

**ATTACHMENT: Proposed changes to Ch 12, Part 2**

**Part 2 – OFFICER BEARING AND GROOMING STANDARDS**

**12201 NOAA CORPS OFFICER BEARING**

Change:

- A.
  - 4. “personal” changed to “upright” posture.

Add:

- B. ...’the use of hand held electronic devices (i.e. cell phones) while walking is inappropriate...’

**12202 GENERAL GROOMING STANDARDS**

Add:

- C. NOAA Corps officers shall conform to the grooming standards that correspond to their gender identity as recorded in DEERS unless a waiver has been granted.

**12203 GROOMING STANDARDS (MALE) and 12204 GROOMING STANDARDS (FEMALE)**

Replace sections 12203 and 12204 with in their entirety with the following:

**12203 GENERAL PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

- A. Hairpieces. Hairpieces or wigs shall be of good quality and fit, present a natural appearance, and conform to the grooming standards set forth in these Directives. They shall not interfere with the proper performance of duty or present a safety hazard.
- B. Jewelry. Conservative Jewelry is authorized for all personnel while in uniform. Jewelry that distracts from the professional appearance while in uniform is not authorized. Jewelry shall not present a safety hazard. Jewelry shall be worn within the following guidelines:
  - 1. Rings. While in uniform, rings shall be conservative. Rings that distract from the professional military appearance of the individual in uniform are not authorized. Rings may consist of natural metals or fabricated materials (e.g., plastic, wood, silicone) and may be gold, silver, copper, grey, tan, brown, black, white, or light pink in color. Only one ring per hand is authorized, plus a wedding/engagement ring set. Double stacking wedding rings with military academy/educational institution rings is authorized on one hand. Rings shall not present a safety hazard. Rings are not permitted to be worn on the thumb.
  - 2. Body Piercing

- a. No piercing, other than those for earrings as described below, will be made through the ear, nose, tongue, chin, eyebrow, or any other body part that would be visible while in any uniform. Ear piercings for females must not exceed two per ear lobe and must be small and inconspicuous in accordance with Section 12205(D) of this chapter. Additional ear lobe and cartilage piercings are prohibited.
  - b. Visible body piercings are not authorized while in uniform, or while carrying out official duties in civilian attire, while within any location under military jurisdiction (e.g., base, ship, aircraft), or while participating in any organized military recreational activities. Piercings concealed by clothing shall not be visible through, or interfere with, the professional appearance or performance of the officer in uniform, or while wearing civilian attire as described above.
  - c. Personnel with preexisting unauthorized piercings must discontinue use of those piercings to allow for eventual healing. Questionable cases should be referred to the Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) for guidance.
3. Necklaces/choker. While in uniform, only one necklace may be worn and it shall not be visible.
  4. Bracelets. While in uniform, bracelets shall be conservative. Bracelets that distract from the professional military appearance of the individual in uniform are not authorized. Bracelets may consist of natural metals or fabricated materials (e.g., plastic, wood, silicone), and may be gold, silver, copper, gray, tan, brown, black, white, or light pink in color. Only one bracelet may be worn while in uniform. Ankle bracelets are not authorized. Bracelets shall not present a safety hazard.
  5. Wristwatch. While in uniform, wristwatches shall be conservative. Wristwatches that distract from the professional military appearance of the individual in uniform are not authorized. Only one watch and one bracelet may be worn simultaneously (one on each wrist) while in uniform.
- C. Tattoos/Body Art/Brands. All tattoos/body art/brands are subject to the following requirements, regardless of ink type (including ultraviolet). Cosmetic tattooing is authorized to correct medical conditions requiring such treatment, and is not subject to the limitations listed herein. For the purpose of this Directive, cosmetic tattooing refers to medical or surgical procedures conducted by licensed, qualified medical personnel.
1. Location. No tattoo or brand, of any type, is authorized on the head, face (including inside the mouth), neck, or hands, except as described below.

- a. Neck/Chest. No tattoo or brand may be visible above the collar of a standard crew neck t-shirt.
  - b. Hands. A single tattoo per hand, no larger than one inch in any dimension is authorized between the wrist and the first knuckle (closest to the wrist). Tattoos on the palm of the hand are not authorized.
  - c. Fingers. A single finger tattoo per hand is authorized and must be within the first and second knuckle closest to the wrist. A ring is considered a finger tattoo.
  - d. Head/Face. Permanent cosmetic makeup is authorized for female officers in accordance with Section 12205(C.1) of this Chapter. No other tattoos, body art, branding, etc. is permitted on the head or face.
2. Content. Tattoos or brands anywhere on the body that promote racism/discrimination, indecency, extremist or supremacist philosophies, lawlessness, violence, or contain sexually explicit material are prohibited. Prohibited content includes, but may not be limited to:
- a. Racist or discriminatory tattoos or brands that advocate the degradation of people based on a protected category.
  - b. Indecent or sexually explicit tattoos or brands that contain a visual image, the dominant theme of which depicts or promotes graphic nudity, including sexual activities or organs, in a lustful way. Tattoos featuring fully exposed nudity are prohibited.
  - c. Extremist tattoos or brands that depict or promote extremist activities or organizations that advocate hatred, intolerance, or lawlessness (e.g., terrorist groups, neo-Nazis, skinheads, outlaw gangs, extreme political organizations with violent histories). Because some extremist/criminal groups and organizations exploit popular symbols (e.g., cartoon characters), care must be taken in evaluating such tattoos or brands so as not to implicate members who may have selected the tattoo or brand based on its artistic value rather than a hidden meaning. In these cases, a member's command will make a determination based on the totality of thematic elements expressed by tattoos or brands elsewhere on the body.
  - d. Tattoos or brands labeled violent or promoting lawlessness are those that depict extreme graphic violence, profanity, glorifications of drug culture, or markings that can reasonably be interpreted as advocating the violent overthrow of State or Federal Government.

3. Coverage Area. There is no limitation on size or percentage of coverage of tattoos, with the exception of those prescribed in Section 12203(C.1), of this Directive. In the case of branding, no more than one brand, not to exceed 4-inches by 4-inches, is authorized. Branding content and location is subject to the restrictions listed in Section 12203(C.1) and (C.2), of this Directive.
4. Body Mutilation or Modification. Other forms of intentional body mutilation or modification are not authorized. Examples include: scarring, excessive ear piercing/stretching, tongue splitting, subdermal decorative implants, decorative tooth plating/engraving, etc. This prohibition does not include traditional elective medical procedures such as teeth straightening, cosmetic plastic surgery, etc.

#### 12204 MEN'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- A. Hair will be clean and neatly arranged, presenting a professional appearance while in uniform or when wearing civilian attire in the performance of duty.
  1. Keep hair neat, clean and well groomed. Hair above the ears and around the neck shall be tapered from the lower natural hairline upwards at least 3/4 inch and outward not greater than 3/4 inch to blend with hair-style. Hair on the back of the neck must not touch the collar. Hair shall be no longer than four inches and may not touch the ears, collar, extend below eyebrows when headgear is removed, show under front edge of headgear, or interfere with properly wearing military headgear. The bulk of the hair (the distance that the mass of hair protrudes from the scalp) shall not exceed approximately two inches.
    - a. Hair coloring must look natural and present a complementary appearance. Multicolored hair styles (other than naturally-occurring) are not authorized.
    - b. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved, and straight hair are recognized, and in some cases the 3/4-inch taper at the back of the neck may be difficult to attain. In those cases, hair must present a graduated appearance and may combine the taper with a line at the back of the neck.
    - c. One (cut, clipped or shaved) natural, narrow, fore and aft part is authorized.
    - d. Varying hairstyles, including afro, are permitted if these styles meet the criteria of maximum length and bulk, tapered neck and sides, and do not interfere with properly wearing military headgear. Plaited or Braided hair shall not be worn while in uniform or in a duty status.

- e. Keep sideburns neatly trimmed and tailored in the same manner as the haircut. Sideburns shall not extend below a point level with the middle of the ear, shall be of even width (not flared) and shall end with a clean-shaven horizontal line. "Muttonchops," "Ship's captain," or similar grooming styles are not authorized.
- B. Shaving and Mustaches. The face shall be clean shaven unless a medical shaving waiver or religious accommodation is authorized by the Director.
1. Mustaches, if worn, will be kept neatly and closely trimmed. No portion of the mustache shall extend below the lip line of the upper lip. In addition, it shall not go beyond a horizontal line extending across the corners of the mouth, and no more than 1/4-inch beyond a vertical line drawn from the corner of the mouth. The length of any individual mustache hair fully extended will not exceed 1/2-inch. Handlebar mustaches, goatees, beards, or chin hair are not authorized.
- C. Fingernails. Fingernails shall be kept clean and maintained in a professional appearance.
1. Fingernails shall not extend past the fingertips. The tips of the nails may be rounded to align with the contour of the fingertip. Buffed nails or clear coat nail polish is authorized. Colored nail polish is not authorized.
- D. Earrings
1. Earrings are not authorized in uniform, or while carrying out official duties in civilian attire, while within any location under military jurisdiction (e.g., base, ship, aircraft), or while participating in any organized military recreational activities.

## 12205 WOMEN'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- A. Hair will be clean and neatly arranged, presenting a professional appearance while in uniform or when wearing civilian attire in the performance of duty.
1. Acceptable Hairstyle Criteria. Hairstyles and haircuts shall present a professional and balanced appearance. Appropriateness of a hairstyle shall be evaluated by its appearance when headgear is worn. All headgear shall fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without distortion or excessive gaps. Hairstyles will not interfere with the proper wearing of headgear, protective masks or equipment. When headgear is worn, hair shall not show from under the front of the headgear. Hair is not to protrude from the opening in the back of the ball cap, except when wearing a bun or ponytail hairstyle. All buns and ponytails shall be positioned on the back of the head to ensure the proper wearing of all headgear. Lopsided and

extremely asymmetrical hairstyles are not authorized. Angled hairstyles will have no more than a 1-1/2 inch difference between the front and the back length of hair. Layered hairstyles are authorized provided layers present a smooth and graduated appearance.

Hair length, when in uniform, may touch, but not fall below a horizontal line level with the lower edge of the back of the collar. Long hair, including braids, shall be neatly fastened, pinned, or secured to the head. When bangs are worn, they shall not extend below the eyebrows. Hair length shall be sufficient to prevent the scalp from being readily visible (with the exception of documented medical conditions).

Hair bulk (minus the bun) as measured from the scalp will not exceed 2 inches. The bulk of the bun shall not exceed 3 inches when measured from the scalp and the diameter of the bun will not exceed or extend beyond the width of the back of the head. Loose ends must be tucked in and secured.

2. Hairstyles. Hairstyles shall not detract from a professional appearance in uniform. Styles with shaved portions of the scalp (other than the neckline), those with designs cut, braided, or parted into the hair, as well as dyed using unnatural colors are not authorized. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved and straight hair are recognized. All hairstyles must minimize scalp exposure. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are authorized.
  - a. Three strand braids and two strand braids (also referred to as twists) are authorized. Braided hairstyles shall be conservative and conform to the guidelines listed herein.
  - b. Multiple braids. Multiple braids consist of more than 2 braids and encompass the whole head. When a hairstyle of multiple braids is worn, each braid shall be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (no more than 1/4 inch), and tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional, well-groomed appearance. Foreign material (e.g., beads, decorative items) shall not be braided into the hair. Multiple braids may be worn loose, or may be pulled straight back into a bun, within the guidelines herein.
  - c. Two individual braids. One braid worn on each side of the head, uniform in dimension and no more than one inch in diameter. Each braid extends from the front to back of the head near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., braids are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head to prevent interference with wearing of headgear). A single French braid may be worn starting near the top of the head and be braided to the end of the hair. The end of the

braid must be secured to the head and braid placement shall be down the middle of the back of the head.

- d. Corn rows. Must be in symmetrical fore and aft rows, and must be close to the head, leaving no hair unbraided. They must be no larger than 1/4 inch in diameter and show no more than approximately 1/8 inch of scalp between rows. Corn row ends shall not protrude from the head. Rows must end at the nape of the neck and shall be secured with rubber bands that match the color of the hair. Corn rows may end in a bun conforming to the guidelines listed herein, if hair length permits.
- e. Rolls. Two individual rolls, one on each side of the head, must be near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., rolls are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head and will not interfere with wearing of headgear). Rolls must be of uniform dimension and no more than one inch in diameter.
- f. Locks. Lock hairstyle (Locks) for the purpose of NOAA Corps Directives grooming standards consists of one section of hair that twists from or near the root to the end of the hair and creates a uniform ringlet or cord-like appearance. Locks may be worn in short, medium, and long hair lengths in the following manner:
  1. Locks must continue from the root to the end of the hair in one direction (no zig-zagging, curving, or ending before the end of the lock to dangle as a wisp or loose hair) and should encompass the whole head. Locks partings must be square or rectangle in shape in order to maintain a neat and professional appearance.
  2. Locks can be loose (free-hanging where no hair is added to the lock once it is started other than hair extensions that are attached to natural hair). When worn loose, locks will be spaced no more than three-eighths of an inch apart, diameter/width will not exceed three-eighths of an inch, and locks will be tightly interlaced to present a neat and professional military appearance. Locks may also be worn in a bun provided all hair grooming requirements are met. Faux locks are authorized provided the hairstyle worn is in compliance with female hair grooming requirements. Locks may not be worn in combination with other hair styles (e.g. twists, braids).

3. New growth (defined as hair that naturally grows from the scalp and has not yet been locked) will not exceed one-half inch at any time.
  4. Locks that do not meet the above standards and do not present a neat and professional military appearance will not be worn in uniform.
- g. **Ponytails.** A ponytail is a hairstyle in which the hair on the head is pulled away from the face, gathered and secured at the back of the head with an approved accessory as prescribed in Section 12205 A.2.h Women’s Personal Appearance, of this chapter. Hair extending beyond the securing accessory may be braided or allowed to extend naturally. The wear of a single braid, French braid, or a single ponytail in Service, Working, and PT uniforms is authorized. The following criteria pertain to the wearing of ponytail hairstyles while wearing a NOAA Corps uniform. Ponytail hairstyles will not interfere with the proper wearing of military headwear and equipment nor extend downward more than three inches below the lower edge of the collar (shirt/blouse, jacket or coat) while sitting, standing or walking. Additionally, ponytails will not extend outward more than three inches behind the head as measured from the securing accessory, nor shall the width exceed the width of the back of the head or be visible from the front. In spaces or environments where there are operational hazards such as rotating gear, etc., the hair may not be worn below the bottom of the collar.
- h. **Hair Accessories.** When hair accessories are worn, they must be consistent with the hair color. A maximum of two small barrettes, similar to hair color, may be used to secure the hair to the head. Bun accessories (used to form the bun), are authorized if completely concealed. Additional hairpins, bobby pins, small rubber bands, or small thin fabric elastic bands may be used to hold hair in place, if necessary. The intent is for pinned-up hair to be styled in a manner that prevents loose ends from extending upward or outward from the head. For example, when using barrettes or hairpins, hair will not extend loosely from the head; when hair is in a bun, all loose ends must be tucked in and secured. Hair accessories shall not present a safety or foreign object damage (FOD) hazard. Hair nets shall not be worn unless authorized for a specific type of duty. Headbands, scrunchies, combs, claws and butterfly clips, are examples of accessories that are not authorized; this list is not to be considered all inclusive.



- i. Unauthorized Hairstyles. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are not authorized: Pigtails; braids that are widely spaced and/or protrude from the head. Commanding Officers have the ultimate responsibility for determining when hairstyles are eccentric, faddish, or out of standards.
  - j. Grooming Standards Exception. Hair coloring must look natural and present a complementary appearance. Multicolored hair styles (other than naturally-occurring) are not authorized.
    1. During group Command/Unit physical training, Commanding Officers are authorized to standardize unit policy for the relaxation of female hair grooming standards with regard to having hair secured to head (e.g., ponytails). Hair restraining devices, if worn, will be consistent with the current hair color.
    2. Relaxed Hair Requirement with Dinner Dress Uniforms. Female officers are authorized to wear their hair below the lower edge of the collar of the blouse, jacket, or coat of the Dinner Dress Uniform being worn. All other NOAA Corps grooming requirements will remain in effect per the guidance promulgated by these Directives.
- B. Fingernails. Fingernails shall be kept clean and maintained in a professional appearance.
1. Fingernails shall have rounded or squared shaped nail tips, and shall not extend beyond 1/4-inch from the end of the fingertip. Nail polish, if worn, shall be of only one color, and all nails shall match. Ornate decorations (such as gems), prints/designs, metallic, glitter-style, textured colors, glow-in-the-dark, and fluorescent/neon colors are not authorized. French and American manicures (white and off-white tips with neutral base color ONLY) are authorized, and are the only two-tone nail color authorized. The tip shall be no wider than 1/4-inch, and must present a clean, natural appearance. Nails shall be maintained to present a professional appearance. Damaged or chipped fingernail color should be repaired in a timely manner (1-2 days). If matching polish is not available or the chipped colors cannot be repaired in a timely manner, the polish should be removed or changed.
- C. Cosmetics. Cosmetics may be applied so that colors blend and enhance natural features. Exaggerated cosmetic styles are not authorized with the uniform and shall not be worn. Care should be taken to avoid an artificial appearance. Lipstick colors

shall be conservative and present a complementary appearance. Long false eyelashes shall not be worn while in uniform.

1. Cosmetic permanent makeup is authorized for eyebrows, eyeliner, lipstick, and lip liner only. Permanent makeup shall blend naturally to enhance a natural appearance. Exaggerated cosmetic styles are not authorized and shall not be obtained. Approved permanent makeup colors are as follows: Eyebrows shall be shades of black, brown, blonde or red that matches the individual's natural hair color. Eyeliner shall be shades of black, brown, blue or green that matches the individual's natural eye color and shall not extend past the natural corner of the eye. Lip liner and lipstick shall be the color of the natural lip or shades of pink and moderate reds only.

D. Earrings

1. Earrings, if worn, will be 4-6mm ball studs (approx. 1/8- to 1/4-inch), natural white pearl (colored pearls are not authorized), white diamond, or plain gold with shiny or brushed matte finish settings. Synthetic variants of diamond or pearl earrings are acceptable provided they meet color and size requirements. While in uniform, only one earring may be worn per ear, centered on the earlobe.