



TITLE

**UNIFORM ETIQUETTE**

SCOPE

Provincial: Emergency Medical Services

DOCUMENT #

SWE-EMS-01-01

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Senior Provincial Director and Chief Paramedic

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Associate Executive Director, EMS Business Standards and Operational Support

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Managing Uniform Standards Policy (#SWE-EMS-01)

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**NOTE:** The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

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## OBJECTIVES

- To define a consistent standard for uniform etiquette.
- To define the items constituting operational dress code.
- To define uniform standards of formal dress.

## APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

## ELEMENTS

### 1. Uniform Preparation

- 1.1 Attention will be paid to the condition of uniforms to ensure a professional presentation when in the presence of the public.
  - a) Uniforms shall be complete, clean, free of wrinkles, in good repair (i.e., no worn, faded, ripped, frayed areas, loose striping or missing buttons).
  - b) All uniform items shall be properly fastened while on duty or in the presence of the public (i.e., shirts buttoned, boots tied or zippered).
  - c) Duty Boots or Office Footwear shall be polished and properly fastened when worn.

- d) **Uniformed Staff** shall identify uniform items that are in need of repair or replacement to their local uniform representative or email EMS.Uniform@ahs.ca for assistance.
  - e) A spare uniform will be kept reasonably accessible for changing if needed.
  - f) The uniform may be worn to and from work.
  - g) Other than travel to and from work, no uniform item is to be worn while **Off-Duty** without the authorization of a **supervisor**.
  - h) If on call, a uniform must be readily accessible.
  - i) Only AHS issued pieces of clothing can be worn while on duty unless pre-approved by **Management**.
- 1.2 **EMS staff** that wish to deviate from the uniform policy based on Human Rights Legislation shall address their request to their immediate supervisor.

## 2. Rank Insignia (See Appendix A)

- 2.1 All Uniformed Staff shall wear the appropriate rank insignia when in uniform.
- 2.2 Epaulette covers shall be worn on all uniform jackets, shirts or sweaters that feature epaulettes.
  - a) Chief Paramedic shall be identified by a crown and 5 gold leaves.
  - b) Executive Directors shall be identified by a crown and 4 gold leaves.
  - c) Associate Executive Directors shall be identified by a crown and 3 gold leaves.
  - d) Directors shall be identified by a crown and 2 gold leaves.
  - e) Managers shall be identified by a crown and 1 gold maple leaf.
  - f) Supervisors or equivalent positions shall be identified by a wreath and 3 gold maple leaves.
  - g) Assistant Supervisors, PEO's and Team Leads shall be identified by a wreath and 2 silver maple leaves.
  - h) Clinical Educators and Coordinators shall be identified by a wreath and 1 silver maple leaf.
  - i) Advanced Care Paramedics (formerly EMT-P) staff shall be identified by a wreath with ACP text.

- j) Primary Care Paramedics (formerly EMT) staff shall be identified by wreath with PCP text.
  - k) Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) staff shall be identified by a wreath with “EMR” text.
  - l) Vehicle, Equipment and Supply Services Technicians (VESST) shall be identified by a wreath with “VESST” text.
  - m) Emergency Communication Officers (ECO) shall be identified by a wreath with “ECO” text.
  - n) All other epaulette designations as approved by EMS Senior Leadership. i.e., **Medical Director**.
- 2.3 Collar pins shall be worn on all shirts by the following Management Uniformed Staff.
- a) The following shall be identified by a gold wreath and a crown:
    - (i) Chief Paramedic
    - (ii) Executive Directors
    - (iii) Associate Executive Directors
    - (iv) Directors
    - (v) Managers
  - b) The following shall be identified by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  gold wreath:
    - (i) Supervisors
    - (ii) Assistant Supervisors
    - (iii) Team Leads
    - (iv) Public Education Officers

### 3. Order of Dress (See Appendix B)

#### 3.1 Levels of Dress for Management Staff

- a) Managers and higher in rank:
  - (i) Civilian attire as approved by the local workplace (office duty only)  
OR

- (ii) Navy blue shirt (long or short sleeved) NO AHS/EMS embroidery or reflective strips, navy blue uniform pants without cargo pockets and reflective stripes.
  - (iii) Appropriate shirt collar pins and epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (iv) Name plate located over right shirt pocket.
  - (v) When a T-Shirt is worn under an issued navy blue shirt (optional), it shall be either the issued navy blue cotton T-shirt or the issued black under-vest T-shirt.
  - (vi) Black leather belt.
  - (vii) Issued black shoes or black footwear appropriate for the job function.
  - (viii) High-Vis jacket (as required) with epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (ix) Non-reflective jacket or sweater with epaulettes reflective of rank.
- b) Supervisors:
- (i) Civilian attire as approved by the local workplace (office duty only)  
**OR**
  - (ii) Navy blue shirt (long or short) with circular reflective stripes, collar pins and epaulettes reflective of rank. Navy blue uniform pants with cargo pockets and reflective stripes.
  - (iii) Name plate located over right shirt pocket.
  - (iv) When a T-Shirt is worn under an issued navy blue shirt (optional), it shall be either the issued navy blue cotton T-shirt or the issued black under-vest T-shirt.
  - (v) Navy blue uniform pants with cargo pockets and reflective stripes.
  - (vi) Black leather belt.
  - (vii) Issued footwear appropriate for the job function.
  - (viii) High-Vis jacket (as required) with epaulettes reflective rank.
- c) Formal Duty (i.e., High Visibility Standby or Media Event)
- (i) Long sleeved white uniform shirt with collar pins and epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (ii) Name plate located over right shirt pocket.

- (iii) Black tie with gold plated tie bar.
  - (iv) Black dress pants (no side pockets or striping).
  - (v) Black leather belt.
  - (vi) Forage cap with cap badge.
  - (vii) High-Vis jacket (as required) with epaulettes reflective rank.
  - (viii) Issued black footwear, clean and polished.
- d) Dress Uniform (i.e., Funerals, etc.)
- (i) Long sleeved white uniform shirt with collar pins and epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (ii) Name plate located over right shirt pocket.
  - (iii) Black tie with gold plated tie bar.
  - (iv) Dress tunic with name plate located over right pocket/chest area.
  - (v) Lanyard-gold.
  - (vi) Black dress pants (no side pockets or striping).
  - (vii) Black leather belt.
  - (viii) Forage cap with cap badge.
  - (ix) Issued black footwear, clean and polished.
  - (x) Trench coat (as required).

### 3.2 Levels of Dress for **Non-Management** Uniformed Staff

- a) Duty Uniform
- (i) Navy blue uniform shirt (long or short sleeved) circular reflective stripes and epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (ii) Name plate located over right shirt pocket.
  - (iii) When a T-Shirt is worn under an issued navy blue shirt (optional), it shall be either the issued navy blue cotton T-shirt or the issued black under-vest T-shirt.
  - (iv) Navy blue uniform pants with cargo pockets and reflective stripes (practitioners).

- (v) Black leather belt with accessories as needed.
  - (vi) High-Vis jacket (practitioners) and non-reflective jackets and sweater (ECOs and other staff assigned) with epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (vii) Issued footwear appropriate for the job functions and weather conditions.
  - (viii) Winter gloves and issued toque as needed.
- b) Formal Duty Uniform (i.e., Funerals, etc.)
- (i) Long sleeve navy blue uniform shirt with reflective stripes and epaulettes reflective of rank.
  - (ii) Name Plate located over right shirt pocket.
  - (iii) Navy blue tie with silver plated tie bar.
  - (iv) Navy blue uniform pants with cargo pockets and reflective stripes.
  - (v) Black leather belt.
  - (vi) Duty footwear, clean and polished.
  - (vii) High-Vis jacket (as required) with epaulettes reflective of rank.

### 3.3 Orders / Medals / **Undress Ribbons** / Decorations

- a) **Formal medals** and insignia may only be worn on a dress tunic or suit jacket.
- b) Formal medals shall not be worn on the duty uniform or formal duty uniform.
- c) Formal insignia will be mounted and worn according to *The Canadian Honours System: Wearing of Orders, Decorations and Medals* published by the Governor General's office (see References section below).
- d) Undress ribbons can be worn on the duty uniform directly over the left shirt pocket.

### 3.4 Lapel Pins

- a) EMS staff shall be allowed to wear the following lapel pins on their uniforms:
  - (i) Association pin (e.g. HSAA, ACP).
  - (ii) Professional pin (e.g. AHS insignia).

- (iii) Years of service pin.
- (iv) Other pins as approved by Management.

- b) Only one pin may be worn at a given time.
- c) The pin must be worn on the centre line of the right breast pocket; just below the button eyelet or flap.
- d) The pin size shall not exceed one inch.

### 3.5 Name Plates

- a) Be worn centered directly above the right breast pocket of the shirt.
- b) Include first name and zone/service for the **health care professional**.
- c) Include first name, last name, rank, area of responsibility and zone for Management staff.

### 3.6 Poppies

- a) Uniformed Staff may choose to wear a poppy following these instructions:
  - (i) Calendar period for wear begins on the last Friday in October until November 11th.
  - (ii) Worn on the left breast pocket flap of the shirt, toward the midline of the body.
  - (iii) Worn on the left lapel of other garments or as close to the heart as possible.

### 3.7 Mourning Ribbons/Pins

- a) Personnel may at times be instructed to wear a mourning ribbon/pin:
  - (i) Calendar period for wear begins upon notification and worn until sunset on the day of the funeral/memorial.
  - (ii) Worn on the left breast pocket flap of the shirt, toward the midline of the body.
  - (iii) Worn on the left lapel of other garments or as close to the heart as possible.
- b) Mourning ribbons/pins should only be worn during periods of mourning and not year round.

#### 4. Appearance

##### 4.1 Personal Appearance & Grooming

- a) Uniformed Staff are expected to use good personal judgment and dress and groom themselves in a manner consistent with professional appearance and safety standards.
- b) Personal grooming, in this context, includes jewelry, fingernails, facial and bodily adornments such as, but not limited to, studs, tattoos, rings and piercing of any type.
- c) For **health care professionals**, facial hair (i.e., moustache, beard) shall be trimmed and facial adornments (e.g. rings, studs, pins) shall be worn in a manner, (be of a size, shape and location) so as to ensure an effective facial seal when required to use respiratory protective equipment. This is required by clauses 250(1) and 250(2) of the Alberta Occupation Health and Safety Code (2009).
- d) Hair will be worn in a manner which will not create a safety hazard, infection control risk or impede uniform identification.
- e) If a health care professional's hair exceeds shoulder length, it shall be worn tied back, up and off of the collar while providing patient care. (The hair accessory used to tie hair up must be consistent with the uniform (i.e., black hair tie).
- f) If in the reasonable opinion of a supervisor, the dress and/or grooming of an employee is not in keeping with the intent of this policy or represents a safety concern, the employee may be asked to leave the workplace until suitably attired and/or groomed.
- g) Sweaters shall be worn over a uniform shirt with epaulettes reflective of rank.

##### 4.2 Sunglasses

- a) Moderately tinted safety glasses or variable tint prescription lenses may be worn.
- b) Sunglasses will be removed while interacting with patients, members of the public, or participating in media events.
- c) When in uniform, sunglasses shall be removed during the playing of any National Anthem.

##### 4.3 Head Wear (Hats)

- a) Head wear is intended to be worn when the practitioner is exposed to environmental conditions that warrant its use.



- b) Head wear should be removed when indoors.
- c) When in uniform, head wear shall be removed during playing of any National Anthem.
- d) Ball caps or summer hats shall be worn with the beak pointing straight forward at all times.

## DEFINITIONS

**EMS Staff** means all employees of AHS EMS.

**Formal medal** means a medal recognized by the Chancellery (Queen's representative).

**Health care professional** means an individual who is a member of a regulated health discipline, as defined by the Health Disciplines Act or the Health Professions Act, and who practices within scope and role.

**Management** means EMS staff at the Supervisor level and higher or staff specified by the Executive Director.

**Medical Director (MD)** means a person, as defined in the *Alberta Emergency Health Services Act and (Interim) Regulation*, who is a physician designated to provide medical control to paramedics, and is in a managerial position with ultimate responsibility for ordering, transporting, storing and providing controlled substances for an organization that provides emergency medical services in Alberta.

**Non-Management** means EMS staff below the supervisor level including Practitioners.

**Off Duty** means not actively on duty or on call.

**Order of Dress** means the appropriate level of dress as determined by EMS Management and the type of function attended.

**Supervisor** means a leadership role in EMS that reports directly to a Manager. This position is responsible and accountable for providing frontline direction and leadership towards the activities of EMS in support of the vision, mission and business plan of Alberta Health Services. A supervisor can be from either a direct delivery service or a contracted provider.

**Undress Ribbons** means a small ribbon mounted on a bar, used to identify the award of a medal, order or decoration.

**Uniformed Staff** means EMS staff required to wear uniforms at any time in the performance of their duties. This includes both Management and Non-management staff.

## REFERENCES

- Appendix A: *Rank Insignia Reference*
- Appendix B: *Order of Dress Reference*
- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - *Managing Uniform Standards Policy (#SWE-EMS-01)*
- Non-Alberta Health Services Documents:
  - Governor General of Canada (2005). *The Canadian Honours System: Wearing of Orders, Decorations and Medals*. 20 APL 2017
  - Veterans Affairs Canada (2009). *The Poppy*. 22 SEP 2009
  - Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Code Part 18 *Personal Protective Equipment Respiratory Protective Equipment 250 (1) & 250 (2)*

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**APPENDIX A**

**Rank Insignia Reference**

**In Scope Employees**

				
<b>EMR</b>	<b>PCP</b>	<b>ACP</b> <b>Medical Director</b> <b>VESST</b>	<b>Clinical Educator</b> <b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Team Lead</b> <b>A/Supervisor</b> <b>PEO</b>

**Out of Scope Employees**

					
<b>Supervisor</b> <b>Quality Assurance Strategist</b>	<b>Manager</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Associate Executive Director</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Chief Paramedic</b>

APPENDIX B

Order of Dress Reference



Management Duty form  
No stripes for Manager Level and above  
No AHS Embroidery