

P.S. 3.02 WORKPLACE STANDARDS

It is the policy of Atlantic County Government that all employees will conduct the business of the County at the highest level of personal ethics. Each Atlantic County employee is an important member of the County team. As such, each employee should present themselves in a professional and pleasant manner to the patrons, clients, customers, citizens and coworkers with whom they have contact. This includes dressing, presenting and conducting themselves in a way that reflects respect for oneself, coworkers, and the public. The following guidelines on workplace standards apply to County employees.

1. WORKPLACE CONDUCT

a. Personal ethics are standards of conduct for individuals by which actions are determined to be right or wrong. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a lawful and professional manner while on county property or on county business. This includes being courteous, respectful and polite.

b. Standards of conduct are based on honesty, character, integrity, conscience, and shared values.

c. All County employees are accountable for their behavior. Obeying the law is the minimum standard. Employees who are criminally charged or arrested for any violation of any law or ordinance, except minor traffic violations (DUI is not a minor traffic offense) shall inform their Department Head or Elected Official within three working days in order to maintain the public trust. Failure to inform the Department Head or Elected Official within the aforementioned time frame will subject the employee to discipline.

d. All County employees have an obligation to wisely use County resources of time, money, materials, and equipment to provide the greatest good to the most citizens.

e. Treating all co-workers and citizens with respect is the minimum standard for behavior in the workplace. It is a betrayal of the public trust to treat co-workers and citizens, discourteously, unfairly, unequally or dishonestly.

f. It is discouraged and unprofessional for supervisory employees to loan or borrow money from subordinate employees in the workplace.

g. Questions about acceptable activities or behavior should be directed to the immediate supervisor.

2. USE OF LANGUAGE IN THE WORKPLACE

a. Conduct which is in violation of the law or accepted standards of decency and morality, including the use of obscene or abusive language or profanity will not be tolerated.

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b. Racial or ethnic slurs, sexually harassing remarks, threats of violence, and any other provocative comments, language or actions will not be tolerated.

c. Employees who are determined to have engaged in inappropriate workplace conduct are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

3. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

a. All employees should be neat, clean, well-groomed and present a businesslike appearance. Makeup, if worn, should be used in moderation.

b. Distracting, revealing or provocative clothing is not appropriate at work. For example, such items as "hot pants", mini or overly short skirts or shorts; tank tops; muscle shirts; bandeau, tube or other tops that expose the midriff; clothing that exposes the midriff or backside; see-through items without appropriate undercover; and anything skintight are not acceptable. Underwear should not be visible. Clothing should not include vulgar, demeaning, discriminatory, sexual or other offensive sayings, symbols or pictures.

c. Overly casual clothing or shoes in the workplace are not acceptable for business activities where the employee may have face to face contact with the public. This includes, for example, T-shirts, jogging suits, blue jeans, workout wear, leggings, and beach attire. Under circumstances where casual attire would be more appropriate for a work related activity, supervisors may approve wearing of attire appropriate for the specified activity.

d. Clothing, shoes and accessories shall not present a safety or health hazard while the employee is performing his/her job. For example, loose clothing and jewelry should not be worn around machinery.

e. Body art such as tattoos and piercings may be permissible unless otherwise prohibited in a specific County Department. However, tattoos and piercings/jewelry that are distracting, sexually graphic, violent or otherwise offensive may not be exposed/visible in the workplace. Additionally, any body piercing jewelry or accessories shall not present a safety or health hazard while the employee is performing his/her job.

f. Some units of county government have specific uniform or dress standards related to job performance and/or safety. Employees in these units are expected to conform to these requirements. Any special requirements should be communicated to prospective employees at the time of the job offer. After review by the Division of Human Resources, individual divisions or units may establish particular dress codes which are specific to their operations. These standards shall be uniformly applied and communicated to any employee at the time of the job offer and/or orientation.

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g. It is the policy of Atlantic County Government that any clothing, uniforms or badges which contain the County logo/seal or otherwise identify the employee as a County employee must only be worn while the employee is performing work for the County, or while traveling to and from work. Materials bearing the County logo/seal and/or name must not be worn at functions/events where the employee is in attendance for purposes unaffiliated with County government business, unless prior approval has been given by the Department Head for an event. Prior to attending off-duty social events or engaging in off-duty activities, all materials which identify an individual as an officer/employee of Atlantic County Government must be removed.

Accommodations, including for religious or medical needs, will be considered on an individual basis by the Division of Human Resources.

Supervisors and managers are responsible for interpreting and enforcing the dress and grooming standards in their areas of responsibility. Supervisors and managers shall consult with the Division of Human Resources in interpreting and enforcing these provisions. If an employee does not abide by these guidelines, he or she will first be counseled by a supervisor or manager. Should the employee continue to disregard these guidelines after verbal counseling, the supervisor should follow up with a written warning. Further disregard will result in formal disciplinary action as outlined in P.S. 1.04 Disciplinary Action for insubordination.

If the violation is unduly distracting or unsafe, the employee will be sent home without pay, to change clothes.