

FALMOUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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| Signature, Chief of Police: | |
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to achieve and maintain the highest standards of professional integrity and public respect for individual police officers, Department personnel and the Department. To this end, this policy is intended to regulate the appearance of officers and non-sworn personnel by describing the police uniform and attendant police equipment, and what is acceptable attire for non-sworn employees.

POLICY

The articles of clothing and items specified in this directive that are permissible or required to be worn will be enforced by supervisory personnel. All other items not specified herein are not permitted to be worn or carried and may be the subject for disciplinary action. Exceptions to permissible or not permitted items to be worn or carried will only be allowed and authorized by specific permission of the Chief of Police.

The Police Uniform

A. Caps

Navy blue in color, Pershing style hat. Cap band shall be black in color for patrol officers and gold in color for supervisory officers. Hat badge shall be silver in color for patrol officers and gold in color for supervisory personnel. The uniform cap shall be worn squared on the head with width of two fingers above the eyebrows. In severe winter weather, the fur cap or issued watch cap may be worn. The fur cap shall not be worn with the dress uniform. The cap shall be worn at all times when outside the vehicle on police business.

B. Sam Browne Belt

Black in color and shall be worn at all times, except it may be removed for station duty.

C. Neckties / Turtlenecks

Neck ties shall be dark blue in color and shall be worn with the long sleeve shirt with the collar buttoned. The department issued turtleneck may be worn with the long sleeved shirt or sweater.

D. Shoes

Shall be black in color, plain toe shoes, boots or oxfords, free of ornamentation. Oxfords must have lace closures. No cleats are permitted. Plain black sneakers are allowed.

E. Shirts / Sweaters

1. Long sleeve (as issued): navy blue in color, shall be worn with all buttons buttoned and shall be worn with tie or turtleneck.
2. Short sleeve (as issued): navy blue in color, shall be worn without tie, with collar open. Shall be fully buttoned except for the top button. Undershirts, if worn shall be black or white in color.
3. Department issued sweaters may be worn with long sleeved shirt and tie or turtleneck.

F. Trousers

As issued, navy blue in color.

G. Waist Belt

Shall be 1 3/4" black leather.

H. Socks

Shall be black in color.

I. Badge

As issued, silver in color for patrol officers, gold in color for supervisory officers. The badge shall be worn on the left breast in the space provided. In the event there is no provision on the garment for the badge, it shall be worn centered over the left breast pocket with the bottom of the badge touching the upper seam of the pocket.

J. Gloves

May only be worn during cold weather, during disorders, or such other times as protection for the hands dictates. Gloves may be black or navy blue in color and may be of cloth or leather.

K. Name bars

Shall be worn on the right breast, in the space provided. If no space is provided, they shall be worn parallel to, and above, the top seam of the right pocket of the blouse or shirt, with the bottom of the bar touching the top seam of the pocket. Service pins will be attached to the name bar.

L. Marksmanship badges and awards

Will be worn directly below the police badge in an authorized badge holder.

M. Tie clasps

Shall be of the style issued, as rank prescribes. In the event the regulation clasp is not available, a plain tie clasp, of similar materials, free of ornamentation, shall be worn. From the top, it shall be worn just above the third button of the uniform shirt.

N. Shoulder patches

Shall be of the official design, as issued and shall be worn as follows:

1. Shirts, centered on the sleeve, with the top of the patch 1/2" below the shoulder seam;
2. Car-duty jacket, centered on the sleeve 1 1/4" below the shoulder seam.

O. Collar insignia

1. Supervisors shall wear the appropriate rank designation.

P. Sergeant chevrons

Shall be gold in color and centered directly below the shoulder patch with the upper point of the chevron patch 1/4" below the lower point of the shoulder patch.

Q. Soft Body Armor

1. All sworn personnel will be issued body armor purchased by the Department. Officers, in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, shall wear only body armor that has been approved for on-duty use by the Chief of Police. To receive Department approval, personally-owned body armor must meet or exceed Department standards and provide adequate body coverage (front and rear) and fit. Body armor performance standards will be determined by the manufacturer's labeling.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Police to determine the body armor performance standard for all body armor purchased or used by the Department and its members. Selection of the type of body armor to be purchased shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Police.
3. The Chief of Police will check to ensure armor fits properly prior to issuance and maintain records on all armor purchased and issued.
4. The Department shall provide training to officers regarding the performance standard of their assigned armor and its proper use and maintenance. Officers will also be provided with periodic updates on incidents involving armor and weapons or ammunition currently being used in the commission of crimes that can penetrate body armor.
5. Officers are required to wear body armor at all times while on duty, unless they are exempt by an activity or assignment outlined in accordance with this policy.
6. An officer is exempt from the use of body armor in the following situations:
 - a. when a Town-approved physician certifies in writing to the Chief of Police that an officer has a medical condition which precludes the use of body armor;
 - b. when a supervisor determines that an undercover or plainclothes officer's duties would be compromised or hindered by the use of body armor;
 - c. when a supervisor determines that an officer has been assigned to perform a solely administrative function (said exemption shall end when the officer returns to regular duties); and
 - d. when the Chief of Police determines an exemption is appropriate. The duration of said exemption shall be determined by the Chief of Police and directly communicated to the officer by his supervisor.
7. Officers not required to wear body armor will wear it in the following situations:
 - a. during any incident in which the officer has prior knowledge that a gun or knife may be present;
 - b. while responding to a robbery alarm;
 - c. during the execution of a search warrant if the area has not been previously secured; and
 - d. while serving any warrants.
8. Any officer shot while wearing body armor shall obtain a medical examination as soon as is practicable even if no physical injury is readily apparent. The officer's body armor shall be promptly inspected by their supervisor and retired from service if damaged.

9. Any officer involved in an incident in which his/her body armor prevents, minimizes or fails to prevent injury shall provide his supervisor with a report regarding the incident. The report shall include the officer's assessment of the performance of the armor, nature of the incident, the type of weapon used, if any, and any injury received. The supervisor shall make the report available to the Chief of Police for use in assessing future body armor purchases.
10. It shall be the responsibility of each officer to properly maintain, store and inspect his/her armor. Officers are responsible for cleaning and storing armor according to the manufacturer's instructions. Officers shall periodically inspect their armor for damage, wear, or defects. Improper maintenance and care of body armor may result in loss of effectiveness.
11. Any defects or damage to an officer's body armor should be promptly reported to the supervisor, who shall determine whether repair or replacement of the armor is appropriate. The Chief of Police will return any defective body armor to the manufacturer. Officers shall not attempt to make any repairs to or conduct any tests of the body armor.
12. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained in accordance with this SOP. Supervisors shall conduct random, unannounced inspections of body armor for fit, cleanliness, damage, abuse and wear. Supervisors shall maintain a record of inspections.
13. Body armor that is worn, damaged, or defective will be replaced by the Department. Body armor that must be replaced due to officer misuse, neglect, or abuse shall be paid for by the officer. The Chief of Police will determine who is responsible for replacement costs.

R. Exterior Vest Carriers

The purpose of the exterior vest carrier is to enhance the distribution of weight associated with the soft body armor, the Sam Browne belt and its accessories. The exterior vest carrier allows for equipment to be easily accessible, reduce stress on the wearer's back, and has the added benefit of carrier removal at appropriate break times for the officer.

Exterior vest carriers shall be worn in accordance with this policy to ensure uniformity. Exterior vest carriers will be maintained by the officer and are expected to be kept clean and in good working order.

1. Carriers will be navy blue in color. They will be marked with "POLICE" across the back-shoulder area and under the badge area on the front left. The lettering will be grey.
2. The officer's name bar will be displayed on the right chest in the provided area above the "Police" identifier.

3. The department issued badge will always be worn on the left chest in the area provided.
4. Equipment pouches will be department-issued hard case style and black in color. Any specific or specialized equipment to be worn must be approved by the Chief of Police.
5. No additional insignia will be worn on the carrier. Any specialty item must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to being affixed to the exterior vest carrier.
6. Any defect, malfunction, or broken equipment will be immediately reported to a supervisor.
7. Any vest with extensive wear or unkept appearance will be taken out of service until proper appearance and function can be attained.
8. Soft body armor or external vest carriers must be worn prior to leaving the police station and can only be removed off-premise for rescue operations or in extenuating circumstances.

Personal Appearance

Employees of the Department are required to maintain a neat, clean, and professional appearance in keeping with contemporary business and professional standards.

- A. Mustaches and beards are allowed. Beards must be well-groomed and closely trimmed. The bulk of the beard must not exceed one-half inch from the skin of the face. Mustaches must also be well-groomed and neatly trimmed, and no portion of the mustache shall extend below the lip line of the upper lip. Goatees are permissible, but muttonchops and other patchy or spotty clumps of facial hair are not allowed. Sideburns shall be neatly trimmed, shall not extend below the ear lobe and shall not be flared.
- B. Hairstyle is a matter of choice provided it is keeping with professional standards. Styles for sworn employees shall not extend to the collar of the shirt or excessively protrude outside the uniform hat. Faddish or extreme hairstyles are not appropriate.
- C. Body piercing jewelry, other than a single earring in the earlobes, is prohibited in body areas that are visible to the public while on-duty. Gauging is prohibited.
- D. Visible tattoos, branding, body art or body markings below the elbow or on the legs will be authorized by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

- E. Non-sworn employees with regular, frequent contact with members of the public are prohibited from displaying tattoos, branding, body art or body markings that may be offensive to the public.
- F. Tattoos, branding, body art or body markings that indicate a criminal gang affiliation, depict sexually explicit art or nudity or symbols such as swastikas, pentagrams, spider webs or logos associated with hate groups, or supremacist groups or initials, acronyms, or numbers such as “KKK,” “666” that represent hate, criminal or supremacist groups are prohibited for all personnel.
- G. Tattoos, branding, body markings or body art on the face, neck or hands are prohibited for all personnel.
- H. Forms of cover and concealment for tattoos, branding, body art or body markings must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to use.
- I. The Chief of Police is the final authority as to the appropriateness of any facial hair, hairstyle, body piercing, tattoo(s), branding, body markings or body art and/or forms of cover.
- J. An exception to the above procedures is allowed if an employee’s duty assignment requires a non-business-like appearance and permission is given by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

Civilian Dress

A. Sworn Personnel

Sworn police officers of the Department assigned to non-uniform functions (detectives, etc) are subject to dress code regulations for the purpose of ensuring uniformity, neatness, and a professional appearance. Such regulations will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police. This discretionary authority includes, but is not limited to, dress regulations for specific activities (court appearances, public contact, etc) and for seasonal considerations.

When attending court or DMV hearings, officers will dress appropriately: i.e. Slacks/skirt, dress shirt/blouse. Jeans, sneakers, sweatshirts, shirts etc. are not acceptable.

B. Non-sworn Personnel

Non-sworn personnel of the Department, particularly those whose function includes public contact, are subject to dress code regulations for the purpose of ensuring uniformity, neatness, and a professional appearance. Such clothing shall be neat,

clean and pressed, in keeping with a professional image. Shorts, sneakers, jeans, T-shirts, and sweatshirts are not acceptable. Dispatchers shall wear the following issued uniform at all times when on duty:

1. Shirts/Blouses

Golf-style with collar, either long sleeve or short sleeve (as issued), with embroidered Department insignia.

2. Trousers/Slacks

Khaki or black in color.

Wearing of Police/Communications Uniform Off Duty

The purpose of this section is to avoid a public perception that a Falmouth Police Officer/Dispatcher is on-duty based on their appearance, and that they are engaging in an unacceptable activity for an on-duty employee. In order to avoid this inaccurate and potentially harmful assumption, the following guidelines are to be observed:

A. To and from work

The police uniform may be worn by officers/dispatchers only in direct travel to and from the police station or a police-duty assignment.

B. Non-work activities

The police uniform shall not be worn by officers/dispatchers in situations that are clearly not police work related. This includes activities on the way to or from work, such as social activities, shopping, leisure activities, or any other non-police public activity.

For purposes of the above restrictions, being in uniform includes any part of the police uniform which, if visible, would cause a reasonable person to identify the wearer as a police officer.