Memorandum of Understanding

The following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Procurement and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFL-CIO), National Veterans Affairs Council #53 (NVAC) concerning VHA Procurement Offices, Station 701, Service Area Office-East Region (SAO-E), Service Area Office-Central Region (SAO-C) and Service Area Office-West Region (SAO-W) Dress Code.

1. The parties understand Attachment A - subject: VHA Procurement Office Dress Code is the policy for AFGE bargaining unit employees in the VHA Procurement Offices, Station 701, Service Area Office-East Region (SAO-E), Service Area Office-Central Region (SAO-C) and Service Area Office-West Region (SAO-W).

2. Local parties should meet with VHA Procurement Offices, Station 701, Service Area Office-East Region (SAO-E), Service Area Office-Central Region (SAO-C) and Service Area Office-West Region (SAO-W) staff to discuss the need for employees to dress in a more business causal manner when dealing with VA customers, Veterans and other staff.

3. NVAC reserves its right to address other matters related to Attachment A concerning the VHA Procurement Offices, Station 701, Service Area Office-East Region (SAO-E), Service Area Office-Central Region (SAO-C) and Service Area Office-West Region (SAO-W) Dress Code as they occur.

4. Upon their receipt, the appropriate management officials shall provide a copy of this MOU and Attachment A to the Local Union President.

Edson Morales, VA LR Specialist
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Oscar L. Williams Jr, 2nd Exec. Vice President
AFGE National Veterans Affairs Council #53

5-13-15
Date

5/12/15
Date

James Zeveski, VHA Labor Consultant
Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

5/18/15
Date

Attachment A

VHA Procurement Office Dress Code

1. PURPOSE: This VHA Procurement Office (VA Wide) dress code establishes guidelines concerning the dress and appearance of employees in order to present a professional image to Veterans, visitors, customers and staff. These guidelines are applicable to all VHA Procurement employees.

2. GUIDANCE:

A. Every employee should present a positive and professional appearance to the Veterans and other members of the public we serve.

B. Personal cleanliness, appearance, professionalism and safety are important employee and organization responsibilities. For this reason, anything that could be considered offensive or distracting will not be permitted. Each employee reflects the Organization's image.

C. Exceptions to the dress code may be granted for medical reasons pursuant to an application for reasonable accommodation as outlined in VA Handbook 5975.1 and/or religious reasons pursuant to Guidelines on Religious Exercise and Religious Expression in the Federal Workplace issued by the White House on August 14, 1997. As outlined in VA Handbook 5975.1, "when a disability or need for reasonable accommodation is not obvious or otherwise not already known to the VA, the Local Reasonable Accommodation Committee (LRAC) may request that the employee submit appropriate medical documentation about the disability and his or her functional limitations through VA Form 0857e." Requests for exceptions should be made through the Supervisor to the Network Contract Manager (NCM).

D. The NCM may approve activities or events that allow special item of clothing; i.e. holidays, dress down, theme attire, etc.

E. No dress code can anticipate all the potential styles and choices that employees may make.

3. PROCEDURES:

A. Hygiene and Grooming:

1) Employees are expected to be clean.

2) Hair, beards, sideburns and mustaches will be clean and neat.

B. Accessories and Jewelry:

Jewelry, ties, scarves and belts will reflect a business casual appearance consistent with the area of the country the employee works in and not be distracting or contain offensive material.

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C. Makeup, Perfume and Cologne:

1) Makeup will be worn in moderation.

2) The use of perfume, cologne and other scents should be minimal.

D. Clothing:

1) Clothing should not distract from the mission but should promote it by providing a business casual atmosphere appropriate for the area of the country the employee works in. All clothing is to be clean, in good repair and appropriate to the employee's position. Discretion should be used to length and fit of clothing.

2) All shoes are to be kept clean and neat.

3) Monday through Thursday has been established as business casual for both men and women.

   a. Monday through Thursday Men's Clothing Options:

   Short or long sleeved business or casual shirts, dress slacks or khakis. Jackets and ties are optional (no denim and/or carpenter pants of any color).

   b. Monday through Thursday Women's Clothing Options:

   Short or long sleeved business or casual shirts or dresses, tailored sleeveless dresses, shirts, or shells (generally worn with business appropriate jacket or cardigan), dress skirts, dress slacks or khakis. Jackets and hosiery are optional (no denim and/or carpenter pants of any color).

   c. Monday through Thursday Footwear:

   Dress or casual shoes (including open toe style heels and flats) and dress boots are acceptable.

4) Friday has been established as Causal Fridays.

   a. Good judgment will be employed in choosing appropriate business causal, with avoidance of clothing that is too casual or sloppy for a professional environment.

   b. If employees are acting in a representative capacity (i.e. meetings with customers and/or facility staff) on Fridays; then

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they are required to wear business attire for the area of the country they work in.

5) Casual Fridays Clothing Options:

a. Denim pants, skirts, or dresses: blue jeans must be in good condition, clean and with no holes; casual slacks or khakis.

b. Shirts: Casual shirts, sweaters, polo shirts and turtlenecks are acceptable.

c. Shoes: Casual leather shoe, tennis or athletic shoes, dress heels and/or flats are acceptable. Athletic shoes are allowed only on Fridays only if cleaned, laced properly and in good repair.

6) Inappropriate Clothing and Apparel:

a. Clothing should not distract from the mission but should promote it by providing a professional atmosphere.
b. Extreme fashions trends, which could be offensive to Veterans, visitors, customers and other employees, are not acceptable.

7) Articles of clothing that are inappropriate include but are not limited to the following:

a. Athletic wear (sweat pants, spandex, wind and jogging suits)
b. Track jackets, jerseys and sweatshirts
c. Strapless/Halter/Spaghetti Strap Tops/Dresses
d. Uncovered tank tops and muscle shirts
e. Shorts, and Mini Skirts
f. Pajama tops and bottoms
g. Plunging/low necklines
h. See through/shear or revealing garments
i. Beach sandals, flip flops, crocs or and house shoes/slippers

4. DEFINITIONS:

A. Business Casual: A dress code that allows employees to tone down their professional attire while maintaining a neat and modest appearance.

B. Business Attire: A dress code that requires employees to be more formal in their attire and appearance.

C. Dress Code: A dress code is a set of standards that organizations develop to help provide their employees with guidance about what is appropriate to wear to work.

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5. REFERENCES:

A. Guidelines on Religious Exercise and Religious Expression in the Federal Workplace issued by the White House on August 14, 1997

B. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Religious Garb and Grooming in the Workplace: Rights and Responsibilities

C. VA Handbook 5975.1

D. The Master Agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees

E. Central Office Human Resources Service Letter Number 12-01 dated February 12, 2008 "Work Place Attire".

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