

Professional Image – First Impressions Count Guidelines for VCH Employees and Leaders

1.0 Introduction

Staff appearance creates a powerful image (i.e., first impressions count), that affects how patients, residents, clients, families and visitors view the quality of care and services delivered by VCH.

VCH staff members are expected to:

- wear work clothing and maintain grooming that reflect a professional appearance, maintain safe standards of care, and are suitable for the work they perform.
- maintain infection prevention and control standards;
- comply with Work Safe BC standards on personal protective clothing and equipment.

2.0 Work Clothes:

Examples of **appropriate** work clothing include the following:

- Clean, tidy clothing in good repair;
- Images on the clothing (if any) should be appropriate to the work environment/setting;
- Dress pants, skirts or dresses at an appropriate length;
- Clinical uniforms in clinical areas.

Examples of **inappropriate** work clothing include the following:

- Sweat pants, sweat shirts, spandex, hoodies, or athletic wear;
- Clothing that is revealing, is not sized appropriately, or clings tightly to the body;
- Soiled and/or badly wrinkled clothing;
- Sheer (i.e., see-through) clothing;
- Flip flops.

Clothing worn to meet religious or cultural requirements (such as a kippah, headscarf, turban) is acceptable.

VCH-Endorsed Work Clothing Supplier (under development)

VCH has arranged with a local clothing manufacturer for staff in designated clinical roles to be able to purchase standardized work clothing online via <http://vchworkclothing.ca> at a reduced price. This clothing is intended to be worn at work only.

2.1 Scrubs

Staff working in areas where scrubs are provided daily, are not to wear the scrubs off-site due to infection control.

Daily scrubs are only to be worn by those staff authorized by their manager to wear scrubs.

VCH is responsible for laundering the daily scrubs.

2.2 Photo/Security Identification (ID)

All staff must wear their photo identification cards when working so that patients, residents, clients, other staff, and physicians can easily see and read the identification for security purposes. New identification cards include a picture, first name and designation of position (e.g. Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, etc). Photo Identification may be worn on “break-away” lanyards or clips at waist level or on chest and must not be defaced.

2.3 Name Tag Identification

Staff who work with patients, residents, clients, family members and visitors are to wear a name badge at upper chest level identifying their first name and designation (e.g. Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, etc.). VCH will supply these badges to employees. Name badges must not be defaced. Staff escorting clients in the community need not wear identification when interacting with the general public.

If standard work clothing is purchased by the employee from the VCH-endorsed supplier, and it includes the employee’s name & VCH logo on the top, then the employee does not need to also wear a name tag.

2.4 Hair

Hair is to be clean, neatly groomed and off the face. When giving direct care, hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back. Moustaches or beards should be neatly groomed.

2.5 Fingernails

As per the hand hygiene policy, staff in physical contact with patients, clients, and/or residents are to maintain clean, short nails. Unchipped clear or light coloured nail polish is acceptable unless you are working in a designated area where nail polish is prohibited (e.g., O.R., Labor & Delivery, MDRD). Prosthetic nails and nail art are not acceptable.

2.6 Accessories

Staff should not wear accessories that could cause injury or affect patient care such as, but not limited to: dangling jewelry, loose bracelets and/or large rings. Rings with stone settings should not be worn in clinical settings as they compromise hand hygiene, can pierce gloves and can scratch patients/clients/residents.

All footwear must comply with Work Safe BC Regulations and VCH's Footwear policy.

Staff are required to wear appropriate clean shoes in a good state of repair provide protection against injury from slipping, spills, sharps, or other hazards.

2.8 Scent-Free

To accommodate individuals who are allergic to strong scents, all staff must avoid the use of scented products as outlined in the Scented Products policy.

2.9 Safety Equipment

Eye Protection (goggles or shields) and other safety equipment provided by VCH must be worn by staff per departmental procedures.

2.10 Other Guidelines

Additional unit/area specific grooming and work clothing guidelines are acceptable provided they maintain professional and direct care standards, are consistently applied and the work clothing is suitable for the work being performed.

3.0 References

Tools, Forms and Guidelines

- **Personal Protective Equipment and Infection Control**

Refer to *Barriers and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)* (Infection Control Manual:

<http://vch-connect/programs/infectcontrol/Documents/Infection%20Control%20Manual%20JG%20ebVRE%20edits.pdf>

Related Policies

- **Footwear Policy:**

http://vch-connect/policies_manuals/human_resources/worksafe_and_wellness/Documents/OHS%20Omnipolicies/binary_21003.pdf

- **Hand Hygiene Policy:**

http://vch-connect/policies_manuals/human_resources/worksafe_and_wellness/Documents/OHS%20Omnipolicies/binary_67390.pdf

- **Scented Products Policy:**

http://vch-connect/policies_manuals/human_resources/worksafe_and_wellness/Documents/OHS%20Omnipolicies/binary_21000.pdf

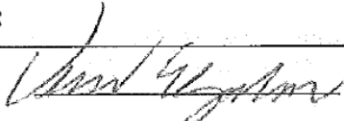
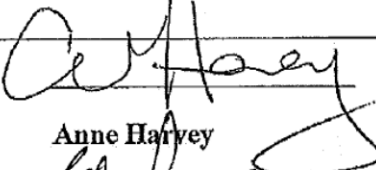
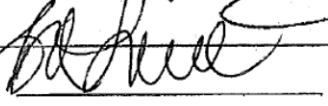
Related Standards

- **WorkSafeBC.** *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.* Part 8: Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment.

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Part8.asp>

Keywords

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