
MATATIELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

DRESS CODE POLICY



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1. OBJECTIVE

The Municipality's objective, in establishing a dress code, is to enable employees to project a professional, business-like image while experiencing the advantage of more casual and relaxed clothing.

2. GUIDELINES

The Municipality has therefore adopted the "Business casual" dress as its standard for this dress code. In contrast with the dress code of many blue-collar and service workers, business-casual dress is not a uniform. There is no generally accepted definition of business casual wear; its interpretation differs widely among organizations and is often a cause of confusion.

2.1. General

In general, business casual means dressing professionally, looking relaxed yet neat. Another view is that business casual dress is a middle ground between business formal wear and street wear, whereby employees should still project a professional image for consumers and community visitors. The formality of the workplace dress code is normally determined by the amount of interaction employees have with customers at their work location.

No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exercise a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If there is uncertainty about acceptable, professional casual attire for work, the Supervisor or Human Resources department should be consulted.

The following is a general overview of appropriate business casual attire:

- 'Casual' in a business context means that a tie is not required, but a collar is. Jeans are out of the question unless you have permission from management to wear jeans.
- High-level business casual includes suits worn with dressy sport shirts or fine-gauge knits and tailored separates, such as dress trousers, dressy

collared sport shirts that do not require a tie, fine knit shirts and sweaters, as well as sport coats.

- Low-level business casual includes khakis, chinos, and knit golf shirts.
- All-leather belts and shoes; and not sandals and sneakers, do meet a true business casual standard.
- In a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished.
- Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. This includes images that are political or religious in nature, are sexually provocative, use profanity or are insulting of other employees.
- Certain items, such as cartoon ties and socks, should never be worn to work. Men should never wear white sports socks with formal shoes and ladies should remember that underwear should be worn under their clothes.
- Clothing / attire that is related to the municipality be it logo or wording is acceptable, however any clothing / golf shirts displaying any other promotional emblems are prohibited. Sports team, university, and fashion brand names on clothing are generally acceptable.

2.2. Specifics

2.2.1. Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants

Slacks that are made of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for biking.

2.2.2. Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits

Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which the wearer can sit comfortably in public.

Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for work. Mini-skirts, shorts, sundresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the office.

2.2.3. Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets

Business casual wear includes open-neck shirts (with collar), dress shirts, golf-type shirts, jerseys, and turtlenecks. Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable attire for the office, if they violate none of the other listed guidelines.

Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.

2.2.4. Shoes and Footwear

Conservative walking shoes, loafers, clogs, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable for work.

Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, slippers, and any shoe with an open toe (male wearers) are not acceptable in the office.

Closed toe and closed heel shoes are required in the technical operational area.

2.2.5. Jewellery, Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne

Should be in good taste, with limited visible body piercing.

Some employees are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so such should be worn with restraint.

2.2.6. Hats and Head Covering

Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head Covers that are required for religious purposes or to honour cultural tradition are allowed.

3. CONTRAVENTIONS

If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by the employee's supervisor and Human Resources staff, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If the problem persists, the employee may be sent home to change clothes and will receive a verbal warning for the first offence. All other policies about personal time use will apply. Progressive disciplinary action will be applied if dress code violations continue.

4. DRESS DOWN DAY OR CASUAL DAY

Certain days can be declared dress down days, generally Fridays. Certain other days may occasionally be declared as dress down days. On these days, jeans, takkies and a more casual approach to dressing, although never potentially offensive to others, are allowed.

Many people make the mistake of thinking that casual wear is the same as fun-wear. Unfortunately it is totally inappropriate to wear fun-wear to the office and jeans and t-shirts should not be worn unless approval is obtained from management.

Unfortunately the casual day dress code tends to lead to casual behaviour at work. Productivity and professionalism has been found to be less controlled and should be guarded against.

5. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MUNICIPALITY

Business casual dress is the minimum standard that must be observed when representing the Municipality or interacting with customers.

Before attending any workshop or community event, the accepted dress code should be ascertained. These might include civic or business development meetings, luncheons, and dinners.

6. LEGALITY

Generally, employers are entitled – or certainly not prohibited – from introducing company policy in respect of clothing and grooming that the employer requires of his employees in his workplace. This can be for many reasons – identification of the company in public places, projecting a certain corporate image both on and off the workplace, uniformity of appearance, and so on.

The courts have recognized that “the appearance of a company’s employees may greatly contribute to the company’s success with the public, and a reasonable dress or grooming code is “therefore a proper management prerogative.”

Such codes would only be considered to be discriminatory if the employer imposes dress or grooming codes on one group of employees only, or imposes more rigid requirements on one group only.

7. ACCEPTANCE

Employees should be informed of these requirements at the interview stage – and the employee should provide written agreement that he/she does not have a problem with the dress code, have no objections to it on any grounds, and will comply with it should the application be successful.