

Policy Name:	Dress Code		
Section #:	4.2	Section Title:	Code of Professional & Personal Conduct
Approval Authority:	GMEC	GMEC Approved:	2/21/2025
Responsible Executive:	DIO	Revised:	3/28/2025
Responsible Office:	Office of Clinical and Health Affairs, Rutgers Health	Contact:	Institutional Coordinator

1. Reason for Policy

Healthcare professionals must develop habits of conduct that are perceived by patients as signs of trustworthiness. Professional appearance is a reflection of attitude towards oneself and the people one is likely to encounter. This policy aims to ensure that all staff members present themselves in a manner that fosters trust, professionalism, and respect.

2. Resources

- I. ACGME Institutional Requirements
- II. ACGME Common Program Requirements

3. Scope

This policy applies to all housestaff, including interns, residents, and fellows, and faculty members in their teaching and supervisory roles.

4. The Policy

I. General Appearance:

- a. All housestaff and faculty must maintain an appropriate standard of personal appearance, hygiene, and grooming at all times while on duty.
- b. Clothes must be clean, in good condition, and appropriate for one's job.
- c. Housestaff and faculty should avoid wearing clothing with emblems, slogans, or symbols related to political affiliation, illicit substances, alcohol, tobacco products, obscene language, or sexual connotations.

II. Guidelines:

- a. Housestaff and faculty:
 - i. Must be clean and minimize body odor.
 - ii. Examples of unacceptable dress include overly revealing shirts, clothing that exposes the mid-section or back, bare feet, pajamas, and sweatpants.
 - iii. Scrubs can be worn in lieu of business attire if they have a neat and professional appearance.
 - iv. Clean white lab coats are preferred; however, any outerwear (e.g. lab coats, fleeces, shells, etc.) must be clean, well-maintained, and be laundered regularly. They should also not have excessively long sleeves or loose fabric that could interfere with patient care or sanitary conditions. Outerwear worn in clinical areas should not be worn outside the facilities to prevent contamination.

- b. Hair must be clean and appropriate.
- c. No hats, bandannas, sweatbands, or headgear may be worn unless required for medical, safety, religious, or cultural reasons or as part of the uniform.
- d. Shoes should be in good repair. Sneakers and athletic shoes are acceptable if clean and in good condition. Open-toed shoes are not permitted for those with direct patient contact.
- e. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with safety or performing assigned functions.
- f. Artificial nails, gel overlays, nail art, tips, and/or fillers are not allowed in direct patient care areas.
- g. Consider covering body tattoos, particularly if illicit substances, alcohol, tobacco products, obscene language, or sexual connotations are visible.
- h. Housestaff and faculty with direct patient contact should avoid heavily scented products.
- i. Dress must also adhere to facility guidelines and expectations.

III. Compliance and Enforcement:

- a. Program Directors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
- b. Housestaff who are not compliant may be sent home to change if they wear inappropriate attire to work.
- c. Housestaff will be notified by the program director when concerns for noncompliance with this policy have been raised. The housestaff officer shall have the opportunity to respond. In extreme cases, disciplinary action (i.e. termination, probation, etc.) may be considered and must follow due process as per Rutgers Health policies.