

# National Joint Council

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## Uniforms Directive

### General

#### Collective agreement

This directive is deemed to be part of collective agreements between the parties to the National Joint Council (NJC), and employees are to be afforded ready access to this directive.

#### Grievance procedure

In cases of alleged misinterpretation or misapplication arising out of this directive, the grievance procedure, for all represented employees within the meaning of the *Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act*, will be in accordance with section 15.0 of the *National Joint Council By-Laws*. For unrepresented employees the departmental grievance procedure applies.

#### Effective date

This directive is effective on March 1, 2022.

#### Purpose and scope

It is the policy of the government to provide appropriate items of clothing to employees where the nature of the work is such that special protection is required or where special identification at the local, national or international level will aid in the effective performance of duties and in meeting program objectives.

When clothing serves for both identification and personal protection, departments shall ensure that this directive is read in conjunction with NJC OHS Directive Part XII -

Personal and Protective Equipment and Clothing and that the requirements of both directives are met.

Departments and agencies shall review their existing clothing policies to ensure that they comply with this directive.

This directive is intended to assist departments in ensuring that their practices provide adequate protection and identification for employees, are economical, equitable and reasonably consistent with those throughout the Public Service and are comparable with those for similar occupations outside the Public Service.

## Application

This directive applies to all departments and agencies listed in Schedules I, I.1 and IV of the *Financial Administration Act*.

This directive does not apply to portions of the Public Service which are subject to other authorities, the Canadian Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or to commissions designated as departments under the *Inquiries Act* for the purpose of the *Financial Administration Act*.

## Authorities

The President of the Treasury Board has delegated authority to approve exceptions to the directive. Requests for such exceptions should be made in the form of a letter to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Such requests should be signed by departmental officials who have authority to sign submissions and should contain the same information as submissions.

Deputy heads have the authority to issue necessary items of clothing and determine the requirements for identification items except when the design of a uniform is changed. In this case prior Treasury Board approval must be obtained.

The introduction of new uniforms, or changes to a present departmental uniform policy, shall be subject to Treasury Board authorization.

## 1 Requirements

### 1.1 Responsibilities

1.1.1 Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) provides clothing advisory services to departments and agencies, through the Clothing Advisory Group.

1.1.2 These services are listed in Appendix A.

1.1.3 It is the responsibility of each department:

- (a) to ensure that appropriate consultation takes place at a joint committee as defined at section 1.2;
- (b) in the absence of a specific joint committee on uniforms, the consultations will include the policy committee or, if there is no policy committee, the workplace committee or the health and safety representative;
- (c) to identify the situations where the provision of clothing is necessary; and
- (d) to determine that the type of clothing provided is adequate and suitable; and to develop and to maintain up-to-date clothing standards and scales of issue including considerations for, but not limited to, fit, cleaning, maternity clothing, tailoring, material used etc.

1.1.4 Departments are required to incorporate controls to ensure that practices are consistent with the policy directives. The internal controls shall include the maintenance of a record containing the following information:

- (a) the number of employees provided with clothing;
- (b) the composition of standard clothing issues;
- (c) the value of clothing issued (in total and by unit);
- (d) the average cost per employee provided with clothing;
- (e) the value of clothing allowances (in total and individually); and
- (f) copies of relevant departmental bulletins or directives.

1.1.5 Corporate and personal identification items such as shoulder flashes, shall be consistent with the requirements of the Treasury Board Secretariat's Policy on Communications and Federal Identity.

## **1.2 Union management consultation**

1.2.1 Departments and other portions of the Public Service shall consult with employee representatives at the local, regional or national level, as appropriate,

regarding the application of this directive, and prior to any planned changes in existing practices.

1.2.2 Departments should be aware of the consultation provisions of the relevant collective agreements when applying this directive.

1.2.3 When clothing serves for both identification and personal protection, departments shall ensure to consult the joint committee on uniforms or in case of absence of a specific joint committee on uniforms the policy committee or, if there is no policy committee, the workplace committee or the health and safety representative, to assist in the determination of personal protective equipment and clothing requirements.

### **1.3 Consultation with the Clothing Advisory Group**

1.3.1 Departments shall consult with the Clothing Advisory Group:

- (a) before introducing new items of clothing or replacing existing issues;
- (b) to ensure that the quality and quantity of clothing to be provided to employees performing similar functions in similar working environments are reasonably consistent from department to department;
- (c) to ensure fabrics selected for protection meet good industrial safety practices, and fabrics selected for uniforms meet the PSPC criteria, considering, but not limited to, flame resistance, etc.;
- (d) not later than two years prior to introduction of new uniforms; and
- (e) when clothing purchases are expected to exceed \$10,000.

1.3.2 A department that finds the PSPC recommendations unacceptable shall submit the dispute to the President of the Treasury Board, as provided for in the Authorities section.

### **1.4 Inquiries**

1.4.1 All inquiries regarding this directive should be routed through departmental headquarters.

1.4.2 For interpretation of specific policy statements contained in this directive, designated members of the departmental headquarters should contact:

Employment Conditions and Labour Relations,  
Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer,  
Treasury Board Secretariat.

## 1.5 Credit revenue

1.5.1 Unless authority to credit revenue to the vote has been obtained by either vote-netting authority or a revolving fund authority, departments and agencies must credit the proceeds of sales to non-tax revenue.

1.5.2 Where there is a charge to employees, the GST and PST (HST) must be collected and remitted in accordance with the applicable federal and provincial laws.

## 2 Provision

### 2.1 General

2.1.1 Uniforms and other items of identification shall be issued to employees free of charge when there is a requirement for identification of employees. There are four distinguishing conditions under which identification of the employee may be required:

- (a) when identification of the employee is required by management to provide a sign of vested authority in directing, inspecting or enforcing specific laws and regulations;
- (b) when identification of the employee is required by management to provide an appropriate identification of the employee's function;
- (c) when identification of the employee is required by management, either permanently or in an emergency, to control emergency equipment and direct persons during an emergency. Such employees must be readily identifiable by the local public; and
- (d) when identification of an employee's authority is required by management to access and work in a secure area. (Identification clothing may supplement the primary form of identification.)

2.1.2 Items of wearing apparel of the same pattern or material or colour are supplied free of charge for the following purposes:

- (a) for occupational identification and worn as required by local management; and/or
- (b) for image distinctiveness and worn uniformly throughout a sector in accordance with orders.

2.1.3 Regular shoes of a specific type or colour, which serve only to provide coordination with clothing, are not considered essential to identify the employee. Departments shall not provide regular shoes free of cost, nor shall they demand that employees wear specific types or colours of shoes. Departments may, however, specify that the footwear be of a type generally considered as acceptable and to coordinate with the uniforms provided.

2.1.4 Departments may, however, utilize the provisions of subsection 3.5.2 to make such footwear available to employees for purchase at cost.

2.1.5 Bulletins shall be issued to employees when the wearing of uniform clothing is required. Such bulletins normally will identify and enumerate clothing commodities, state the employee's responsibility for clothing received and specify the manner of accounting for clothing when the employee is no longer eligible to receive or retain it (e.g. on promotion, demotion, separation or due to a change in working conditions).

2.1.6 Normally, clothing which is issued to employees shall be worn only on duty and will not be worn away from the workplace. When employees are provided with specific items of clothing for wear on duty, substitute items shall not be worn. Clothing which is issued to employees may be worn in public to travel to and from work when the safe storage of personal clothing is not possible.

2.1.7 When, as a condition of employment, an employee receives any item of clothing as an individual issue, that employee will be expected to wear and maintain it in a clean, pressed and repaired condition, in accordance with departmental directives and in accordance with care labels permanently attached to each garment.

## 3 Acquisition

### 3.1 Selection

3.1.1 Clothing shall be selected to ensure that it is hazard free, based as much as possible on comfort, serviceability and ease of care. Natural fabrics, natural fabric blends and fabrics not requiring dry-cleaning are the preferred choice.



3.1.2 When departments and agencies are reviewing their uniform policy, and the current or planned uniform requires dry-cleaning, employee representatives, at the local, regional or national level, as appropriate, shall assist in the selection of the uniforms.

3.1.3 Uniforms that require dry-cleaning shall only be selected when easy-care uniforms are clearly unsuitable, the Clothing Advisor agrees, and the employee representative has been fully informed. If the employer requires employees to have, wear and maintain a dress uniform (i.e. ceremonial clothing or number 1 dress) that can only be dry-cleaned, the employer must ensure full payment of the cleaning cost.

3.1.4 Care labels, as designated by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, should be attached to each new item of clothing.

3.1.5 Normally, it will be advantageous to have clothing for identification manufactured from all-season fabric, requiring minimum care. Commercially available items in standard sizes are more economical than custom-tailored special designs.

3.1.6 In events where employees have allergies to the fabric and/or cleaning products, the employer will consider alternatives to the uniform and will accommodate any request from employees. Any request for accommodation to the uniform will not be denied unless it can be demonstrated that it will impose an undue hardship on the employer.

## **3.2 Sun protection**

3.2.1 Sun protection shall be made available to employees who wear uniforms outdoors in summer. This means the provision of summer-weight long pants and summer-weight long-sleeved shirts for sun protection in addition to skirts, shorts and short-sleeved shirts and hats designed to protect from sun rays.

3.2.2 Clothing shall be selected to minimize total body heat burden. Employees shall have the option of choosing, from the clothing provided, the combination they prefer. Sun protection provisions shall be in compliance with the Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Directive.

## **3.3 Quantities**

3.3.1 The quantity of each commodity to be provided initially to each employee shall be based on conditions of wear and tear and the expected wear-life of each commodity.

### **3.4 Replacement**

3.4.1 Replacement items of clothing shall be issued free of charge when existing items are no longer serviceable.

3.4.2 The employer will replace any clothing that is lost unless it can be demonstrated by the employer that the employee was unreasonably negligent.

### **3.5 Personal clothing**

3.5.1 Personal clothing does not include items which are designated as essential for identification within the context of this directive. Employees will normally be expected to provide, wear and maintain personal clothing as appropriate and necessary for their duties.

3.5.2 In special circumstances departments may make arrangements for employees to purchase reasonable amounts of personal clothing for use while on duty.

3.5.3 Items of personal clothing may be made available for employees to purchase when:

- (a) the department is providing clothing and employees are responsible for wearing items of personal clothing that foster neatness and uniform appearance and complement clothing which is provided;
- (b) employees request items of personal clothing that are not essential for identification, but the department considers that it would be beneficial, in order to improve the general appearance and comfort of employees while on duty; and/or
- (c) employees desire additional items of clothing, over and above the amount of authorized issue.

3.5.4 Such a service will be provided only when there are positive assurances that employees will purchase and use any items of personal clothing that are made available under this arrangement.



3.5.5 Departments may purchase through PSPC a number of items at cost for resale to employees. These may include, but shall not be restricted to:

- (a) headgear,
- (b) jacket, blazer and windbreaker,
- (c) trousers (work pants) and skirt,
- (d) shirt or sweater,
- (e) tie,
- (f) socks,
- (g) gloves or mitts,
- (h) topcoat or other similar type of raincoat,
- (i) parka (non-distinctive),
- (j) belt,
- (k) scarf,
- (l) footwear, and/or
- (m) maternity clothing.

## **3.6 Clothing allowance**

3.6.1 The Treasury Board prefers the direct issue of clothing to the payment of clothing allowances. However, Treasury Board does not wish to preclude payment of such allowances in cases where the practice is established or the economy of introducing a new allowance can be clearly demonstrated.

3.6.2 No new allowances or changes in existing allowances shall be introduced without the prior authorization of the Treasury Board.

3.6.3 No allowances shall be paid for:

- (a) repair, cleaning, pressing and laundering; or
- (b) personal clothing.

## **4 Identification**

### **4.1 Requirement**

4.1.1 The requirement of management for identification of the employee shall be determined by the degree to which the identification will aid in the effective performance of duties.

4.1.2 Employees may be identified by the use of readily available identity cards or by a card at their work station in an office or other setting where special clothing would not be required.

4.1.3 As per the *Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations*, where the use of employees' full names or surname(s) represents a security problem and eventual workplace violence hazard that may follow them outside the workplace, departments shall jointly determine through the consultations defined at Part 2 above, the use of alternate forms of identification such as, not limited to: a badge number, nickname or first name only.

4.1.4 The amount of identification depends upon the following:

- (a) the continual contact of the employee with either the local, national or international population;
- (b) the requirement for promotion of Canada-wide departmental services; and
- (c) promotion of the federal identity and the image of Canada.

4.1.5 Items such as shirts, which are normally considered as personal clothing, may be provided as clothing when essential for a distinctive and consistent image as part of the identifying clothing.

4.1.6 Outer identifying clothing is provided only when the employee is required to wear it while on duty outdoors for a significant portion of the working period.

4.1.7 Clothing provided for identification may also serve to protect employees. Duplication of issue for identification and protection should be avoided.

4.1.8 In some situations only one "identifier" will be required; in others, a combination of two or more may be necessary.

4.1.9 Identification clothing consistent with job requirements should be provided to probationers and casual or part-time employees. Items for identification may differ from those provided to full-time employees with the same job requirements (e.g. armband instead of headgear and tunic). The scale of issuance may also vary.

## 4.2 Local image

4.2.1 Clothing is provided when required for continual identification of employees, while on duty at the local level, when in continual direct contact with the local public whom they are serving.

4.2.2 Clothing for local image includes the following identifiers to wear with personal clothing:

- (a) identification card, badge (i.e. for attachment to personal clothing),
- (b) armband,
- (c) headgear,
- (d) smock or coveralls with identification markings, and/or
- (e) identification vest.

## 4.3 National or international image

4.3.1 Clothing is provided when required for identification of an employee while on duty as an official representative of the federal government and when formal identification of vested authority is required to aid the employee in the effective performance of duties. The appearance of the employee must be readily distinguishable from other employees working in the area and must also enhance federal visibility and the image of Canada.

4.3.2 Clothing for national or international image consists of uniform clothing of a distinctive design and includes:

- (a) headgear,
- (b) tunic,
- (c) pants and skirt,
- (d) outer identifying clothing including one of: parka, pea jacket, ski jacket, cape, overcoat, rainwear, and/or
- (e) badges or rank insignia that could vary with department and unit.

## Appendix A - Clothing Advisory Group

The Clothing Advisory Group of the Commercial and Consumer Products Directorate, Clothing and Textiles Division, Public Services and Procurement Canada, will:

- (a) provide information on commercially available commodities and advise on materials, apparel, their components and their availability;
- (b) produce information for materiel managers dealing with all aspects of apparel purchasing, expected future costs and the latest available technology in the apparel fields;
- (c) advise on or produce purchase descriptions and specifications, including quality assurance requirements in both official languages;
- (d) evaluate the design of present and proposed apparel;
- (e) produce and arrange for new design apparel;
- (f) determine the best product or fabrics which would provide maximum safety protection as required for employees;
- (g) maintain contact with the Treasury Board Secretariat with respect to the Federal Identity Program. (Departments and agencies may consult FIP officials directly when this approach is desirable);
- (h) arrange for the production of samples;
- (i) assist in cost-benefit analyses against actual field performance of clothing commodities using commodity performance reports;
- (j) arrange for the testing of materials and apparel;
- (k) arrange for outside inspection services to be carried out at a plant or a consignee point;
- (l) promote the use of common terminology;
- (m) assist departments and agencies to follow Treasury Board guidelines on the provision of clothing and related items to federal employees, with:
  - (i) guidance in the procurement of clothing according to the guidelines set out by the Treasury Board, the Federal Identity Program and according to national objectives, e.g. domestic purchases, regional considerations, scale of issue, economics, design, functionalism, protection, etc.;
  - (ii) assistance in fabric selection consistent with the demand for standardized fabrics;
  - (iii) forecast of fabric required to meet anticipated scale of issue, cost-benefit of maintaining inventories of fabric and garments, average allowance for normal maintenance;

- (iv) cost estimates related to current prices falling within budgetary limitations as set out in the departmental objectives;
- (v) assistance with requisitions that clearly state to contracting officers the precise requirements, including purchase descriptions provided by the Clothing Advisory Group;
- (vi) a critical path from first advice to product delivery, showing involvement of all parties;
- (vii) arrangement for consolidation and distribution of all clothing items; and
- (n) act as the design authority when requested.

## Related Links

[Appendix A - Clothing Advisory Group](#)