



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: GENERAL APPEARANCE-ALL MEMBERS		NO: K-0200	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: 08/01/1990	REVIEWED: 08/20/2025	REVISED: 08/20/2025	UPDATED: 08/20/2025

POLICY

Members of the Kern County Sheriff's Office are reminded they are highly visible representatives of the County and the Sheriff's Office. In their dress and grooming they must endeavor to present a neat, well-groomed appearance that inspires confidence in the public that services will be performed in a competent and impartial manner. The following regulations are general standards that apply to all members whether in uniform or not with the possible exception of undercover personnel.

DIRECTIVE 1:

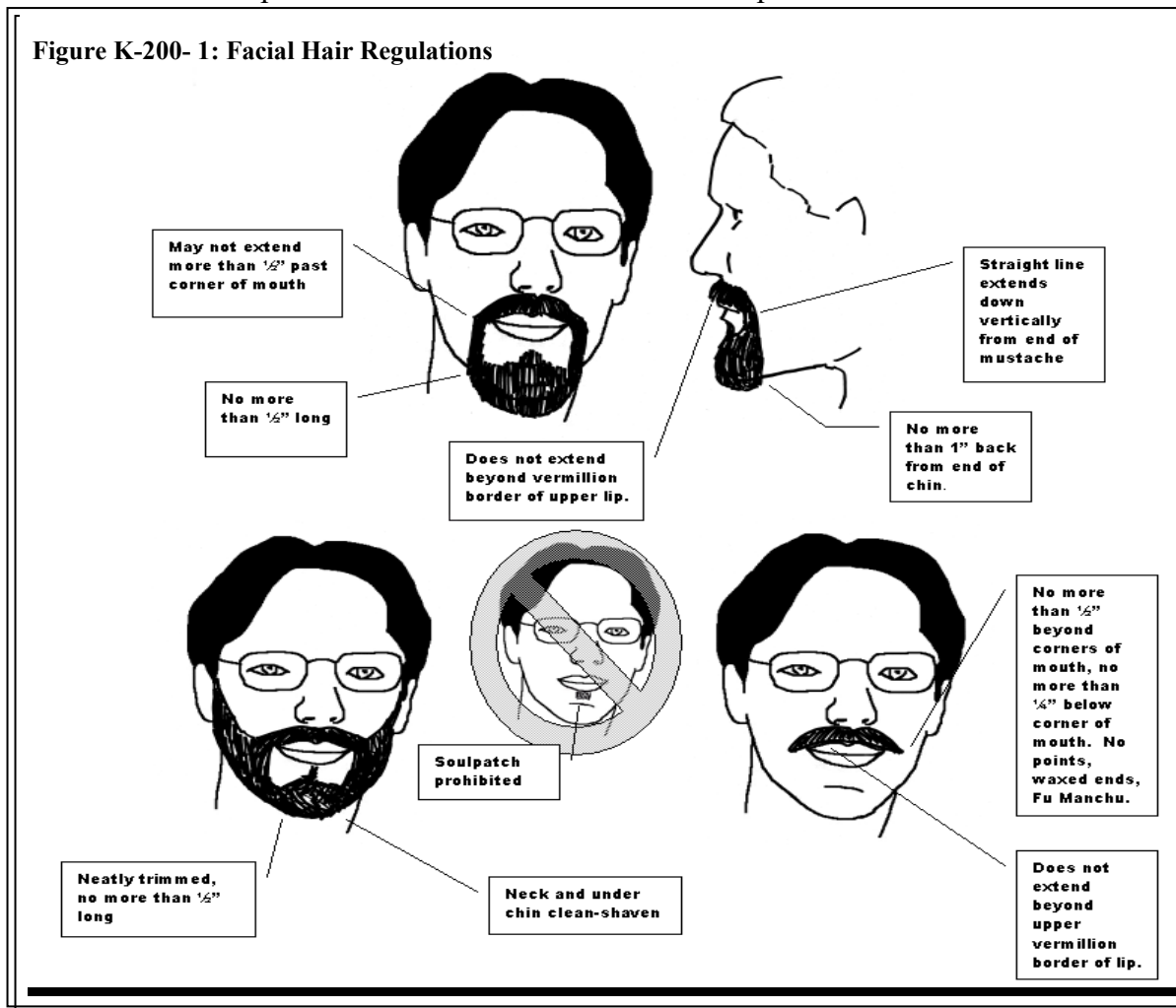
For purposes of this policy, Deputy Sheriffs, Detentions Deputies, Deputy Coroners, and Park Rangers will conform to the sworn officer requirements.

MALE PERSONNEL (Uniformed, Non-Uniformed, Civilian)

HAIR

- Must be clean and neatly combed.
- Hair color and style will not be unusual or bizarre.
- Hair shall not be worn longer than to the top of the shirt collar at the back of the neck when standing with the head in a normal posture.
- Hair will be tapered at the back of the head so as not to curl outward.
- Hair may extend over the top of the ears but will extend no further than the bottom of the ear opening.
- The bulk and length of the hair shall not interfere with the wearing of all standard headgear.
- Natural hairstyles may be worn as long as they conform to the above standards. Sideburns shall be neatly trimmed and not bushy and shall be rectangular in shape and shall not extend below the ear lobe.
- Male personnel assigned to special assignments or specialized duties may be exempt with Division Commander approval.
- Beards/facial hair:

- Sworn: Male personnel shall be clean-shaven; however, neatly trimmed sideburns and mustaches are permissible.
- Non-sworn: Beards must be neatly trimmed, may not be more than ½ inch thick and may not extend more than 1 ½” from the tip of the chin/jaw line back toward the neck. The neck will be clean-shaven. (See Figure K-200-1)
- Goatees include a full mustache that complies with mustache guidelines below. The mustache must extend in a straight vertical line down to the beard. Goatees may not be more than ½ inch long and may not extend more than 1” from the tip of the chin/jaw line back toward the neck. The neck will be clean-shaven. (See Figure K-200-1)
- Mustaches shall not extend more than ½ inch beyond the corners of the mouth nor below the vermillion border of the upper lip, or more than ¼ inch below the corner of the mouth. Waxed ends or points shall not be allowed. (See Figure K-200-1)
- Soul patches and Fu-Manchu mustaches are prohibited.



K-200-2

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FINGERNAILS

- Shall be clean, neatly trimmed, and well-maintained.
- Nail length shall not extend past the fingertips. Nails in excess of this length can pose a safety hazard and interfere with the performance of the member's particular function.
- Fingernails shall be maintained in a manner that promotes safety, supports operational readiness, and reflects a professional appearance.
- Fingernails shall not interfere with the performance of duties, including but not limited to the safe and effective handling of firearms, defensive tactics, and other physical tasks.

JEWELRY

Jewelry may be worn but should be of a conservative nature in keeping with contemporary standards of good taste.

Only the following items of jewelry may be worn by on duty sworn and uniformed civilian personnel:

- Bracelets worn for medical purposes.
- A total of two conservative rings including a wedding band.
- A watch.
- No visible body piercing, earrings, eyebrow, nose, or tongue studs.
- Teeth: No dental art, decals, inlaid rings, stones, or other adornment/designs are permitted.

TATTOOS, BRANDING, SCARIFICATION, BODY IMPLANTS:

Employees while on-duty shall not display any tattoos, branding, scarification, dermal punching, or body implants.

- For purposes of this regulation, body implants mean objects inserted beneath the skin of the hands, arms, head, face, neck, upper chest, or ears resulting in a visible protrusion of the skin outlining the object.
- For purposes of this regulation, dermal punching is the removal of tissue for the insertion of jewelry or other objects.
- Any visible tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants will be covered by wearing an approved uniform, appropriate non-uniform clothing, or a neutral skin patch or bandage (e.g. ace bandage or Band-Aid) that covers the tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants.
- Facial tattoos whether covered or not are prohibited.

K-200-3

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FEMALE PERSONNEL (All Except Civilian Non-Uniform)

All sworn female personnel in non-uniformed line positions (i.e. Administrative and Detective assignments) shall adhere to the same grooming standards as those in uniformed assignments, unless otherwise noted.

HAIR

- Will be kept clean, neat, and well-groomed at all times while on duty.
- The hairstyle and/or color shall not be unusual or bizarre. Hair must not interfere with the proper fit, seal, or function of safety equipment, such as helmets, gas masks, or SCBA masks.
- Hair must not extend below the eyebrows, over the collar in front of the ears, or obstruct vision during physical activity.
- Hair length must not extend below the mid-back or fall beneath the horizontal level of the bottom edge of the uniform patch when the employee is standing in a normal posture. Hair must be worn in a tightly secured bun, a single braid, a single ponytail, or in no more than two individual, tightly wrapped braids of uniform size (Figure K-200-2). Personnel should consider the increased risk of being grabbed during physical confrontations with extended hairstyles like braids and ponytails. Duty-appropriate hairstyles should be chosen accordingly.
 - Hair color must appear natural and professional, subject to approval by the employee's Division Commander. Hair accessories used to secure longer hair must be discreet, blending in color and style with the hair and concealed as much as possible.
 - Hair length extending below the mid-back is considered a safety hazard and is prohibited. Hair shall be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned.
 - Ponytails must be centered at the back of the head, secured at mid-head or the base of the neck, and not extend beyond the natural width of the head.
 - All other hair grooming standards apply.
 - Female personnel assigned to special assignments or specialized duties may be exempt with Division Commander approval.
- Sworn female personnel must comply with uniformed grooming standards when in uniform, recognizing the need to conform may arise without notice.
- Braids and ponytails are **not** permitted with the Class A uniform cover.

K-200-4

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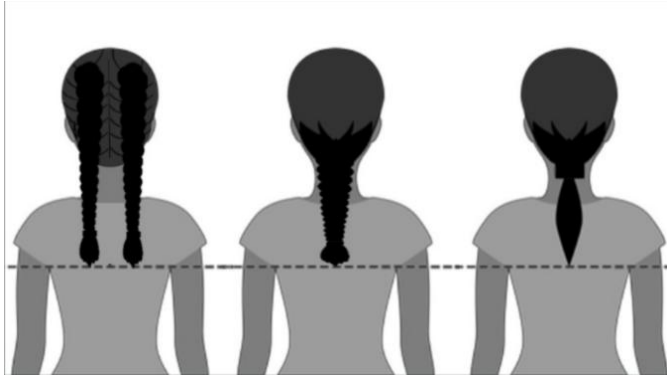


Figure K-200-2: Female Hair Regulations

FINGERNAILS

- Shall be clean, neatly trimmed, and well-maintained.
- Nail length shall not extend past the fingertips. Nails in excess of this length can pose a safety hazard and interfere with the performance of the member's particular function.
- Fingernails shall be maintained in a manner that promotes safety, supports operational readiness, and reflects a professional appearance.
- Fingernails shall not interfere with the performance of duties, including but not limited to the safe and effective handling of firearms, defensive tactics, and other physical tasks.
- Fingernail polish is permitted but must present a professional appearance. All nail polish, if worn, shall be painted in a consistent, uniform color or in a traditional French tip style. Neon colors, patterns, stones, and images are prohibited.
- Ceramic or gel overlays are permitted, provided they conform to the above described standards.

JEWELRY

Jewelry may be worn but should be of a conservative nature in keeping with contemporary standards of good taste.

Only the following items of jewelry may be worn by sworn and uniformed civilian personnel:

- Bracelets worn for medical purposes.
- A total of two conservative rings (for the purpose of this order, a set of wedding and engagement rings will be considered one ring).
- A watch.
- The wearing of pierced stud earrings only, limited to two earrings per ear, stud-type not to exceed 1/4-inch diameter and conservative in appearance.

K-200-5

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- No visible body piercing, eyebrow, nose, or tongue studs.
- Teeth: No dental art, decals, inlaid rings, stones, or other adornment/designs are permitted.

TATTOOS, BRANDING, SCARIFICATION, BODY IMPLANTS:

Employees while on-duty shall not display any tattoos, branding, scarification, dermal punching, or body implants.

- For purposes of this regulation, body implants mean objects inserted beneath the skin of the hands, arms, head, face, neck, upper chest, or ears resulting in a visible protrusion of the skin outlining the object.
- For purposes of this regulation, dermal punching is the removal of tissue for the insertion of jewelry or other objects.
- Any visible tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants will be covered by wearing an approved uniform, appropriate non-uniform clothing, or a neutral skin patch or bandage (e.g. ace bandage or Band-Aid) that covers the tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants.
- Facial tattoos whether covered or not are prohibited.
- Permanent conservative eyebrows and lip liner cosmetic tattoos are acceptable.

COSMETICS

- If worn, cosmetics shall be subdued and blended to match the natural skin color of the individual.
- False eyelashes are prohibited and shall not be worn while on duty.

FEMALE PERSONNEL (Civilian Non-Uniformed)

HAIR

Non-uniformed civilian personnel shall have their hair neatly styled, trimmed, and well groomed. It shall not be of a style, length, or artificial color which is offensive to the general public. Wigs or hairpieces are permitted if they conform to these standards.

JEWELRY

Jewelry may be worn but should be of a conservative nature in keeping with contemporary standards of good taste.

K-200-6

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Only the following items of jewelry may be worn:

- A bracelet.
- A total of two conservative rings (for the purpose of this order, a set or wedding and engagement rings will be considered one ring).
- Earrings.
 - Only one conservative clip-on earring per ear.
 - No more than two conservative pierced earrings per ear.
- A watch.
- A necklace.
- No visible body piercing, eyebrow, nose, or tongue studs.
- Teeth: No dental art, decals, inlaid rings, stones, or other adornment/designs are permitted.

TATTOOS, BRANDING, SCARIFICATION, BODY IMPLANTS:

Employees while on-duty shall not display any tattoos, branding, scarification, dermal punching, or body implants.

- For purposes of this regulation, body implants mean objects inserted beneath the skin of the hands, arms, head, face, neck, upper chest, or ears resulting in a visible protrusion of the skin outlining the object.
- For purposes of this regulation, dermal punching is the removal of tissue for the insertion of jewelry or other objects.
- Any visible tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants will be covered by wearing an approved uniform, appropriate non-uniform clothing, or a neutral skin patch or bandage (e.g. ace bandage or Band-Aid) that covers the tattoos, brandings, scarification, or implants.
- Facial tattoos whether covered or not are prohibited.
- Permanent conservative eyebrows and lip liner cosmetic tattoos are acceptable.

COSMETICS

- If worn, cosmetics shall be subdued and blended to match the natural skin color of the individual.
- Unusual or bizarre false eyelashes and/or longer than ½” are prohibited.

FINGERNAILS

- Shall be clean, neatly trimmed, and well-maintained.

K-200-7

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- Fingernail polish is permitted but must present a professional appearance. All nail polish, if worn, shall be of a conservative color or in a traditional French tip style. Neon colors, patterns, stones, and images are prohibited.
- Ceramic or gel overlays are permitted, provided they conform to the above described standards.

EXCEPTIONS

The rule is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable personal appearance standards. The Sheriff’s Office recognizes the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. Although it is impossible and undesirable to establish an absolute dress and appearance code, the Sheriff’s Office will apply a reasonable and professional workplace standard to individuals on a case-by-case basis. The Division Commander may make exceptions for special occasions.

Members who seek cultural (e.g. protected hairstyles) or other exemptions to this policy that are protected by law should generally be accommodated (Government Code § 12926). A member with an exemption may be ineligible for an assignment if the individual accommodation presents a security or safety risk.

Requests for medical or religious exemptions must be submitted through the chain of command to the member’s Division Commander. The Division Commander will issue a decision, including any conditions or requirements for approval. A copy of the decision will be forwarded to the Human Resources Section and placed in the member’s personnel file.

The Sheriff, or designee, must be notified of any exemption requests that are denied due to safety or security concerns.

K-200-8

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