

	SAN MARCOS POLICE DEPARTMENT	
	Policy 4.5 Uniforms, Appearance, and Equipment	
	Effective Date: April 10, 2019	Replaces: GO 607
	Approved: _____ <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;">Chief of Police</div>	
	Reference: 1.11, 1.12, 2.13, 7.17, and 7.23	

I. POLICY

Proper uniforms and equipment are essential to the performance of our law enforcement duties. Officers must present a professional image to the community we serve, one that promotes respect and confidence. All employees must strive to present a clean, well-groomed image when wearing the departmental uniform or representing the department in any capacity.

II. PURPOSE

The purposes of this policy are to provide officers with a list of uniform and equipment items and to provide a departmental dress code for all employees, sworn and unsworn.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Field Activities - Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected to place officers in situations where they would be required to act in enforcement rather than administrative or support capacities.
- B. Uniform Class A - Long sleeved shirt, tie and uniform trousers with uniform accessories. Baseball caps may not be worn with the Class A uniform. Uniform hats may be worn with a Class A uniform.
- C. Uniform Class B - Short or long-sleeved shirt open at the collar and uniform trousers with uniform accessories. Embroidered badge, collar rank insignia, and name patch are approved for wear on the Class B uniform.
- D. Uniform Class C - Polo style utility shirt with the cargo type class B trousers. Embroidered badge, collar rank insignia, and name patch are supplied on the Class C uniform.

IV. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. New employees shall be issued the uniforms and the equipment needed to perform their duties. Employees may purchase and carry additional items that are approved and authorized in writing by the Chief of Police. With the exception of note taking materials, flashlights, and pocketknives, employees will not wear, carry, or use any personally owned equipment without the written approval of the Chief of Police, a copy of which will be kept in the employee’s personnel file. (TBP: 1.11)

- B. Inventory must be documented in a database or each employee must sign an inventory sheet listing all uniform and equipment items issued to the employee. The inventory sheet will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.
- C. Employees are responsible for the uniforms and equipment issued.
- D. The employee's supervisor shall ensure that all departmental uniforms and equipment are returned to the department upon resignation, termination, or retirement. Failure to return all items of city property may result in legal action against the employee.

(TBP:1.12)

- 1. Uniforms will be worn only in the following situations:
 - a. On Duty – During a tour of duty, at official Department functions when required, when appearing in court regarding a duty related matter, when traveling to and from work, or as directed by the Chief or his designee.
 - b. Extra Duty – When a uniform is required for extra-duty employment.
 - c. Class A uniforms will be worn during formal ceremonies, such as funerals, academy graduations and award ceremonies. All sworn personnel are required to maintain at least one Class A uniform at all times.

V. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE CITY

- A. Uniforms and equipment provided to police officers by the City of San Marcos shall include:

- 1. 2 long sleeve and 3 short sleeve shirts
- 2. 4 pairs of trousers
- 3. Midnight blue convertible jacket with liner
- 4. Body armor
- 5. Tie
- 6. Inner belt
- 7. Outer belt
- 8. Holster
- 9. Double magazine pouch
- 10. Handcuffs with 2 keys
- 11. 2 handcuff cases
- 12. Collapsible metal baton and case
- 13. Radio carrier
- 14. Badge
- 15. Silver colored nameplate for officers
- 16. Gold colored nameplate for corporals and higher ranks
- 17. Flashlight and ring
- 18. Raincoat
- 19. OC spray and holder
- 20. Conductive Electrical Weapon (Taser)
- 21. Duty Weapon and Magazines

- 22. Body Camera
 - 23. Laptop
 - 24. Portable Radio
 - 25. Cellular Phone
 - 26. Traffic Vest
 - 27. Citations or award pins.
- B. Uniforms and equipment that are excessively worn or damaged are replaced by the department. An employee requesting replacement should have the item inspected by his/her supervisor, who will provide written approval for the replacement.
 - C. With the written approval of the Chief of Police officers are allowed to purchase additional uniforms and equipment as needed or desired. These items may be purchased from any vendor, but they must comply with current uniform or equipment standards.
 - D. Uniform items and equipment meeting departmental specifications and provided by individual officers shall include the following:
 - 1. Black or navy-blue undershirts
 - 2. Black or navy-blue socks
 - 3. Footwear, black leather

VI. PROTECTIVE VESTS (TBP: 7.23)

- A. Issuance of Body Armor
 - 1. All body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
 - 2. All officers will be issued agency-approved body armor (soft).
 - 3. Body armor that is worn or damaged will be replaced by the agency. Body armor that must be replaced due to grossly negligent misuse or abuse by the officer may be required to be paid for by the officer.
 - 4. Upon issuance, officers will receive instruction on the proper care, fitting, inspection, use, storage, and maintenance of the armor as well as be given the provided manufacturer's guidelines/paperwork if receiving new armor.
- B. Use of Body Armor
 - 1. Officers are to wear only agency-approved body armor.
 - a. Approved personally owned external carriers may be worn with supplied duty armor.
 - 2. Officers that are assigned to a uniformed function and non-uniformed sworn officers are required to wear body armor while engaged in field activities both on duty and during off duty employment unless exempt as follows:
 - a. When an agency-approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor;

- b. When the officer is involved in undercover or plain clothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor; or
 - c. When the department determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.
 3. Specialized body armor - When appropriate, the department may issue specialized body armor. Specialized body armor includes NIJ Level III/IV rifle plate armor. Officers should make every attempt to don the issued specialized body armor when they know that they are responding to high risk situations that may include response to an armed subject, active shooter response, search warrants, during a deployment of their patrol rifle, or in any other situation that the extra level of protection may be foreseen as reasonable.
 - a. This section does not allow uniformed patrol officers to substitute specialized armor for their duty body armor.
 4. Personnel conducting or participating in ANY department sanctioned live fire training at ANY location will wear body armor.
- C. Inspections of Body Armor
 1. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as required by this policy through routine observation and periodic documented inspections.
 2. Annual inspections of body armor are to be conducted for fit, cleanliness, and signs of damage, abuse and wear.
- D. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor
 1. Officers are to routinely inspect issued body armor for signs of damage and for general cleanliness.
 2. As dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels, each officer is responsible for cleaning personal body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
 3. Officers are responsible for the proper storage, maintenance and care of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
 4. Officers are responsible for reporting damage or excessive wear to the ballistic panels or cover to their supervisor and the individual responsible for the uniform supply function.
 5. Officers are prohibited from leaving specialized body armor in a vehicle when off duty so as to minimize any heat related damage to the armor.
 6. Body armor is to be replaced in accordance with guidelines and protocols established by the National Institute of Justice.
- E. Training
 1. The training coordinator or rangemaster is responsible for:
 - a. Monitoring technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.

- b. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
- c. Provide access to officers to any demonstrations presented of body armor's stopping power under actual firing conditions and that emphasize its safe and proper use.

VII. REFLECTIVE VESTS

Agency personnel are issued and shall wear the high-visibility reflective vest as soon as practical when directing traffic or working at the scene of an accident. (TBP: 7.17)

VIII. DEPARTMENTAL APPEARANCE REQUIREMENTS (TBP: 2.13)

A. Uniform Employees

1. Badges will be pinned to the left side of the shirt in the appropriate position. The metal badge will be worn with the Class A uniform.
2. The Class C uniform shirt will display the embroidered badge, rank insignia, and name patch.
3. Nameplates will be centered above the first seam of the right shirt pocket on all uniforms.
4. Nameplates will be engraved with the initials and last name only.
5. Short sleeve uniform shirts are not worn with any other type of shirt exposed beyond the sleeve length.
6. Service Awards and Special Pins are optional for wear for Class A or B uniforms only.
 - a. Only those pins that are authorized by the Department may be worn.
 - b. Special pins will only be worn when the employee is assigned to or active in the specialty or organization represented.
 - c. When worn, service awards and specialty pins will be centered above the top seam of the right shirt pocket in a level line with the highest award on the top right as viewed by others, with no more than three awards per row and only one pin at a time.
 - d. Authorized awards and pins:
 - i. United States flag
 - ii. Bike patrol
 - iii. S.W.A.T.
 - iv. K-9
 - v. FTO
 - vi. Motorcycle Officer
 - vii. F.B.I National Academy pin for graduates
 - viii. Exemplary Award bars
 - ix. City Service Award pin (5, 10, 15, 20 year pins)
 - x. Leadership Command College for graduates

xi. Copeland Memorial Pin

xii. National Law Enforcement Memorial pin

7. The shoulder patch will be affixed one inch below each shoulder seam.
8. Chevron patches will be centered one inch below the shoulder patch.
9. Longevity service stripes may be worn on the long-sleeved uniform shirt in an amount equivalent to one stripe per four years of service as a sworn peace officer. The stripes shall be affixed to the left sleeve 1 5/8" up from the top cuff seam and 1 5/8" over from the hem of the cuff split toward the center of the shirt.
10. Tie tacks or tie bars must be in good taste.
11. Officers will wear only authorized headgear.
 - a. Baseball style cap – The authorized cap with adjustable rear size band is authorized for wear with the Class C uniform.
 - b. Winter headgear may consist of a navy blue or black knit or fleece cap with no visible logos or emblems.
 - c. Technical and special services components may be assigned special headgear to fulfill assigned or designated duty functions.
 - d. Dress Hat – If the officer has an issued dress cap, it may be worn with the Class A uniform.
12. Uniform trousers will not be worn bloused or tucked into the officer's footwear, except with the Class C uniform.
13. Regardless of assignment, officers will report for duty with clean and shined footwear.
 - a. Boots will be black leather with a maximum 2-inch heel and plain rounded toe, and may be worn with any Class uniform.
 - b. Foul weather boots will be black leather lace-up, 9-10 inch tops, with black Vibram type soles, plain rounded toes, and black laces. Foul weather boots will not be worn with a Class A uniform.
 - c. Shoes will be black leather, black athletic type, or black Vibram plain rounded toes with black laces and black socks. Athletic style shoes will not be worn with a Class A uniform.
14. Only the issued jackets with the Department patches, badge and chevrons may be worn. Technical and special services components may be assigned special clothing.
15. Only black or navy blue crew neck or turtleneck T-shirts will be worn with the Class B or C uniforms.
16. Gun belt and accessories will be plain black and restricted to issued and/or authorized items.
 - a. The Velcro inner belt will be worn in the belt loops of the trousers with the Velcro side out. The outer gun belt is worn over the Velcro inner belt.
 - b. The holster will be worn on the strong hand side of the gun belt.

- c. Handcuff cases are worn where most comfortable for the officer.
 - d. The collapsible baton will be worn in a position that is most comfortable for the officer to draw from.
 - e. The magazine pouch is worn on either the right or the left front side of the gun belt.
 - f. Other authorized items may be worn on the gun belt at the officer's discretion.
17. Officers may elect to individually purchase a nylon gun belt and accessories as specified by the Department. The use of tactical or hip-extended holsters will be limited to job function. The nylon gun belt and accessories are to be worn with Class B/C uniforms only.
18. Officers have the option on whether to wear leather or web gear on duty.
19. Shirts will be worn neatly tucked into the trousers.
20. Collar Brass:
- a. Officer – no collar brass worn
 - b. Corporal – no collar brass worn
 - c. Sergeant – no collar brass worn
 - d. Commander – Single gold star
 - e. Assistant Chief – Double gold star
 - f. Chief of Police – Triple gold star
21. When issued, all uniform items will be correctly sized for employees. Minor alterations that do not substantially alter the appearance, such as tapering to improve the fit, may be made at the individual employee's expense. Replacement at the Department's expense will be limited to instances of damage or normal wear that makes the item unusable.

IX. PLAIN CLOTHES ASSIGNMENTS (Sworn and Non-Sworn Employees)

- A. A Sworn and Civilian employees must conform to clothing standards to enhance the professionalism of themselves and the Department.
 - 1. If a sidearm is worn on the waist, the officer's department badge must be prominently displayed
 - 2. Plain-clothes officers may wear a vest or jacket that readily identifies the wearer as a police officer during call-outs, specific assignments, or extra-duty assignments when appropriate.
 - 3. Plain-clothes sworn personnel are required to maintain at least one complete standard uniform at all times in case they are called upon for uniformed duties.
- B. Acceptable Attire – Male Personnel
 - 1. Shirts must have collars, with the exception of sweaters
 - 2. Suits, sports coats, shirts with ties, dress or casual slacks are appropriate
 - 3. Denim material is acceptable but must be in like new condition, properly laundered and pressed.

4. Male personnel will not wear sandals
- C. Acceptable Attire – Female Personnel
 1. Dresses, skirts or slacks with a blouse or sweater, dress or pants suits
 2. Sleeveless shirts and dresses should be at least 2 inches in width on the shoulder. Armholes should be properly fitted and not gaping.
 3. Dress / skirt length should not be more than 4 inches above the knee
 4. Shirts and blouses will have an appropriate neckline and be properly buttoned. Displaying excessive cleavage is prohibited.
 5. Female personnel will wear bras.
 6. Denim material is acceptable but must be in like new condition, properly laundered and pressed.
- D. Unacceptable Attire – Male and Female Personnel
 1. Shorts
 2. Sweat pants, sweatshirts, sweat suits or wind/warm-up suits
 3. Athletic wear, t-shirts or tank tops
 4. Sleep wear (i.e. pajamas, nightgowns, robes, etc.), house shoes or slippers
 5. Beach type or rubber flip-flop shoes
 6. Ball caps with insignia or markings. Plain black or navy caps may be worn on the dispatch floor to assist in relieving eye strain.
 7. Any attire that reveals the midriff when arms are raised over head
 8. Excessively worn or torn apparel
 9. Dresses and shirts that show bare shoulders (strapless or spaghetti straps), unless a coordinating jacket or blouse is worn as a top garment at all times
- E. Special Assignments
 1. Employees placed in special assignments, including covert or undercover assignments, special events, or other special operations, will wear clothing approved by the Chief of Police or the supervisor of the operation.
- F. Court Attire
 1. Officers attending court will be in uniform or civilian clothes to include a shirt and a tie for male employees and appropriate business attire for female employees.

X. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

- A. Employees shall maintain their physical appearance in accordance with good taste and professionalism. Hair shall not be dyed, colored, or styled in a manner that would draw undue attention to the employee. Female employees will apply their makeup tastefully. Male employees shall not appear for work needing a shave or haircut.
- B. Hair length
 1. Male employees shall wear their hair so as to present a groomed appearance. Hair will not extend past the collar at the back of the neck. Hair on the sides will not extend below the top of the ear and must be mildly tapered. Hair in the front

will not extend below the middle of the forehead. Sideburns may extend no lower than the lowest tip of the employee's ear lobe. They shall be of a naturally even width and shall end with a clean-shaven horizontal line.

2. Female employees shall wear their hair so as to present a groomed appearance. They shall not be restricted as to the length of their hair; however, for sworn employees if the hair extends below the bottom of the uniform collar it shall be pulled up or pulled back and secured for officer safety. It shall not hang into the employee's face, either in front or on the sides.

C. Mustaches and beards

1. Mustaches will not extend beyond the corner of the mouth on a horizontal line, nor below the corner of the mouth on a vertical line, nor below the top line of the upper lip. They shall be neatly trimmed at all times.
2. Goatees and beards will not be permitted in uniform except as provided by addendum A

D. Jewelry

1. Rings are limited to one ring on each hand.
2. Female employees may wear earrings, provided they are small and tasteful in appearance and only one per ear. Male employees are not permitted to wear any type of earring.
3. Employees in uniform are discouraged from wearing chains and necklaces as they could be lost or cause an injury during the performance of police activities.
4. A female employee in civilian attire may deviate from these regulations with the approval of her supervisor.
5. To present a uniform and objectively neutral appearance to the public, non-departmental jewelry or pins shall not be worn on the uniform at any time or on plain clothes while on duty unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police.

E. Personal Hygiene

1. Employees shall practice good personal hygiene at all times, including use of soap, water, and deodorant. Employees shall not report for work emitting an offensive body odor. A moderate amount of perfume or aftershave may be used. Fingernails are to be kept clean and of a length not to inhibit the employee's performance.

F. Tattoos, Body Art, Piercing, or Branding

1. While representing the department in an official capacity, no department personnel shall exhibit any visible tattoos, body art, or branding on the face, neck, or hands.
2. With the exception of pierced ears, body piercing is not authorized for any agency personnel while representing the department. Body piercing(s) must be covered by the official uniform or plainclothes apparel when agency personnel are representing the department.

- G. Sworn members assigned to Narcotics investigations are exempt from uniform and grooming standards.

XI. USE OF DEPARTMENTAL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT AND EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

All employees, reserves, and volunteers are advised that the use of departmental facilities, lockers, vehicles, and any equipment, including computers, telephones, or other electronic devices, is governed by departmental rules and regulations and that there is no expectation of privacy regardless of whether locks, passwords, or privacy settings are employed.