

MARYLAND JUDICIAL COMPLEX

3.5.2 GUIDANCE FOR PERSONAL APPEARANCE

(a) Purpose and Scope

(1) Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to promote an inclusive environment where employees of the Maryland Judicial Complex and Judiciary employees who visit the Maryland Judicial Complex (individuals) may dress to express diversity within culture, religion, and personal identities.

(2) Scope

(A) This guidance applies to:

- (i) employees who are paid through the Central Payroll Bureau of the Comptroller; and
- (ii) employees of the State Board of Law Examiners, the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library, the Commission on Judicial Disabilities, and the Supreme Court of Maryland Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure.

(A) This guidance does not apply to:

- (iii) locally funded employees in the circuit courts;
- (iv) employees of the Register of Wills or the Orphans' Court;
- (v) employees of the Attorney Grievance Commission and the Client Protection Fund; and
- (vi) justices and judges.

(b) Definitions

(1) Administrative Head:

- (A) For the District Court, the Chief Judge of the District Court, the Chief Clerk, or an Administrative Clerk or an Administrative Commissioner for all employees under their supervision;
- (B) For the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the State Court Administrator;
- (C) Any person who serves as the authorized designee, by express written designation, of any of the foregoing persons.

(2) Business Professional Attire – Formal and professional clothing required for meetings, presentations, or formal events.

(3) Business Casual Attire – A less formal dress than business professional attire, but still maintains a professional appearance.

(4) Cultural and Religious Attire – Clothing or accessories that reflect an employee's cultural identity or an aspect of their religious practices.

(5) Judiciary Human Resources Division (JHRD) – The division within the AOC that is responsible for, but not limited to, the following functions for State employees in the Maryland Judiciary: human resources policy development, administration, and interpretation; talent acquisition; employment and orientation services; employee benefits; position classification and salary administration; employer-employee relations; judicial services and information privacy.

(c) Principles for Professional Appearance

The Judiciary expects individuals to dress in a way that aligns with Section (d)(16) of the Policy on the Standards of Conduct and recognizes the importance of dressing in a manner that promotes personal identities and expression during working hours (while in the office or when teleworking) and when representing the Judiciary.

- (1) Individuals are encouraged to dress business casual, which may include cultural or religious attire, that reflects their personal style and identity. The clothing should be neat, clean, and appropriate for a professional office environment and should not call into question the employee's impartiality in the administration of justice.
- (2) Individuals may wear piercings and display tattoos in a manner that is not disruptive to the professional office environment and does not call into question the employee's impartiality in the administration of justice.
- (3) Acceptable business casual attire includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (A) Tops: Button-down shirts, blouses, knit tops, polo shirts, or sweaters.
 - (B) Bottoms: Slacks, khakis, chinos, skirts, or dresses; and
 - (C) Footwear: Flats, loafers, boots, or well-maintained footwear, including sneakers that can seamlessly integrate into a business casual outfit.
- (4) A religious accommodation is not necessary for cultural and religious attire which may be worn to reflect cultural or religious practices. Examples may include but are not limited to hijabs, turbans, yarmulkes, and other attire that is not disruptive to the professional office environment and does not call into question the employee's impartiality in the administration of justice.
- (5) An individual may require specific attire for medical or accessibility reasons and may contact ada@mdcourts.gov or review the Policy on Accommodations of Disabilities for guidance.
- (6) Jeans may be worn on "casual Fridays" and other days designated by the Administrative Head.

(d) Circumstances for Business Professional Attire

- (1) There are circumstances that may require business professional attire such as the following:
 - (A) Formal presentations and speaking engagements;
 - (B) Executive leadership interactions;
 - (C) Interviews; and
 - (D) Formal ceremonies.
- (2) Business professional attire includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (A) Tops: Suit jackets, pantsuit jackets, blazers, collared shirts, tailored dresses;
 - (B) Bottoms: Suit pants, skirts, pantsuits, tailored trousers; and
 - (C) Footwear and accessories: Dress shoes, ties, pocket squares, etc.

(e) Guidance is Not Subject to a Grievance Action. Individuals may be requested to wear clothing that is neat, clean, and appropriate for a professional setting and such requirements are not subject to a grievance action.

(f) Not a Contract. This guidance for the Maryland Judicial Complex does not constitute or create an express or implied contract. It is not intended to, and does not, create contractual obligations with respect to any matter it covers.