



**VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
1001 E. Broad Street, Suite LL20  
Richmond, Virginia, 23219  
Telephone (804) 225-4051 Fax (804)-644-6400  
Email [headquarters@vdf.virginia.gov](mailto:headquarters@vdf.virginia.gov)



Office of the Commanding General

VDF-HCG

6 May 2010

Command Policy Letter CG 10-05

SUBJECT: VDF Grooming Standards and Uniform Wear

1. Reference:

- a. VDF New Recruit Guide (available on the VDF website).
- b. VDF REG 670-1, Wear and Appearance of the VDF Uniform (2010 draft).

2. Pending the publication of the 2010 version of VDF Regulation 670-1, the grooming standards for VDF personnel when in VDF uniform are as cited in the recruit guide, chapter 5. Those standards are repeated here:

**EXTRACT FROM THE RECRUIT GUIDE:**  
**Personal Appearance While In Uniform**

**5-1 Hair:**

**a. General:** the requirement for hair grooming standards is necessary to maintain uniformity within a military population. Many hairstyles are acceptable, as long as they are neat and conservative. It is not possible to address every acceptable hairstyle, or what constitutes eccentric or conservative grooming. Therefore, it is the responsibility of leaders at all levels to exercise good judgment in the enforcement of VDF policy. Hairstyles that do not allow soldiers to wear the headgear properly are prohibited. Extreme, eccentric, or trendy haircuts or hairstyles are not authorized. If soldiers use dyes, tints, or bleaches, they must choose those that result in natural hair colors. Colors that detract from a professional military appearance are prohibited. Therefore soldiers should avoid using colors that result in an extreme appearance. Applied hair colors that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright (fire engine) red, and fluorescent or neon colors. Soldiers will not cut designs into their hair or scalp.

**b. Male:** haircuts will conform to the following standards. The hair on top of the head must be neatly groomed. The length and bulk of the hair may not be excessive or present a ragged, unkempt, or extreme appearance. When the hair is combed, it will not fall over the ears or

eyebrows, or touch the collar, except for the closely cut hair at the back of the neck. Males are not authorized to wear braids, cornrows, or dreadlocks (unkempt, twisted, matted individual parts of the hair). Hair that is clipped closely or shaved to the scalp is authorized. Males will keep sideburns neatly trimmed. Sideburns may not be flared; the base of the sideburn will be a clean-shaved, horizontal line. Sideburns will not extend below the lowest part of the exterior ear opening. Males will keep their face clean-shaven. Mustaches are permitted; if worn, males will keep mustaches neatly trimmed, tapered, and tidy. Mustaches will not present a chopped off or bushy appearance and no portion of the mustache will cover the upper lip line or extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth. Handlebar mustaches, goatees, and beards are not authorized. If appropriate medical authority prescribes beard growth, the length required for medical treatment must be specified.

**c. Female:** haircuts will conform to the following standards. Females will ensure their hair is neatly groomed, that the length and bulk of the hair are not excessive, and that the hair does not present a ragged, unkempt, or extreme appearance. Likewise, trendy styles that result in shaved portions of the scalp (other than the neckline) or designs cut into the hair are prohibited. Females may wear braids and cornrows as long as the braided style is conservative, the braids and cornrows lie snugly on the head and any hair holding devices comply with the standards. Dreadlocks (unkempt, twisted, matted individual parts of hair) are prohibited. Hair will not fall over the eyebrows or extend below the bottom edge of the collar at any time during normal activity or when standing in formation. Long hair that falls naturally below the bottom edge of the collar, to include braids, will be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned, so no free hanging hair is visible. Styles that are lopsided or distinctly unbalanced are prohibited. Ponytails, pigtails, or braids that are not secured to the head (allowing hair to hang freely), widely spaced individual hanging locks, and other extreme styles that protrude from the head, are prohibited. Females will ensure that hairstyles do not interfere with proper wear of military headgear. When headgear is worn, the hair will not extend below the bottom edge of the front of the headgear, nor will it extend below the bottom edge of the collar. Hair-holding devices are authorized only for the purposes of securing the hair. All hair holding devices must be plain and of a color as close to the soldier's hair as is possible or clear.

**5-2 Body Piercing:** no attachments, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the skin while in uniform, in civilian clothes while on duty, or in civilian clothes off duty on any military installation or other places under VDF control.

**5-3 Tattoos:** visible tattoos or brands on the neck, face or head are prohibited. Tattoos or brands on other areas of the body that are prejudicial to good order and discipline are prohibited. Additionally any type of tattoo or brand that is visible while wearing a Class "A" Uniform and detracts from a soldierly appearance is prohibited.

**5-4 Lipstick and Nail Polish:** females are authorized to wear lipstick and nail polish with all uniforms as long as the color is conservative. Extreme shades of lipstick and nail polish such as purple, gold, blue and white will not be worn.

**5-5 Wearing of Jewelry:**

a. The wearing of a wrist watch, a wrist identification bracelet, including a conservative style POW/MIA identification bracelet (only one item per wrist) and not more than two rings (wedding

set is considered as one ring) is authorized with Army uniform unless prohibited for safety or health reasons as long as the style is conservative and in good taste.

b. No jewelry, watch chains, or similar items, to include pens and pencils will appear exposed on uniforms. Authorized exceptions are a conservative tie tack or tie clasp which may be worn with the black four-in-hand necktie and a pen or pencil which may appear exposed on the food service, CVC, and flight uniform.

c. Female soldiers are authorized optional wear of screw-on, clip-on or post-type earrings with the Class "A" and Class "B" Uniform. Earrings will not be worn with Class "C" Uniforms. Earrings will not exceed 6 mm or 1/4 inch in diameter. They will be of gold, silver, or white pearl, or diamond, unadorned and spherical. When worn, earrings will fit snugly against the ear and will be worn as a matched pair with only one earring per ear lobe. Male soldiers are not authorized to wear any type of earrings when in uniform or when wearing civilian clothing on duty.

d. Fad devices, vogue medallions, personal talismans, or amulets are not authorized for wear in uniform or on duty.

END EXTRACT

3. Requests for waiver of any provision of the grooming standards will be made through command channels with supporting documentation to DIV HQ. Waivers based on medical conditions require the VDF member to provide supporting documentation from their physician. Waivers based on religious reasons will only require a statement from the soldier. No further documentation will be required for waivers based on religious reasons unless directed by DIV HQ. All requests for waiver will be provisionally granted until a final determination is made by DIV HQ. No investigation into the basis for any requested waiver will be conducted unless directed by DIV HQ. Requests for investigation should be submitted to DIV HQ in writing. DIV HQ, after legal and Chaplain review of the request, will determine whether to authorize an investigation.

4. POC is DIV G-1, VDF HQ, 804 225 4051.

JOHN D. TAYLOR  
MG, VDF  
Commanding

Distribution: A