


<p><b>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</b></p>  <p><b>General Order Number: 4.41</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Issue</b></p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p><b>Effective Date</b></p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p><b>Revision Date</b></p>
<p><b>Subject: UNIFORMS AND APPEARANCE</b></p>	<p>Amends:</p>	<p>Rescinds:</p>	
<p>Index as: Appearance, Court Dress, Dress Standards, Equipment, Grooming, Uniforms</p>	<p>State Certification Standards:1.5, 3.11</p>		

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to prescribe the policies and procedures of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office regarding the uniforms and appearance of employees of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It shall be the policy that all sworn and civilian employees of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office shall be dressed in either the uniform(s) of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office or in appropriate civilian clothing and present a neat and professional appearance that reflects favorable on the department.

**DISCUSSION**

All personnel are expected to present the highest professional standards of personal hygiene and appearance while performing their duties and representing the department in any official capacity.

It is the responsibility of all supervisors to ensure through personal observations and daily inspections that employees comply with all uniform, appearance, and grooming requirements of the department.

**I. SWORN OFFICERS**

**A. General Appearance Standards**

**1. Sworn Personnel**

Sworn personnel will wear the designated and agency uniform components and equipment items when reporting for duty, while on duty, during any authorized special assignments, and while performing extra-duty employment. When in uniform, care should be taken that it fits well, is neat, clean, pressed, in good condition and properly worn, if the officer is dressed in the Class "A" type uniform or the "BDU" type uniform.

2. Auxiliary (Reserve) Personnel

Reserve personnel will wear the same uniform components (plus the "Auxiliary" designation on the departmental shoulder patch), use the same equipment items, and comply with the same grooming standards as full time officers. Reserve officers will only wear the departmental uniform for official departmental sponsored purposes when reporting for duty, while on duty, and during any authorized special assignments. The uniform will not be worn for any off duty employment.

3. Criminal Investigation Division Personnel

Criminal Investigation Division personnel will wear suitable business attire while on duty. Criminal Investigations Division investigators are authorized to wear polo type shirts and khaki type pants during warm weather. Criminal Investigations Divisions will wear a coat and tie or suit during judicial appearances or as directed by the Sheriff of Rabun County or his designee(s). Other clothing allowed will be at the discretion of the Criminal Investigations Division Commander or his designee(s) based on assignment. Sworn personnel may be assigned to special investigative units within the Rabun County Sheriff's Office. During these assignments, a relaxation of appearance and dress standards may be suited or appropriate in light of the unit(s) overall or short term mission(s). It shall be the discretion of the Criminal Investigations Division Commander and the Unit Commander to determine the appropriate appearance standards of sworn personnel assigned to such units. This discretionary responsibility does not extend to judicial appearances or other occasions where the officer's appearance may reflect negatively on the Rabun County Sheriff's Office.

4. While in uniform, sworn personnel shall not inter-mix items of civilian clothing as an outer garment, unless specifically authorized by this General Order.

5. All uniform components and items of equipment must conform to departmental approved specifications as established in this General Order.

6. Personnel are responsible for the general care and maintenance of uniforms and equipment:

- a. The uniform is to be kept well pressed, clean, and free of spots and dirt. Uniforms should be brushed to remove lint and dandruff as required;
- b. Minor repairs shall be made to attach buttons, repair small tears, and re-sew a hem;
- c. All leather and authorized metal items shall be clean and polished;
- d. Headgear will not be altered, such as by bending the hat brim or in any way creasing or altering the hat's manufactured shape;
- e. Uniform and equipment replacement as far as wear and tear, damage, or changes in the wearer's size will be accomplished in accordance with prescribed procedures; and

- f. Uniforms and equipment turned in upon the employee's termination of employment or affiliation with the Auxiliary Program will be in the same condition as when issued (except for normal wear and tear) and will be dry cleaned.
7. While in civilian attire, uniform items shall not be worn as an outer garment except under emergency conditions, such as situations requiring the use of the reflector vest for traffic control, body armor if engaged in potentially hazardous duty, or special protective clothing for crime scene processing.
8. Undergarments will be worn at all times by male and female personnel while on duty.
9. Tobacco products may only be used as prescribed by Rabun County Employee Handbook. In addition no tobacco product will be used:
  - a. While in a formation;
  - b. When engaged in traffic direction or control;
  - c. When talking or engaging in official departmental business with a citizen, or
  - d. When in the private residence or place of business in an official capacity without first asking for and obtaining permission.
10. Uniform or civilian clothing which is tattered, excessively worn, or in poor taste shall be considered unacceptable for wear.

#### B. Grooming Standards

1. Hair must be kept clean and neat. If dyes, tints, or bleaches are used, colors used must be natural to human hair and not present an extreme appearance. Hair must not contain an excessive amount of grooming aids. When combed, the hair shall not touch the eyebrow, shall not be worn in any "fashion" style (i.e., ponytails, "corn-rowing, pigtails, or Mohawks), and shall not be worn in any manner that exceeds the length or bulk standards or in any way violates departmental safety standards. In uniform, the hair shall not protrude below the front band of the issued headgear.
2. Male officer's hair must have a tapered appearance on both sides and the back of the head, whether with or without headgear. A tapered appearance is one that, when viewed from any angle, outlines the individual's head by conforming to its natural shape, curving inward at the termination point. The bulk (thickness) or mass of hair shall not be of excessive thickness at the termination point. A block style cut is permitted as long as a general tapered appearance is maintained. Hair must not extend down over the ears and only closely cut or shaved hair on the back of the neck may touch the shirt collar. Hair must not contain or have any visible foreign items attached to it.
3. Female officer's hair may not be worn down in such a manner that the hair extends down to the shoulder. Female officer's hair must be worn up if the length of it would cause it to touch below the shirt collar. Hair must not exceed 3 inches in bulk (when worn up) or prevent the proper wearing of the issued headgear. Hair will not contain ornamentation such as ribbons or jeweled pins. Plain hairpins, combs, and/or barrettes similar to the officer's hair color may be worn to keep hair in place.
4. Mustaches are discretionary. When worn, a mustache will be kept well trimmed and must not extend downward beyond the lip-line of the upper lip or extend sideways beyond a horizontal line

drawn from the corner of the mouth. The thickness shall not be excessive. Handlebar or "Fu-Man-Chu" style mustaches are not permitted.

5. Sideburns must be neatly trimmed and tapered in the same manner as the haircut. Sideburns will be straight and of an even length, (not flared) and end in a clean shaven line, not extending below the lowest part of the exterior ear opening.
6. Beards will not be permitted for uniform officers unless permitted by the Sheriff or Chief Deputy. Officers will report to work clean-shaven.
7. Wigs and hairpieces must conform to the same standards required for natural hair, be of good quality, and fit properly.
8. If worn by female officers, facial cosmetics are to be subdued and worn with good taste to present an overall conservative appearance. Bright colors in facial and eye make up are prohibited. False eyelashes are prohibited. Lipstick, if worn, is to be of a subdued color. Any deviation of the above will be made by the officer's Division Commander and only as may be required by job assignment.
9. Fingernails shall be kept clean. If polish is worn by a female officer, only a clear or natural color product shall be used. The length will not exceed 1/8 inch beyond the finger nor will any ornamentation be attached to the nail(s).
10. Jewelry
  - a. Only one necklace is permitted for wear by male and female officers. The necklace must be worn unexposed, with no more than one charm or medallion.
  - b. Female officers are permitted to wear one earring in each ear. The earring must be of the stud type and cannot dangle below the earlobe in a hoop style. Male officers are not permitted to wear earrings of any type while in uniform or while on duty unless authorized by their Division Commander and then only when operating in a plain clothes or undercover assignment.
  - c. Male and female officers are permitted one ring (or wedding band set) on each hand. The ring shall not be of excessive size or inappropriate design.
  - d. No wrist or ankle bracelets will be worn while in uniform, except for the medical alert type.
11. Sunglasses are permitted for wear during the daylight hours and outside of buildings unless the employee has a prescription from a physician requiring that sunglasses be worn under other circumstances or has been authorized by the employee's supervisor.
  - a. The lens will be smoke, gray, green, or amber in color. No florescent or multi-colored frames or mirror lens will be permitted.
  - b. When in uniform, the glasses shall not affect the wearing of the departmental issued headgear.
  - c. When in uniform at special functions such as court appearances, while in a formation, or at funerals, glasses will not be affixed to the shirt when they are removed.

12. Officers on special assignments or when assigned to a unit where the appearance should not be of a law enforcement officer, may at the discretion of their unit commander, deviate from the standards of this General Order.

C. Officer Uniform and Personal Equipment Standards

1. All uniform items and related personal equipment shall be issued by and satisfy the specifications of the department as approved by the Sheriff or his designee(s).
2. The department shall provide an adequate supply of the approved uniforms as needed for the employee's assignment.
3. Issued clothing and equipment remains the property of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office and will be returned to the Property Officer before clearance to issue the employee's final check is given.
4. Auxiliary officers shall obtain their uniforms and equipment in accordance with established procedures.
5. All personnel are forbidden to wear other than the regulation uniform or insignia of their respective rank, or to wear medals, badges, decorations, or ribbons in any way other than as prescribed and approved by the appropriate division commander.
6. Officers in uniform who do not wear the issued duty belt will wear a black inner belt.

D. Uniform Classifications

1. The Class "A" uniform will consist of the following:
  - a. Black shoes or boots;
  - b. Brown or black socks if the socks are visible when wearing shoes or low quarter boots;
  - c. Brown uniform pants with black stripe;
  - d. Tan short sleeve shirt or long sleeve shirt depending on the season or occasion. If the long sleeve shirt is worn, the departmental issued tie will also be worn;
  - e. Basketweave gear; and
  - f. Departmental issued hat unless safety or location dictates otherwise.
2. The Utility Uniform will consist of the following:
  - a. Black boots or shoes;
  - b. Department issues polo or button up shirt with embroidered badge;
  - c. Khaki BDU (Battle Dress Utility) pants that can be worn tucked into boots or loose over boots as long as the pants legs are not excessively long;

- d. Black plain inner belt; and
- e. Basketweave gear.

**Note:** Utility uniform will normally be worn by Administrative personal or patrol officers when required.

- 3. Special Teams or units are authorized to wear uniforms as approved by their Team Commander. These uniforms are to be worn while the team member is on duty with the team or on assignment with the team. Otherwise, the team member will wear the uniform of the day for their assignment.
- E. Uniform Policies (NOTE: ALL UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT WILL BE ISSUED BY THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE. ANY EXCEPTIONS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CHIEF DEPUTY OR SHERIFF.)
- 1. The following uniform items may be worn as the outer garment to any uniform classification when appropriate:
    - a. Departmental Issued Jacket;
    - b. Departmental Issued Raingear;
    - c. Departmental Issued Traffic Vest; and
  - 2. The following items of equipment will be worn attached to the duty belt, which will be black in color:
    - a. Weapon and holster;
    - b. Handcuffs with closed cuff case(s);
    - c. Radio and holder;
    - d. Expandable baton and holder;
    - e. O.C. Pepper spray/foam with holder;
    - f. Cell phone if issued;
    - g. Dual magazine holder;
    - h. Flashlight holder or ring;
    - i. Micro cassette recorder and holder or video recording equipment and holder; and
    - j. Belt keepers.
  - 3. All officers assigned to the Uniform Patrol Division, and others as authorized are required to wear departmental issued expandable batons and O.C. Pepper Spray while on duty. Officers shall retain their expandable batons and O.C. Pepper Spray to be readily available while on duty. All officers assigned to the Rabun County Jail who have completed the O.C. Pepper Spray certification training are required to wear their departmental issued O.C. Pepper Spray while on duty.

#### 4. Class "A" Uniform Shirt

- a. The uniform shirt will be tan in color and will be the same type and color regardless of rank or position. Shirts will be kept clean, pressed, and shall not be worn if frayed or torn.
- b. No alterations will be made on the length or cut of the sleeves on short sleeve shirts.
- c. Long sleeve shirts will be sized so that when the arms are fully extended perpendicular to the ground, the edge of the cuff extends to the hand area.
- d. All shirt buttons will be kept fastened at all times, except for the collar button on the short sleeve shirt.
- e. Bulky items will not be carried in shirt pockets.
- f. Undershirts will not be visible when worn with the short sleeve shirt.
- g. Non-uniform articles will not show above the uniform collar.
- h. Shirts will be sized so that individual body armor can be worn properly.
- i. Accessories
  - (i) The appropriate badge will be worn on the left side of the shirt in the badge slot provided on the garment.
  - (ii) The nameplate will be worn on the right side of the shirt, attached so that the top edge of the nameplate is centered and parallel to the bottom seam of the flap of the breast pocket. All employees in the duty uniform will wear a nameplate. All deputies will wear a gold in color name plate. The nameplate will have the last name in uppercase black letters centered on the nameplate. The nameplate will be kept clean and polished and displayed on the short or long sleeve shirt at all times the officer is in uniform. Officers are authorized to wear an attachment to their name plate such as "Service Since" provided the attachment is the same color as the name plate and the lettering is in black.
  - (iii) Collar brass will be worn just inside the seam of and perpendicular to, the corner of the collar. All officers wearing the Class "A" uniform shirts are to wear collar brass.
  - (iv) Departmental patches will be worn on the left and right sleeves of the shirt, sweater, or jacket. They will be positioned one inch below the shoulder seam and centered on the crease of the sleeve. The only "rocker" or patch tab that is authorized is for the Reserve Unit.
- j. Rank Insignia
  - (i) Senior Sergeants, Sergeants will wear the insignia in the place of the collar brass on the Class A shirts.
  - (ii) Major, Captain, and Lieutenant insignia or bars will be affixed to the shoulder epaulets on both shoulders. These will be affixed to the cross sewn areas of the epaulets.

- k. The radio microphone will be attached to either the right or left epaulet.
  - l. Only departmental issued brown clip-on ties of conventional shape and length will be worn. The use of a tie tack is optional. However when one is used, it will be of an appropriate nature and worn centered on the tie.
  - m. Only black, gold, or silver ink pens will be worn visible on the left shirt pocket.
  - n. Whistle chains may be worn at the discretion of the officer. If an officer wishes to wear a whistle chain, the whistle chain will be attached under the shoulder epaulet on the right side and threaded under the outside of the pocket flap of the right shirt pocket. The color of the whistle chain will be gold.
  - o. The State of Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Pin will be worn on the right shirt pocket flap, centered between the left edge of the pocket flap and the nametag or name strip.
5. Class "A" Uniform Trousers
- a. Trousers/slacks will be brown in color with a black stripe sewn on the outside seam. Trousers will be clean, pressed, and sized to provide a proper fit and length.
  - b. Bulky items will not protrude from the pockets.
6. Footwear
- a. Only solid black in color footwear will be worn with the uniform. Shoes with buckles will not be worn. Zip up boots are permitted.
  - b. Boots or shoes will be worn with the Utility type uniform.
  - c. Black or brown socks will be worn when a low quarter type boot or shoe is worn.
  - d. Shoelaces will be solid black in color.
  - e. Boots or shoes will be clean, polished, and maintained in good repair.
  - f. Galoshes or overshoes may be worn during inclement weather and will be black in color.
7. Gloves will be full finger, black in color. White gloves will be worn during special details such as funerals. White or orange gloves may be worn for traffic control operations.
8. Rain gear will be worn when required by environmental conditions. Only departmental issued hat covers and raincoats will be worn.
9. Body armor will be worn by all officers performing law enforcement field duties, Jail duties, Court or Courthouse security Duties and during special circumstances unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate division commander.
10. Sweaters will be V-neck, Wooly-Pulley type, brown in color, with departmental patches sewn on both arms in appropriate locations as described in this General Order.



11. Jackets will be the departmental issued, brown or black in color with departmental patches sewn on both arms in appropriate locations as described in this General Order.
12. Hats shall be worn out of doors unless safety dictates otherwise. It will be the departmental issued campaign style hat with either the gold acorns as prescribed below:
  - a. The acorns will be centered on the front of the brim with the cords cut so that the acorns are in the middle of the brim.
13. Whenever an officer can no longer properly wear the departmental uniform and equipment due to pregnancy or medical condition, the officer will comply with the civilian dress requirements.
14. Special uniform clothing and/or equipment items may be designated and approved by the Sheriff or his designee(s).
15. The transition period for Class "A" Long Sleeve and Short Sleeve Class "A" Uniform Shirts are as follows. However: The Long Sleeve Class "A" Shirt shall be mandated for special details such as Honor Guard, VIP details, special funeral details, or at any other times and occasions as dictated by the Sheriff or his designee(s)
  - a. The Long Sleeve Class "A" shirt will be worn during the period of November 1st through April 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. The Short Sleeve Class "A" shirt will be worn during the period of April 15<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**NOTE:** Supervisors may extend or shorten these periods based on weather conditions.

16. A departmental issued jacket may be worn at the discretion of the officer depending on the weather conditions. If a jacket is worn and the officer is wearing the Short Sleeve Class "A" shirt, the jacket should be zipped approximately two thirds of the way up to present a more uniform appearance.

## II. CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

### A. General Appearance Standards

#### 1. Administrative Personnel

Administrative personnel will wear suitable business attire while on duty. It shall be the discretion of the Criminal Investigations Division Commander to determine the appropriate appearance standards of personnel assigned to their division.

### B. Dress Standards

1. Civilian employees and sworn personnel when authorized to wear civilian clothing, will conform to the following standards of clothing attire unless otherwise authorized by their Division Commander.
  - a. Male Employees
    - (i) Business casual attire for male employees is defined as trouser cut pants, cotton twill pants, cotton shirts, long or short sleeve dress shirts, knit polo shirts, socks and appropriate footwear that blend with the total business and professional image presented.
    - (ii) Prohibited clothing items will include jeans, sweat pants or jogging pants, shorts, t-shirts, tank tops, cropped (above the waist) tops, sweatshirts, shirts or tops that contain obscene printed material, flip flops or shower shoes, or sandals.
    - (iii) Shoes will be closed toe. Excessive decorative attachments are unacceptable.
    - (iv) Socks must be worn and shall be plain or neutral in color.
  2. Female Employees
    - a. Business attire for female employees is defined as dresses, skirts, blouses, blazers, dress pants, cotton twill pants, traditional denim skirts, knit polo shirts, cotton shells, knit shirts with collar, cotton long and short sleeve shirts, cotton turtlenecks, gathered skirts, casual knit dresses, tailored trousers, appropriate hosiery, rubber, crepe, or leather soled shoes and dress sandals with hosiery. Footwear must blend with the total business and professional image presented.
    - b. Prohibited items include, sweatpants or jogging pants, leggings, spandex, stretch pants, or tight stirrup pants, shorts, cut-offs, tank tops, camisoles worn as outer tops, cropped (above the waist) tops, see through voile or chiffon blouses, mini skirts, low cut front or back dresses or tops, strapless dresses or blouses, halter tops, shirts or tops that contain obscene material, flip flops or shower shoes.
    - c. Skirt/dress length will be consistent with a conservative image.
3. Exceptions

Exceptions to the above standards may be made by the appropriate Division Commander as required for operational necessity, such as for a duty assignment or for other valid purposes such as for a general office clean-up or for a scheduled recreational activity or causal day.
4. When wearing civilian clothes and performing duties in public, officers will keep their firearms concealed from view if possible. At all times when the weapon is exposed the badge will be openly displayed next to the firearm.

### III. COURT APPEARANCE STANDARDS

- A. While attending judicial proceedings, employees must exhibit the highest standards of appropriate attire and professional appearance.
- B. In addition to the requirements specified in this General Order, employees will adhere to the following:

- a. Portable radios and cell phones will be turned off;
- b. Firearms will be secured in accordance to the rules of the particular court.
- c. Uniform Attire
  - (i) Officers who wear the uniform of the day to a judicial proceeding will ensure that the uniform meets the standards of this General Order; and
  - (ii) Officers and civilian employees who wear civilian clothing to a judicial proceeding will ensure that the clothing meets the standards of this General Order in that all clothing is of a conservative nature. In addition, males will wear a coat and tie or dress shirt with tie.

#### IV. TRAINING DRESS STANDARDS

- A. While attending any training as an employee of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office, employees will comply with departmental grooming standards and the clothing requirements as prescribed by the training facility.
- B. Employees attending training in a classroom environment will comply with departmental grooming standards.
- C. Employees attending training at the range or other facility will comply with the class requirements for safety purposes.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**  
Sheriff, Rabun County