

Dress Code Policy: Attire and Professional Appearance

Employees are often the most important representation of any organization and contribute to the image and reputation of their organization in the way they present themselves. Within the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM), professional appearance is essential to a favorable impression with students, families, staff and the U-M community. Further, good hygiene and appropriate dress reflects pride and inspires confidence.

Policy Scope

For the purpose of this policy, “staff” includes employees classified as regular, temporary, grad interns and student staff.

OEM reporting units may have additional guidelines specific to the unit. In such cases, staff are expected to follow such guidelines and unit leadership will have upward discretion.

OEM encourages and supports a diverse and inclusive work environment. This policy communicates expectations for attire and appearance with these efforts in mind, yet may also prohibit unprofessional or offensive clothing articles, images, and appearances not listed below.

Face Covering Policy in response to COVID-19 – effective 7/15/2020

The University of Michigan requires all students, staff, faculty, and visitors to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose anywhere on U-M property. Many types of cloth face coverings are acceptable, including homemade masks, scarves, bandanas and handkerchiefs, but face coverings that seal as tightly as possible to the face are preferable to those that fit loosely. Staff may provide their own masks if they choose, and face coverings will also be available to all employees for their safety and the safety of others when working onsite.

The full U-M [face covering policy](#) is available on the Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) website, and includes a description of the limited exceptions. Generally, face coverings are required at all times except for:

- Indoors in a single enclosed private office with your door closed
- Eating or drinking but still maintaining social distance (at least six feet of physical separation between yourself and others).
- Employees granted a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For information on requesting such accommodations, please contact the Office for Institutional Equity.
- Communicating with someone who is hearing impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication; in such circumstances, alternatives may be explored.

Face coverings are considered a component of dress attire, mandated by U-M and the governor of the state of Michigan. All OEM employees are expected to adhere to the face covering policy, and regulations and guidelines below.

Regulations and Guidelines

OEM expects employees to be professional in appearance when engaged in work-related activities. General appearance/attire guidelines include:

- Staff are encouraged to dress for the weather, their commute and their work area/environment; however, appropriate office attire is expected during the workday.

- Clothing should be clean and neat, free from stains, holes, and wrinkles.
- Clothing should not appear to be worn, faded or stretched out.
- Clothing must have appropriate fit, with no visible undergarments/undershirts.
- Clothing should be free from offensive images, words or logos.

A. Business Attire

OEM staff in student-facing positions are expected to dress in business attire during working hours. In addition, staff meeting with students, families, staff or others in the U-M community, should observe business dress guidelines.

Examples and basic elements for appropriate and professional business attire includes items such as collared shirts, ties, blouses, blazers, suit jackets, sweaters, slacks, dresses/skirts of appropriate length, socks and dress shoes including heels. Guidelines for appropriate business attire **does not include** leggings, yoga pants, shorts, tank/halter tops, low-cut blouses or sweaters, sweatshirts, pajamas or any extreme style of fashion in dress and footwear.

B. Business Casual Attire

Staff that do not have student-facing roles or recurrent, in-person contact with external constituents may dress in business casual attire on a daily basis. Other staff members may also elect to dress in business casual attire on Fridays and/or workweek days prior to University-observed holidays with the understanding that there may be specified and announced periods when casual days are suspended.

Examples of business casual attire includes crewneck shirts, golf/polo shirts, casual slacks, jeans, Michigan shirt paraphernalia and other T-shirts without inappropriate logos or obscene language, casual slip on or tie-up shoes and dress sandals (Memorial Day through Labor Day only). Guidelines for appropriate business casual attire **does not include** leggings, yoga pants, shorts, tank/halter tops, low-cut blouses or sweaters, pajamas, flip flops or floppy sandals.

C. Student Staff

Many of our student staff directly interacts with prospective/new students and their families. Their appearance, although more relaxed, should remain professional at the discretion of the unit.

D. Reasonable accommodations of religious beliefs

OEM recognizes the importance of individually held religious beliefs and will reasonably accommodate a staff member's religious beliefs in terms of this policy unless the accommodation creates an undue hardship. Those requesting an attire accommodation based on religious beliefs should be referred to OEM Human Resources.

Dress Code Policy Enforcement

Unprofessional appearance and/or poor hygiene will be addressed with the employee by the immediate supervisor on an individual basis. Questions regarding the appropriateness of clothing or appearance should be directed to the supervisor. If a supervisor determines that an employee's dress or appearance is not appropriate as outlined above or per the specified unit policy, they may take corrective action and require the employee to leave the work area to make necessary changes towards compliance.

Repeated violations of this policy will follow progressive discipline steps. Supervisors will partner with OEM Human Resources prior to delivering discipline beyond a verbal warning.