



Dress and Appearance Standards

This document is part of North Yorkshire Police policy to which all Chief Constable personnel and the functions provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner are required to adhere.

Policy Statement

1. General

- 1.1 The public expect everyone working in the police service to have the highest standards of professionalism. Police officers and members of staff in a non-uniformed role also have a responsibility to present a professional image of the organisation, in line with the College of Policing's Code of Ethics. This Guidance applies to Police Officers, Police Staff (whether employed by the Chief Constable or under Enable) Special Constables and Volunteers collectively.
- 1.2 Uniform is provided for various roles as identified within this standard's document free of cost for use only in the performance of their role. These uniforms have been assessed for suitability to role and cost effectiveness and may not be altered other than by prior agreement of the Uniform Equipment Group and appropriate governance.
- 1.3 While this guidance deals with the general principles of uniformity, every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate variations in uniform for all protected characteristics.
- 1.4 This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to Reasonable Adjustments. Reasonable adjustments will be considered on a needs basis and considered in conjunction with Line management.
- 1.5 This document provides you with clear and comprehensive guidance on the standards expected of you, to present a professional image, achieve and maintain standards while also allowing for a level of self-expression. Our appearance and standards of dress are an important display of our professional image, to instil trust and confidence from the public.
- 1.6 It is expected that all individuals working for North Yorkshire Police will take personal responsibility in making sure they attend work presenting themselves appropriately and behaving in line with the standards of professional behaviour and code of ethics. This requirement is based upon maintaining the safety of the public, the safety of members of staff and the maintenance of a credible, public-facing professional image of North Yorkshire Police.

2. Overriding principles

2.1 Unless otherwise stated, this guidance applies to all police officers and members of staff who are in a public-facing role. Deviating from these standards without justification may result in you facing disciplinary proceedings. North Yorkshire Police aspires to the provision of an excellent police service which inspires confidence in all victims and communities. This policy seeks to minimise, as far as is reasonably possible, any negative perception or misconception which could be drawn by the communities we serve, based upon appearance, and subsequently diminish confidence in the organisation as a whole.

3. Supervisors

3.1 As supervisor, you have a responsibility to ensure that there is a robust and consistent approach towards this guidance, rather than your personal interpretation of it. You are expected to challenge officers and staff who do not present a professional image of the force in line with the guidance.

3.2 Set an example with your own high standards of appearance. Ensure groups of uniformed staff and officers working together in public view are dressed in accordance with this policy as far as is practicable, subject to operational commitments, religious observance/cultural needs, medical, maternity or health reasons.

4. Hair

4.1 Uniformed / Public facing staff.

Wear your hair so that it is cut or secured above the collar and ears, in a bun and/or close to the head and ensuring it is neat and tidy. This includes hair that is worn long owing to religious observance. It should not present a health and safety hazard. Any visible hair accessory must be plain in design and colour. Extreme and vivid hair colouring is not permitted. Hair should be of natural colours and extra tones should be subtle.

For police officers and other operational uniformed staff, pigtails and ponytails are unacceptable due to officer safety implications.

4.2 Non-uniformed staff / Non-Public facing

Ensure your appearance reflects the same high standard required of all other members of the force, dependent on working environment.

5. Facial hair

5.1 Facial hair should be neat and tidy. This should not be dyed with conspicuously unnatural colours. An unshaven/stubby appearance is unacceptable unless you are growing a beard or moustache. This does not apply where there is a genuine medical reason not to shave.

5.2 Lengthy beards are not acceptable for health and safety reasons. Where religious observance dictates that beards may not be cut, they will be secured appropriately whilst on operational duty.

6. Tattoos

6.1 North Yorkshire Police recognises the prevalence of body art in modern society and the right of each individual to make their own choices about their appearance.

6.2 Visible tattoos are unacceptable if they could reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory or offensive and/or indicate attitudes or views inconsistent with the Code of Ethics and

the Standards of Professional Behaviour. The presence of any such tattoo would preclude an applicant from being recruited into the employ of North Yorkshire Police. If a member of staff obtains a tattoo of this nature after having commenced their service, disciplinary proceedings may be appropriate.

7. Jewellery

7.1 Operational staff

Individuals should carefully consider the potential risk to Health & Safety in their choice of jewellery at work and should be in line with our professional image. You are permitted to wear a watch, a band ring (e.g., a wedding, civil partnership) and small stud earrings and a necklace (provided this is worn under clothing and is not visible). Rings with raised stones are not allowed for operational officers.

7.2 You may wear other jewellery with permission and on a case-by-case basis. This could be for instance on medical grounds, e.g., an alert bracelet, or religious grounds but must be of a design that ensures any health and safety risk is minimised and following discussion and agreement by line management.

7.3 All other staff

You may wear jewellery but must maintain the professional image of the force. Jewellery is worn at your own risk and North Yorkshire Police will not be liable for any loss, damage, or theft of such. You are therefore encouraged not to wear valuable jewellery to work.

7.4 Facial or tongue piercings are not permitted by any member of staff in a public facing role or in circumstances where such piercings would impede their ability to perform their role. An exception may be justified where a role specifically dictates such a need for successful covert operations.

8. Footwear

Footwear will be appropriate for the duty/role being undertaken and must be kept clean and polished.

8.1 Uniformed staff

Wear plain black boots or shoes appropriate for the role to be performed. Footwear must be clean, with a low, flat heel.

8.2 Socks and tights or stockings must be of a plain/dark colour and appropriate to the uniform being worn.

8.3 Non-uniformed staff

Only wear footwear that is clean, smart and appropriate to your role and in keeping with the standards set for uniformed staff. Some styles of shoe are inappropriate in certain situations due to health and safety considerations, e.g., high-heeled shoes and open-toe sandals.

8.4 All staff

If there is a medical need (e.g., disability or pregnancy) for certain types of footwear, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

9. Makeup

- 9.1** Uniformed operational and public facing officers/staff are only permitted to wear subtle makeup appropriate to your natural skin tone or in connection with your religion/faith, e.g., the Bindi. You may also wear makeup to conceal a facial disfigurement or significant blemish.
- 9.2** Uniformed operational officers and staff, for health and safety reasons, should keep fingernails trimmed short and clean. You may not wear any jewellery or attachments on the nails. Nail polish must be clear or of neutral colour. Nail art is not permitted but short extensions are acceptable. The nail varnish must be uniform across both hands and the length and style of nails must not hinder or prevent the performance of duty or present a risk.

10. Headgear

- 10.1** Headgear is an integral part of police uniform and an important element in enabling the public to recognise you. It is compulsory for uniformed staff to wear force-issued headgear while performing public duties. This not only projects a professional image but, where appropriate, assists in the health and safety of staff.
- 10.2** Custodian and Bowlers are issued to all uniformed police officers for use whilst undertaking general duties. Flat caps are issued to those undertaking specified roles and are for wearing whilst undertaking such only. Flat caps should not be worn for routine duties.
- For those officers who are no longer routinely issued custodians, but who may require such for ceremonial events these can be loaned from uniform stores if required.
- 10.3** Baseball caps are not to be worn unless engaged in public order, firearms or LSO duties.
- 10.4** It is recognised that headwear plays an important role in several religions and cultures. Those individuals undertaking uniformed, operational duties, requiring alternative headwear, will be supported wherever possible, in consultation with line manager, Faith lead, and People services.
- 10.5** The exception being in the event of a public order incident, the NATO style helmet must be worn to protect the health and safety of the officer, his or her colleagues and members of the public.
- 10.6** Additionally, other policing activities which, for the same reasons of health and safety, require the wearing of protective headwear e.g., motorcycle unit, pedal cycle patrol etc. will not be permitted without the wearing of full PPE including headwear i.e., motorcycle or pedal cycle helmets for these example activities.
- 10.7** Where an individual exemption has been granted, this will remain in place throughout the officer's career within NYP or until such time that the officer's religious observance may allow them to wear the protective headwear. In such times of force resilience or threat to operational capacity, the officer may be required to be deployed to a different role other than their current role, in line with health and safety legislation.

11. Uniform dress code

- 11.1** Keep all items of uniform clean and in good repair. It is your responsibility to ensure lost/damaged items of uniform are replaced. Unless an agreed reasonable adjustment is in place, uniformed staff will wear uniform at all times when on duty or at work.

- 11.2 Only wear police-issue items of equipment on the uniform belt or tac vest. Wear utility belts over the trousers and fleece, blouson or high-visibility jacket for health and safety reasons and to ensure uniformity.
- 11.3 Insignia/epaulettes of rank or post must be worn and visible at all times.
- 11.4 Do not wear uniform when appearing on social media or internet sites in an off-duty situation or in any other off-duty capacity without prior authority of a manager.
- 11.5 No item of uniform or equipment issued by the force will be altered, defaced, or deliberately damaged in any way, with the exception of minor tailoring adjustments. They also remain the property of the Force and must be surrendered upon leaving.
- 11.6 All items of uniform and equipment issued to a member of staff will be cared for properly whilst in use and stored securely and appropriately when not in use. Members of staff who fail to take reasonable care of their uniform or equipment may find themselves financially liable for its replacement or repair and/or subject to disciplinary action.

12. Uniformed Operational Duties

- 12.1 Unless it has been authorised, members of staff that are in a role that requires a uniform must wear it whenever they are on duty and members of staff performing operational duties must be in possession of all items of PPE, wear their protective vest and be in possession of their airwaves radio at all times.
- 12.2 Only the uniform and equipment that is relevant to their role profile may be worn. No items obtained privately may be worn, with the exception of small items of utility equipment (i.e., torch).
- 12.3 Members of staff issued specific items of uniform or equipment to perform specialist roles will only wear those items whilst actively undertaking that specialism and will not wear those items when performing normal duties. (Examples including but not limited to Cycle clothing, licenced search officer (LSO) kit and Servator kit)
- 12.4 High Visibility jackets must be worn when dealing with traffic or working on or near any road, highway, or railway. Such jackets must always be the outermost garment worn. The wearing of black protective vests over high visibility jackets is not permitted.
- 12.5 When officers operate in pairs, or as part of a larger group such as a public order serial, any variance of uniform must be kept to a minimum to portray a professional, corporate image.
- 12.6 The senior officer in charge of an operation or event may make directions about the wearing of any items of uniform or equipment to meet a policing objective.

13. Spectacles

- 13.1 Prescription spectacles worn during operational activity, including roles that involve direct contact with the public, must have frames that are generally plain and neutral in colour and style.

14. Sunglasses

- 14.1 Frames should be plain and neutral in colour and style.
- 14.2 Remove your sunglasses when talking to a member of the public and inside a building unless it is necessary to continue wearing them for medical reasons or because they are prescription sunglasses. In such cases, consult a supervisor. You may need to

provide supporting evidence, e.g., a medical note from the GP or a request from occupational health.

14.3 Coloured contact lenses of an unnatural eye colour must not be worn unless there is need owing to a specific confirmed medical reason.

14.4 If a member of staff chooses to wear sunglasses whilst on duty, the force will not be liable for any loss or damage that may occur.

15. Ties and cravats

15.1 Staff wearing the operational black wicking shirt will not be required to wear a tie/cravat. Chief Inspectors and above as well as other roles as designated by the Chief Officer Team, who are required to wear a white shirt, should wear a force-issue tie/cravat, unless permission has been given to remove this due to weather or staff are on a meal break away from public view.

16. Protective vests

16.1 Protective vests will be worn when undertaking all operational duties unless a suitable risk assessment has been carried out that negates the necessity for its wear. This must be approved by a supervisor where appropriate.

17. Cold weather clothing

17.1 In cold weather conditions uniformed staff are, in addition to their general patrol wear, permitted to wear a force issued woolly hat. This should be at the direction of supervision.

17.2 It is not intended to issue prescriptive guidelines for when this hat should or can be worn. Rather it is expected that staff and their supervisors consider a number of issues and come to a sensible conclusion based on a number of factors, which include the nature and length of time spent in the conditions faced, the nature of the duty, the degree of public visibility and expectation and the need to present a professional and uniform image to maintain the reputation of the Force.

General Patrol Wear

Patrol Wear is designed as a layered system to maximise the comfort and safety of individuals and forms the core components for the uniform worn by police officers and staff carrying out uniformed operational roles.

Under normal circumstances, officers and staff may choose which items of uniform clothing to wear as part of the layered structure **however, an issued high visibility garment will be worn as an outer garment when engaged in outside duties (unless the operational order determines otherwise).**

The various layers are as follows:

- **Operational Shirt and Trousers** - will be worn for all operational purposes in accordance with role requirement. Police officer and PCSO shirts are to be worn as a base layer and should be worn with body armour and a high visibility outer garment when out on patrol.

- **Micro Fleece** - if worn, must be worn over the operational shirt. This is a mid-layer and should be worn with body armour and a high visibility outer garment when out on patrol.
- **Body Armour** - This must be worn in line with current Health and Safety Risk Assessment. i.e. be worn when out on patrol. It may be worn over the operational shirt and/or shirt and micro fleece combination. Body armour should be worn with a high visibility outer garment when on patrol.
- **Black Softshell Jacket** - if worn then this should be over body armour. A high visibility outer garment should also be worn when out on patrol.
- **Black Anorak** - again if worn then this should be over body armour. A high visibility outer garment should also be worn when out on patrol.
- **High Visibility Blouson/Light Weight Jacket** - this must be worn as an outer garment when on external duties.
- **Headwear** - this will be worn for outside duties and may be worn for inside duties where it is deemed appropriate or as directed by an operational order.

The final decision as to the appropriateness of headgear, like all uniform, is a supervisory / managerial one and might be different in relation to individual circumstances. However, the over-riding expectation is that staff and their supervisors will maintain a dignified and uniform appearance and should, unless the weather conditions require it, continue to routinely deploy in normal bowler or helmet.

Patrol wear will be worn by officers/staff of all ranks when on operational duties.

NB: A high visibility outer garment should always be worn when engaged in outside duties.

Patrol 1



- Bowler / Custodian Helmet
- Wicking Shirt Long or Short Sleeve
- Body Armour
- Hi Viz Equipment Carrier

Patrol 2



- Bowler / Custodian Helmet
- Wicking Shirt Long or Short Sleeve
- Micro Fleece (Optional)
- Softshell Jacket
- Body Armour
- Hi Viz Equipment Carrier

Patrol 3



- Bowler / Custodian Helmet
- Wicking Shirt Long or Short Sleeve
- Micro Fleece (Optional)
- Body Armour
- Black Anorak
- Hi Viz Equipment Carrier

Patrol 4



- Bowler / Custodian Helmet
- Wicking Shirt Long or Short Sleeve
- Micro Fleece (Optional)
- Body Armour
- Softshell Jacket (Optional)
- Hi Viz Blouson/Light Weight Jacket
- Hi Viz Equipment Carrier

18. Non-uniform dress code

- 18.1** Individuals wearing plain clothes for their role should ensure that their standard of dress and appearance reflects the same high standard required of uniform staff.
- 18.2** You must have your ID card on display while on police premises (remove visible identification when away from police premises) and consider the appropriateness of the lanyard.
- 18.3** Dress in business wear, which is smart and clean. Business suits or an appropriate smart jacket are the expected forms of dress whenever you are representing the force at events, at court or in contact with the public through your role.
- 18.4** Individuals engaged in covert roles and operations where their identity must be concealed may dress to suit the circumstances.
- 18.5** Officers or staff in departments where the business need requires specific clothing other than business attire will have the dress code specified by the head of function. For example, fleet services or OMU.
- 18.6** Members of staff engaged in plain clothes operations will carry their PPE unless a suitable risk assessment has been carried out that negates the need for a particular item to be carried.

19. Warrant/identification cards

- 19.1** Carry your warrant/identification at all times and must produce it upon demand for purposes of identification, unless carrying this would compromise an authorised covert policing activity.
- 19.2** Those officers required to wear white shirts, namely those of Chief Inspector rank and above, must wear their issued name badge and identity card on their outer clothing for security reasons, at all times while on police premises.
- 19.3** You must report the loss or theft of a warrant / ID card to a line manager immediately due to security implications and follow Identity and Warrant Card procedure which can be found on the source.
- 19.4** All uniformed members of staff must have their collar number and/or relevant rank or insignia, including correct indication of rank, clearly visible at all times.

20. Medals

- 20.1** You may wear medals and ribbon brooch bars on tunics for special events. The medal ribbon brooch bars may be worn on softshell jackets. Medal ribbons should be positioned just above the left breast pocket flap of the tunic centred over the pocket button, in order of importance from right to left, i.e., the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal first, followed by the Diamond Jubilee, Platinum jubilee, Coronation and then the Police Long Service and Good Conduct medal. The General Service Medal and other military medals should precede the jubilee medals.

21. Insignia

- 21.1** The Chief Constable will allow the display of 'Thin Blue Line' patch and /or a National Police Memorial Pin on uniform. Remembrance poppies can be worn during the relevant period.

22. Personal Hygiene

Members of staff must be clean and maintain a high level of personal hygiene. The standard of personal hygiene should be appropriate to working in a close environment with others and with due consideration of those with whom they come into contact - both colleagues and public alike. Challenges about personal hygiene should always be done in private and with particular sensitivity.

23. Chewing gum and smoking.

- 23.1** Members of staff must not chew gum when dealing with the public.
- 23.2** Smoking on police premises, including inside police vehicles is unlawful and smoking in public view whilst in uniform is unacceptable. This includes smoking around the footprint of police buildings unless in a designated smoking area.
- 23.3** Vaping is also not permitted in the circumstances as detailed in (23.2)

24. Mobile Telephones or other Multimedia Devices

- 24.1** Members of staff/officers are permitted to carry their personal mobile telephones or other multi- media devices whilst on duty for purposes of emergency personal contact. Personal calls should never be made whilst visible to the public.
- 24.2** Personal social media should not be updated whilst on duty unless on a designated break.

24.3 If a member of staff/officer chooses to carry their personal mobile telephone or other multi- media device whilst on duty, the force will not be liable for any loss or damage that may occur to that device.

24.4 Public facing officers and staff should give consideration to turning off Bluetooth and location services due to potential security risks.

25. Adherence:

25.1 It is an expectation that line managers will enforce this policy in the first instance.

25.2 It is compulsory for all members of staff to follow the requirements of this policy. Non-compliance may be considered a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to Orders and Instructions or Discreditable Conduct. Where appropriate, breaches may result in disciplinary action, particularly in cases where such breaches are intentional, prolonged, or repeated. Given the importance of maintaining a professional appearance, it can be considered as part of an individual's ability to competently perform their duty.

25.3 Supervisory enforcement will be guided by the Code of Ethics. A supervisory instruction made correctly and in line with this guidance, to a police officer, will be considered a lawful order. Clear direction will be given to members of Police staff and documented where necessary. Where a police officer is required to make adjustments to their appearance in order to meet these requirements, they must do so immediately. The time taken to rectify identified issues may not be considered as part of their rostered duty time if the breach has been deliberate, prolonged or repeated.