in various locations throughout the province (e.g., urban, suburban, rural / isolated).
- Work irregular shifts, evenings, weekends and some statutory holidays. Attend after-hours callouts.
- Spend upwards of 40% of your time working in an office environment doing administrative work, such as preparing reports and answering public inquiries.
- Work in isolated areas and under difficult conditions (e.g., inclement weather, rugged environment).
- Wear a uniform and meet standards of dress and personal appearance.
- Successfully complete physical abilities testing for conservation officers as a prerequisite of employment.
- Operate and maintain government vehicles in accordance with ministry policy and any applicable laws and regulations (e.g., 4-wheel drive, off-road vehicles, boats).
- Travel in small, fixed-wing or rotary aircraft.
- Satisfy qualification and re-qualification standards in the use of firearms.
- Take ongoing training in the use of force to ensure confidence, ability and safety in hostile situations.
- Deal with resistant, aggressive or potentially violent persons, many of whom possess weapons, while patrolling alone.
- Conduct investigations under a range of environmental and public-safety related statutes.
- Arrest and detain persons and obtain and execute search warrants or other legal processes as required by your day-to-day law enforcement duties.
- Serve Orders, Summonses, Appearance Notices and other law enforcement documents.
- Testify in court as a witness and be cross-examined.
- Act as a first responder to wildlife-human attacks. Assess animal behaviour and risk. Destroy dangerous/injured/orphaned wildlife as required by policy and often in the face of public opposition.
- Perform basic necropsies on wildlife and fish which may be in various stages of decomposition.

**I, the undersigned, hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the information provided in this form and I am willing to abide by its terms and conditions if hired.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed



**POLICY AND PROCEDURE  
CONSERVATION OFFICER SERVICE**

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**Title:** Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance

**Effective:** August 24, 2017

**Staff Affected** Members of the Conservation Officer Service

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

1. This policy establishes standards of personal appearance for conservation officers (“officers”).
2. Maintaining a professional image promotes public respect for and confidence in the officer and the Conservation Officer Service (“COS”) and enhances both officer and public safety.

## **2.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Officers will wear the appropriate uniform or clothing for their role and duties, be properly equipped, well-groomed and maintain a professional appearance while performing their official duties.
2. Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may constitute a breach of the [Code of Professional Conduct](#).
3. This policy does not apply to an authorized non-uniformed assignment (e.g., undercover operator).

## **3.0 UNIFORMED DUTIES**

### **3.1 Wearing the Uniform**

1. Officers will:
  - a. wear only approved uniform items;
  - b. keep uniform items clean, tightly pressed, and in good repair; and
  - c. repair or replace uniform items as necessary to maintain a high standard of appearance.
2. Officers will not:
  - a. make any modifications to a uniform item except those required to obtain a proper fit or to return a damaged uniform to proper order; or
  - b. wear visible civilian clothing while in uniform.

NOTE: Further information on the issue of uniform items and dress standards is available on the COS SharePoint in the COS [Policy Manual](#) and [Uniform Catalogue](#).

### **3.2 Hair**

1. An officer’s hairstyle or facial hair must not present a hazard in the execution of their duties or prevent or interfere with the proper wearing of any required uniform item or equipment.
2. Hair will be neat and well-groomed and must not be dyed in conspicuously unnatural colours.
3. The hair of male officers will not extend below the top of the shirt collar. The major portion of the ear must remain exposed. Sideburns will be neatly trimmed and not extend below the bottom of the ear lobes.

4. Officers are required to shave on workdays or as required to ensure a professional appearance (i.e. no facial whiskers or stubble is present). Officers will abide by Section 3.2 (5) and (6).
5. A moustache may be worn provided it is neat and trimmed and does not extend below the corners of the mouth.
6. A beard/goatee is permissible providing:
  - a. the neck is shaven;
  - b. the beard/goatee is worn with a moustache and the moustache joins the chin hair with no space between;
  - c. the beard/goatee is neat and trimmed and not in excess of 2.5 cm. in length; or
  - d. the beard/goatee is grown to “maturity” during an absence from duty.
7. The hair of female officers, either pulled back and secured or in a natural state, will not extend below the bottom of the back of the shirt collar. The major portion of the ear must remain exposed. Items used to secure the hair must be conservative in colour.

### **3.3 Cosmetics/Fingernails**

1. Cosmetics and nail polish should be worn in moderation and in a manner which would be appropriate for professional business attire.
2. Nail length must not present an undue risk to officer or public safety.

### **3.4 Jewellery and Accessories**

1. The following visible jewellery may be worn on duty, provided an item does not present an undue risk to officer or public safety:
  - a. a wristwatch;
  - b. bracelet, no more than one per wrist;
  - c. rings, to a maximum of two; or
  - d. a maximum of two plain stud/post type earrings, one stud per ear.
2. A wedding ring and engagement ring worn together count as one ring. Rings are not authorized for wear on thumbs or an officer’s trigger finger.
3. Officers shall not wear any facial jewellery, including jewellery attached to piercings of the eyebrow, nose, lip, chin, mouth and tongue.

### **3.5 Smoking/Chewing**

1. Smoking (including e-cigarettes) or chewing tobacco products is not permitted in COS vehicles or in public view.

### **3.6 Alcohol / Intoxicating Substances**

1. Officers will not consume alcohol or any other legal intoxicant while on duty or in uniform.
2. EXCEPTION: An officer attending a formal, COS sanctioned event in dress uniform may consume alcoholic beverages if approval has been obtained from the Chief or Deputy Chief Conservation Officer. Officers will be unarmed and unavailable for call out. Additionally, officers are expected to drink responsibly and remain conscious of their conduct at all times.

### **3.7 Tattoos/Body Art**

1. Tattoos/body art that may be considered offensive, invite provocation from members of the public or co-workers, and/or otherwise negatively impact the professional image of the COS must be covered at all times.
2. Tattoos/body art are not permitted on the face and must not be readily visible above the collarbone when wearing an open collar uniform.
3. The display of excessive or otherwise prominent tattoos/body art is discouraged and will be considered on a case by case basis to determine if it would undermine the authority of an officer's position, the professional image of the COS, and/or present a risk to officer safety.
  - a. The addition of tattoos/body art that may violate the requirements of this policy should be discussed with your supervisor beforehand.

### **3.8 Glasses/Sunglasses**

1. Eyewear must be conservative in appearance and should be made of a suitable material to minimize the risk of injury in the event they are broken.
2. Whenever practicable, officers will remove their sunglasses when:
  - a. dealing with a member of the public;
  - b. participating in a media interview; or
  - c. posing for a photograph for the media.

## **4.0 PLAINCLOTHES DUTIES**

1. Officers assigned to plainclothes duties (e.g., detectives) will wear generally accepted business attire that is appropriate to the situation. Examples of appropriate business attire include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Men: suits, jacket and dress pants, dress shirts, sweaters, dress shoes; and
  - b. Women: business suits or dresses, jacket and skirt or dress pants, dress shirts or blouses, sweaters, and dress shoes.
2. The requirements set out in section 3 above apply to officers assigned to plainclothes duties.



## **5.0 BUSINESS ATTIRE**

1. Unless otherwise instructed, officers are expected to wear generally accepted business attire to events outside of the normal course of duty (e.g., training session, conference). See section 4.0 above for examples of appropriate business attire.

## **6.0 SUPERVISION**

1. Supervisors will ensure that officers maintain a high standard of personal appearance.

## **7.0 NEW OFFICERS**

1. New officers must sign the Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance Acknowledgement (see Appendix 1).
2. The Inspector, Staff Development, Training and Recruiting, will ensure an officer's signed acknowledgement is retained on file at COS Headquarters.

## **8.0 EXEMPTIONS**

1. A supervisor may, for the duration of a specific assignment, exempt an officer from the [prohibition](#) against wearing visible civilian clothing with the uniform (see section 3.1).
  - a. For example, an assignment may require covering an officer's uniform with civilian clothing to ensure more effective compliance checks.
  - b. See COS Policy, [Plainclothes Investigations](#), for further direction.
2. Other exemptions from the requirements of this policy may be made where reasonably justified, including operational, medical, religious or cultural reasons. A request for this type of exemption must be submitted in writing through the chain of command to the Chief or Deputy Chief Conservation Officer.
3. An exemption to this policy must be documented in writing.

## **9.0 APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Standards of Dress and Personal Appearance Acknowledgement**

1. Attached.