



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

NO. 06-09

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APPAREL POLICY

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

APPAREL POLICY

Issued by: Fire Chief Richard Bowers
Policy No. 06-09

Authority: Montgomery County Code Section 21-1.(a)

Effective Date: July 20, 2009

Section 1. **Purpose:** To establish a policy and procedures for the issuance, composition, wearing, replacement, and return of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) uniforms and service apparel. This policy and procedure also requires MCFRS employees to maintain a neat, professional appearance both to enhance their own professional pride and credibility as emergency service providers, and to favorably influence the public perception of the quality of care they receive.

Section 2. **Applicability.** This Policy and Procedure applies to MCFRS personnel in the Firefighter/Rescuer Occupational Series. It was developed in cooperation with the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1664.

Section 3. **Definitions.**

- a. **ALS Certification/Specialty Team/Station Emblems.** Categories of officially approved emblems and patches that may be purchased solely by the employee.
- b. **Approved.** An item that complies with all MCFRS Policies and Directives, and is specifically authorized by the Fire Chief or designee.
- c. **Class A Uniform.** This is the MCFRS dress uniform, consisting of the following issued items: Cap and cap badge, dress blouse, long sleeve dress shirt (light blue for Master Firefighters and below, white for Lieutenants and above), tie, dress pants, belt, and approved black shoes. The Class A Uniform includes the appropriate breast badge and collar insignia (for Lieutenants and above), nameplate, and "MCFR" lapel pins. The Class A Uniform also includes the raincoat, if issued, and solid black or navy blue matching socks.
- d. **Class B Uniform.** These uniform items include the same items as the Class A Uniform, without the dress blouse and dress hat.



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e. **Class C Uniform.** This is the working uniform for all ranks within MCFRS, with exceptions as indicated in this Policy. The Class C Uniform must be worn between 1030–2100 hours. The outermost garment of the Class C Uniform must have a collar. This type of garment may include either the button-front style shirt, or the golf-style shirt. Employees ranked Master Firefighter and below are issued midnight blue polo-style shirts with white embroidery. Employees ranked Lieutenant and Captain are issued midnight blue shirts with gold embroidery. Employees below the rank of Battalion Chief assigned to the Operations Division must wear the complete Class C Uniform, with the shirt neatly tucked into the trouser or shorts waistline at all times while on-duty. The Class C Uniform is completed with matching black or navy blue socks, and the issued items described below.

1. **Captains and below:** Short- or long-sleeved midnight blue golf shirt, or midnight blue button-front shirt with nameplate and appropriate collar insignia, uniform trousers or cargo shorts, blue tee-shirt, belt, and shoes (or other approved footwear).
2. **Chief Officers:** Short- or long-sleeved white button-front shirt with nameplate, badge, and appropriate collar insignia, uniform pants, white tee-shirt, belt, and shoes (or other approved footwear). All Chief Officers must wear the complete Class C Uniform at all times while on-duty, unless specifically excepted by this Policy. All Chief Officers must wear a tie when wearing a long-sleeved uniform shirt.

f. **Class D (Plain Clothes) Uniform.** This uniform class has two sub-classes: *Business Attire*, and *Business Casual Attire*. Employees attending public functions at which a Class D Uniform is the Uniform of the Day are representing the MCFRS and must make the most professional possible appearance.

Examples of appropriate *business attire* include suits, dresses (females only), sport coats, blazers, shirt and tie, dress slacks, and dress shoes.

Examples of appropriate *business casual attire* include button-down or golf-style shirts, khaki slacks, skirts (females only), and shoes or sneakers. Open-toed shoes or sandals are *not* permitted.

NOTE: Only the MCFRS Fire Chief may authorize wearing the Class D Uniform.

g. **Class E Uniform.** This uniform class consists of the issued sweatpants, sweatshirt, tee-shirt, and physical fitness shorts. Foot wear and socks appropriate for physical fitness activities must also be worn with the Class E



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Uniform. Synthetic "moisture wicking" fitness attire may not be worn at any time while on duty. Shorts/pants must be solid navy blue in color. Tee-shirts must be solid navy blue for the ranks of Captain and below. Employees may wear the Class E Uniform while participating in physical fitness training and for activities approved by the Battalion Chief, i.e., for FROMS physicals or blood work or IPE, and for specific station work details, including hose testing, and apparatus or lawn maintenance, etc. Other requirements regarding the use and wearing of components of the Class E Uniform are indicated below.

1. Physical Fitness Training. An employee may report to work in the Class E Uniform if physical fitness training is to be conducted within two hours of the beginning of the shift, and the employee participates in the physical fitness training. The Class E Uniform may **not** be worn between 1030 and 2100 hours unless approved by the on-duty Battalion Chief.
 2. Sleepwear. Issued physical fitness shorts and tee shirts are the **minimum** acceptable garments for Division of Operations employees while sleeping in fire and rescue stations or worksites after 2100 hours.
 3. Responding to Calls. Employees responding to calls in the Class E Uniform must wear the issued sweatpants or protective trousers. **Physical fitness shorts must not be worn as an outer garment** when on calls for service, or when interacting with the public outside of a fire and rescue station.
- h. Class F Uniform. This uniform consists of the authorized apparel issued to employees assigned to the Fire and Explosives Investigation Section and Fire Code Enforcement Section. Employees assigned to the Division of Community Risk Reduction Services must wear the complete Class F Uniform at all times while on duty, as specified by the Fire Chief, unless specifically exempted by this Policy.
- i. Distributed. The means by which the MCFRS Logistics Section conveys approved uniform and apparel items that are purchased with County Funds.
- j. Employee-Purchased Apparel. An item of approved apparel purchased *solely* with employee funds. These items may include job shirts, alternative footwear, uniform rappel belt, et. al.
- k. Fire Chief. The Fire Chief, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.



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- i. **Insignia.** Approved adornments indicating rank, awards, accomplishments, or special affiliation. Included in this definition are nameplates, collar pins, badges, and meritorious service awards. IAFF members who are bargaining unit employees are authorized to wear and display the IAFF logo on all uniforms issued or authorized by the County, consistent with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- m. **Issued.** The means by which the MCFRS Logistics Section conveys approved uniform and apparel items to an individual employee.
- n. **Negligence.** An individual's failure to exercise reasonable care, under the circumstances.
- o. **Optional Apparel.** Items of apparel approved by the Fire Chief, that may be worn and/or purchased only by certain categories of employees, under certain specific conditions, and/or at certain specific times, as described below.

 1. **Cargo Shorts.** May be worn between April 1-October 31; however, the Duty Operations Chief may make exceptions in addition to these dates. Only the cargo shorts approved by the Fire Chief may be worn; the Logistics Section will select the brand, style, and vendor.
 2. **Job Shirt.** This item may be purchased *solely* by the employee. Only the job shirts approved by the Fire Chief may be worn; the Logistics Section will determine the brand, style, and vendor. The job shirt may be worn as the outermost garment only if it is neat, clean, and free of visible wear or damage. The Duty Operations Chief has the final discretion as to whether a job shirt is wearable.
 3. **Mock Turtleneck Undershirt.** This item may be purchased *solely* by the employee. This shirt is a version of the turtleneck, with a shortened neck that does not fold over. A mock turtleneck may be worn under any approved long-sleeve shirt (i.e., the polo, button-down or job shirt.) Wearing this shirt is authorized *only for the ranks of Captain and below*; it ***must not*** be worn in place of the uniform shirt, nor can it be worn as the outermost garment outside of the Class E Uniform time parameters. The undergarment sleeve length of the mock turtleneck shirt ***must not*** exceed the length of the outer garment sleeve. It may be worn with the Class E Uniform, either as a substitute for the tee-shirt, or under the sweatshirt; or under the issued long-sleeve Class C Uniform shirt.
 4. **Hats and Caps.** The officer-in-charge may authorize employees to wear the approved baseball-style hat or approved stocking-type winter cap



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during in-station activities and when weather dictates. When worn, the bill of the hat must face forward. Baseball and stocking-style caps **must not** be worn while conducting indoor inspections, when meeting the public during non-emergency situations, or while in any building except a fire and rescue station.

5. **Uniform Belt.** This is the black leather belt issued by the MCFRS Logistics Section.
 6. **Rappel Belt.** This is a nylon belt with "D" ring style attachment, which may be purchased *solely* by the employee. *The rappel belt is for uniform use only, and is neither intended nor designed for life safety use.*
 7. **Optional Footwear.** Normally, uniform shoes are provided as part of the *standard issue*. However, instead of receiving the uniform shoes, an employee may choose to purchase an alternate oxford style shoe or leather duty style boot, which must be black and capable of being shined. The employee will be reimbursed for the entire amount of the shoe/boot purchase price, which must be indicated on an original, dated receipt attached to a Request for Payment form (Montgomery County Form 1010) that describes the shoe and indicates the place of purchase. The MCFRS Logistics Section will validate the request and process the payment to the employee by U.S. Mail. The employee will be reimbursed at the rate of \$50.00/year. For example, if an employee chooses to purchase an optional pair of shoes/boots costing \$150.00, they will not be issued new shoes, nor will they be eligible for reimbursement for shoes or boots, for *three years* from the date of that purchase.
 8. **Sweater.** This is a navy blue military-style, V-neck wool or wool/acrylic blend sweater which may be purchased *solely* by the employee, and **is worn only by Battalion Chiefs and above**. The sweater must have shoulder epaulets, a gold nameplate on the right side of the chest, and a badge holder on the left side of the chest. This sweater must be worn over a Class B or Class C Uniform shirt.
 9. **Sweatshirt.** A sweatshirt **must not** be worn as the outermost garment except for the Class E Uniform, as detailed in Section 3.g.1.-3.
- p. **On-duty.** Status indicating an MCFRS employee is in pay status, performing a work substitution, or otherwise officially representing MCFRS.



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- q. **Patch or Emblem.** An identifying label affixed to a uniform jacket or blouse, indicating an employee's membership on a specialty team, station assignment, or ALS certification, and specifically approved by the Fire Chief.
- r. **Standard Issue Apparel.** Category of specific items of uniform clothing allowance issued to MCFRS Operations Division employees on an eighteen-month cycle, as indicated below:
- three long-sleeved midnight blue polo shirts or button front shirts (or a combination), for FF/R through Captain *
 - three short-sleeved midnight blue polo shirts or button front shirts (or a combination)*
 - five long-sleeved white button front shirts for Battalion Chief and above
 - five short-sleeved white button front shirts for Battalion Chief and above
 - three pairs of trousers, employee's choice of straight leg or cargo-cut, for FF/R through Captain *
 - five pairs of straight leg trousers for Battalion Chief and above
 - two pair cargo shorts for FF/R through Captain
 - five tee-shirts, midnight blue, for FF/R through Captain
 - five tee-shirts, white, for Battalion Chiefs and above
 - one black leather belt
 - two sweat shirts
 - two pairs of sweat pants
 - two pairs of physical fitness shorts
 - shoes, issued on a *twelve-month* replacement cycle
 - two name plates, silver for FF/R-M/FF/R, gold for all other ranks
 - MCFRS-issued outer coat, issued as needed

* Day work personnel are issued five of these items in each category

- s. **Uniform.** MCFRS attire, approved by the Fire Chief, consisting of items of clothing, insignia, and Standard Issue apparel distributed by MCFRS, or approved items under the Optional Apparel list, purchased by the employee.

Section 4. **Policy.** All issued apparel is the property of Montgomery County. Only the Fire Chief or designee may authorize exceptions to this policy.

- a. **Uniforms** and apparel must be outfitted and worn in compliance with this Policy.
- b. When ordered by the **Fire Chief** or designee, employees must produce **issued uniform** items and official equipment.



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- c. Employees must wear or display only the **approved** items defined in this Policy, and must maintain **uniform** items in compliance with this Policy.
- d. All **on-duty** employees must wear the appropriate class of **uniform** established by this Policy. Employees must appear clean, neat, and presentable at all times. The Duty Operations Chief will determine the acceptable presentation of the **uniform**.
- e. **Reporting Procedure for Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Uniforms or Equipment.** When any **uniform** component or official equipment is discovered to be lost, stolen, or damaged, the employee must report this fact to their supervisor. The supervisor must then notify the appropriate Battalion Chief, who must investigate the circumstances and determine who is responsible. If the loss or damage is the result of an employee's **negligence**, as defined in this Policy, the employee must be notified in writing of their responsibility for the expense of replacement. The item must then be replaced at the employee's expense.

The employee must complete the "Employee Statement" section of the Property Request form if a **uniform** component is lost, stolen, or damaged. Stolen items valued at \$100 or more must be reported to the police department having jurisdiction. A copy of that report must be attached to the Property Request form

- f. **Property Request Forms.** An employee is **not** required to use a Property Request form when receiving their standard **issue** items. An employee must have a Property Request form approved by the Station Officer **except** for standard issue items.

Captains and Chief Officers must have Property Request forms approved by their supervisor. When **uniform** components must be replaced for reasons other than the normal replacement cycle, an employee must present an approved Property Request form to Logistics Section staff. The Duty Operations Chief will resolve any difference of opinion between an employee and their Captain (or supervisor) regarding replacement.

- g. **Insignia and Badges.** **Insignia**, buttons, and belt buckles for the ranks of Lieutenant through Chief are gold. **Insignia**, buttons, and belt buckles for other employees are silver. The specifications for rank **insignia** are described below.



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RANK

INSIGNIA

Fire/Rescue Chief	Five crossed trumpets
Fire/Rescue Division Chief	Four crossed trumpets
Fire/Rescue Assistant Chief	Three crossed trumpets
Fire/Rescue Battalion Chief	Two crossed trumpets
Fire/Rescue Captain	Two vertical trumpets
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	One vertical trumpet
Master Firefighter/Rescuer	Fire Service cluster
Firefighter/Rescuer	Fire Service cluster

- h. **Sleeve Striping on Uniform Blouses.** Sleeve stripes are gold, either ¼ inch or ½ inch wide, and are sewn to the circumference of the lower sleeve on each arm of the **uniform** blouse. Officers must appoint their **uniform** blouses with gold striping according to the requirements below.

Fire/Rescue Chief	5 stripes, ¼ "wide
Fire/Rescue Division Chief	4 stripes, ¼ "wide
Fire/Rescue Assistant Chief	3 stripes: ¼ "wide
Fire/Rescue Battalion Chief	2 stripes: top stripe ¼" wide, bottom ½ "wide
Fire/Rescue Captain	2 stripes: ¼ "wide
Fire/Rescue Lieutenant	1 stripe, ¼ "wide

- i. **Emblems/Patches.** An approved emblem/patch may be worn on the right sleeve of the **Class C Uniform** shirt and/or **job shirt**. To display the approved patch, the employee must be currently affiliated with the group, team, or assignment indicated by the patch. An employee must not wear more than two emblems/patches on the **uniform** shirt, i.e. one emblem/patch on each sleeve. Except for the **Honor Guard rocker patch**, only one of these emblems may be worn on the **uniform** at a time, in addition to the **MCFRS emblem**, which must be worn on the left sleeve. ***No patch or emblem may exceed the size of the MCFRS emblem.***

The **ALS Certification/Specialty Team/Station Emblems** may be worn only when an employee maintains their Montgomery County **ALS certification**, or is assigned to the **Specialty Team/Station**. All **ALS Certification/Specialty Team/Station Emblems** must be **approved** by the **Fire Chief**. These emblems may be worn only on the right sleeve of the Class C button-front uniform shirt and/or the **job shirt**.



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The cost of affixing and removing a patch is borne *solely* by the employee, who is also responsible for any damage caused by affixing or removing a patch from an **issued** item.

- j. **Honor Guard Rocker Patch Placement.** Members of the Honor Guard are authorized to wear a rocker on the left sleeve of the **uniform** shirt and blouse. The rocker must be affixed directly below and adjacent to the MCFRS emblem.
- k. **Award Pin.** Pin for meritorious service or other awards and pins approved by the MCFRS **Fire Chief** may be worn over the nameplate on the **uniform** shirt and blouse.
- l. **Authorized Times to Wear Uniforms.** Employees are authorized to wear the MCFRS **uniform** only when **on-duty**, traveling to or from a work site, attending an MCFRS-sanctioned function, or as otherwise authorized by the MCFRS **Fire Chief**.
- m. **Consuming Alcoholic Beverages.** Employees are prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages while wearing or displaying any part of the **issued uniform**.
- n. **Code of Ethics and On-Duty Personal Conduct.** Employees must comply with the *Code of Ethics and On-Duty Personal Conduct* Executive Regulation while wearing or displaying any part of the **issued uniform**.
- o. **Restrictions from Wearing the Uniform.** Employees who have been suspended or relieved from duty must not wear or display any part of the **issued uniform** unless attending a required or authorized MCFRS meeting or hearing.
- p. **Sunglasses.** Employees may wear sunglasses while **on duty**, when weather conditions or the employee's safety dictates. Employees must not wear sunglasses while inside a building, unless required for medical reasons. Sunglasses must have impact-resistant lenses that comply with the current Food and Drug Administration/ANSI standard for prescription glasses. When not in use, sunglasses must be stored out of sight.
- q. **Marking Issued Items.** Employees must use an indelible pen to mark **uniform** items with their fire department identification number. These markings **must not** be visible on the outside of the **uniform**.
- r. **Modifying/Altering Uniforms.** Employees are prohibited from modifying or altering **issued uniforms** and apparel in any way that does not comply with the provisions of this Policy.



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- s. **Recordkeeping.** The Logistics Section Manager must maintain records of all property **issued, distributed, collected, and condemned.**
- t. **Returning Items.** Newly-**issued** items that do not fit properly must be returned to the Logistics Section within thirty days. The employee must provide the Logistics Section with the reason for the returned item(s).
- u. **Separation from Service.** An employee who separates from County employment must return all **issued uniform** components to the Logistics Section not later than one week after the effective date of separation.

Section 5. **Responsibility.**

- a. Employees must clean and maintain **issued uniforms** and **insignia** according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- b. Employees must comply with the **uniform** issuance schedule as needed for routine replacement.
- c. The Division Chief, Administrative Services, must notify the Logistics Section of personnel actions that affect the issuance of **uniforms.**
- d. An employee who has been promoted must report to the Logistics Section to obtain needed uniform items as soon as is reasonable. Previously **issued insignia** must be returned to the Logistics Section upon request.
- e. The **on-duty** Logistics Section staff must complete and sign a Receipt of Property form before removing **issued** property from the Logistics Section inventory.
- f. An **on-duty** employee may report to Logistics and request items for another **on-duty** employee from the same duty station or worksite, if both employees are eligible for **uniform** items to be **issued** within the same replacement cycle. A Property Request form including accurate sizing information is required for this type of transaction. The employee picking up the items for the other **on-duty** employee must sign the Property Receipt form; by doing so he/she accepts responsibility for the safekeeping and timely delivery of those items to the intended employee. By the end of the duty shift, the employee to whom the items are **issued** must determine the appropriate fit of the items, sign a Property Receipt form, and return it to Logistics Section by Inter-Office Mail. The employee to whom the item was **issued** must return any item(s) that do not fit, or are otherwise not acceptable, in person, to the Logistics Section.



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Section 7. **Cancellation.** This Policy supersedes MCFRS Policy and Procedure No. 516, **Uniforms**, and all previous Fire Chiefs General Orders, Directives, and Information Bulletins relating to **uniforms**.

Section 8. **Implementation and Enforcement.** The Fire Chief is the implementation and enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Section 9. **Effective Date.** This Policy is effective on July 20, 2009.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard R. Bowers".

Richard R. Bowers, Fire Chief
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

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