# Workplace Dress and Professional Image Policy

**POLICY STATEMENT**
The City of Hamilton believes it is important that all employees present a consistent, citizen focused, professional image compatible with the community that The City serves.

**PURPOSE**
The purpose of this Policy is to outline expectations of acceptable workplace dress and presentation while conducting City of Hamilton business. Image is one of the key themes in the City of Hamilton’s Strategic Plan and workplace dress is a reflection of the City’s image.

**SCOPE**
This Policy applies to all City employees including permanent, temporary, contract employees and students.

Departmental policies or clothing guidelines may address more specific position dress requirements necessary to meet operational requirements.

There are specific provisions on uniforms, clothing entitlements, equipment, and dress code requirements outlined in the collective agreements. Refer to the applicable collective agreement for specific details. Where there are discrepancies between this Policy and the employee’s collective agreement, the collective agreement takes precedence.

**DEFINITIONS**

| **Business Casual (Monday – Thursday)** | Attire that is less formal than formal business dress, but more formal than Casual Friday; the attire is clean, neat, and professional. |
| **Casual Friday** | As it is a commonly accepted practice in office environments, it is acceptable to wear more casual clothes including jeans on Friday. |
| **Citizen Focused** | Reflecting the needs and expectations of the City of Hamilton’s citizens and the local communities and businesses that The City serves in our decision-making, service delivery and practices. |
| **Formal Business Dress** | Clean, neat and professional clothing that is more formal than business casual. It generally refers to suits for both men and women, but other alternatives may also be acceptable. |
**Image**

One of The City of Hamilton’s Strategic Themes that aims to create a positive impression of Hamilton and promote The City as the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

**PRINCIPLES**

The following principles apply to this Policy:

1. Appropriate workplace dress and overall presentation are important as they imply good individual judgment and promote a professional City image.

2. Employees are required to dress comfortably, but appropriately, in all weather conditions.

3. Safety should be the primary factor when selecting clothing and footwear for the workplace. As per the Health and Safety, Personal Protective Equipment Procedure, employees who are required to wear uniforms, personal protective equipment, and/or special footwear by the nature of their job shall do so unless specifically directed otherwise by the supervisor / manager.

4. Appropriate dress and presentation involves a balance between projecting the desired City image, while still allowing employees to express their diverse, unique individuality and style.

5. Managers and Supervisors may make reasonable accommodation when the situation requires an exception due to an employee’s religious dress requirement or a disability, providing it does not violate the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**TERMS & CONDITIONS**

**Office Attire - General**

1. Employees are required to wear City-supplied clothing or uniforms where issued. Employees who work in areas other than an office environment must abide by their position dress requirements. All employees must use their best judgment to dress appropriately for the occasion and their position. Above all, consideration of what is reflective of the customer must be given. Employees should ask their Manager or Supervisor for clarification as required.

2. Non-uniformed employees who work for The City of Hamilton may wear business casual dress providing that
formal business dress is worn as their meeting schedule requires, or as the department requires.

3. Clothes and uniforms must be neat, clean and presentable.

4. Appropriate footwear is critical to safety and must be suitable to staff work location and in compliance with The City’s Health and Safety policies. Shoes or boots must be worn in the workplace.

5. Appropriate shorts may be worn and are defined as “tailored shorts to the knee”. Certain positions have health and safety considerations around wearing shorts. For more details, see the Wearing of Shorts Guidelines.

6. All clothing must be free from contractor or vendor logos that may indicate a conflict of interest or political affiliation. City and Union logos are acceptable.

7. Tattoos and jewelry must not incorporate offensive or discriminatory symbols. Jewelry, including facial jewelry, may be worn at work provided that it creates no health or safety hazard.

8. Departments or divisions may provide employees with name tags for customer service or client/resident care needs. If provided, employees are expected to wear these name tags in a clearly visible manner.

9. For all employees who are issued a City identification badge, these are to be worn and visible at all times in the workplace.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee

- Consistently present a well-groomed image with a professional presentation.
- Use best judgment as to whether the selected clothing and footwear is appropriate based on this Policy or the applicable collective agreement.
- Ask Manager or Supervisor for clarification.

Manager or Designate

- Ensure staff understand and remain in compliance with this Policy.
- Apply consistent discipline for Policy violations. When disciplining violators, discuss why their attire does not
comply with the Policy and what they can do to comply.
  o Consult your Director or General Manager if you have any questions.

COMPLIANCE
Failure to comply with this Policy may result in an employee being sent home, without pay, to change his or her attire. Continual non-compliance may result in more serious discipline measures up to and including dismissal.

RELATED DOCUMENTS
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Personal Protective Equipment Procedure - COH-RQ-WI-010
- Scented Products Guideline - COH-RQ-GD-028
- Wearing of Shorts Guideline - COH-RQ-GD-014

HISTORY
This Policy was drafted by Human Resources and was reviewed by the Corporate Policy Review Group.

This Policy replaces The City of Hamilton’s Dress Code Policy and was approved by the Senior Management Team on 2010 04 08.