

River Bend Police Department
Uniforms
General Order 42
Effective Date: 05/01/2012

42.01 **Policy:** The image which police personnel present to the public has a direct effect on the perception of the delivery of law enforcement services. Written guidelines governing the wearing of official uniforms and civilian attire while on duty are essential to a disciplined and efficient police department. Uniforms, leather goods, and accessories should convey uniformity. Unless otherwise required by duty, employees shall present a neat, clean, well groomed appearance while on duty that promotes public confidence, acceptance, and respect.

42.02 **Procedure:** Uniformed sworn employees shall wear the issued black polo shirt and 5.11 Coyote in color tactical pants with a black in color undershirt as the department's official uniform. Uniformed sworn employees shall wear the issued dark blue uniform shirt and accessories when attending district court or other functions directed by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

42.02.01 Exceptions: Officers assigned to undercover or other such special assignments shall be exempt from the physical appearance and grooming provisions of this general order. Appearance and grooming standards for the undercover officers shall be established by the Chief of Police in accordance with the needs and circumstances of the duties to be performed.

42.02.02 **Hygiene and Fitness:** Attention to personal hygiene is required of all employees while on duty, in uniform, or in official performance of duties. Police officers are responsible for their individual physical fitness, and should not allow themselves to become physically unfit to perform official duties.

42.03 **General Regulations (for all employees):** Uniforms and related equipment shall be provided to all employees required to wear a uniform. Uniformed employees shall wear uniforms and insignia commensurate with their rank and assignment. The official uniform or any part thereof shall be worn only while on duty, traveling to and from work, or at authorized assignments or ceremonies.

42.03.01 The official uniform shall be worn in its entirety. The official uniform shall not be mixed with civilian clothing except when required for recognition purposes by plainclothes officers during raids or similar emergencies or as authorized by the Chief of Police.

42.03.02 While in uniform, employees shall be neat and clean in personal appearance, and shall wear the uniform with dignity and in conformance with rules and regulations. Uniforms shall fit properly. Uniformed personnel shall keep the issued uniform clean and pressed. Authorized metal accessories worn with the uniform shall be kept clean and bright. Shoes and leather accessories shall be kept clean and shined. **If an officer is not deemed presentable by a supervisor or Chief of Police, they will be sent home to change uniform.** *An officer will be counseled upon their return. Further repeated actions will result in disciplinary action.*

42.03.03 When operating a Police Department vehicle, employees shall be attired in the “uniform of the day” or business casual civilian attire. The employee’s attire will **always** project the professional image of the Department. Officers must keep in mind that when the public sees a marked police vehicle, they have the expectation that the marked vehicle is an on-duty police officer and capable of providing assistance.

42.03.04 An officer must have his/her badge, department identification, authorized weapon, ammunition, handcuffs, portable radio readily available while operating any police vehicle should an enforcement action become a necessity.

42.03.05 Officers on light duty status for an extended period, or those under suspension or other restriction, shall not operate department vehicles and must turn their vehicle and keys into their immediate supervisor. This equipment will be reissued when the employee is cleared for full duty and with the approval of the Chief of Police.

42.04 General Regulations:

42.04.01 Male Employees: Hair styles shall be worn in a fashion that is professional in appearance and style, and in keeping with normal business standards as determined by the River Bend Police Department. Hair shall not extend over the top of the ear when groomed, and shall not touch the back of the collar in normal posture.

42.04.02 Sideburns: Sideburns shall not extend below the earlobe and shall at no point be more than one and one half inch (1½") wide nor more than one half inch (½") in thickness. Sideburns shall not flare and shall be trimmed horizontally across the bottom.

42.04.03 Mustaches / Goatees: Mustaches and goatees are permitted and shall be neatly trimmed at all times. Mustaches and Goatees shall not cover any part of the upper lip.

42.04.04 Beards: Beards are permitted and shall be neatly trimmed at all times. Beard hair length should not exceed the length of the hair on the side of their head.

42.04.05 Female Employees: Hair styles shall be worn in a fashion that is professional in appearance and style, and in keeping with normal business standards as determined by the River Bend Police Department. Hair may not be worn longer than three inches (3") below the bottom of the collar. Longer hair must be worn in an upward sweep or bun and not allowed to straggle. These hair styles must present a neat appearance.

42.04.06 Prohibited Hair Styles: Hair styles which are prohibited for all employees (except approved Narcotics assignments) include, but are not limited to:

1. Corn rows;
2. Mohawks;
3. Plaits;
4. Spikes or tails;
5. Unusual colors.

42.04.07 Earrings: Jewelry worn with the uniform must be in good taste and not distract from the professional image or work performance of the employee. Male employees shall not wear earrings. Female sworn employees may wear **one** pair of stud type earrings not in excess of three sixteenth inches (3/16") only to be worn in the ear lobe. Female non-sworn employees may wear one pair of earrings, only to be worn in the ear lobe, which must not be dangling, open hooped or in excess of one half inch (½") in diameter. Any other visible piercing is not authorized.

42.04.08 Jewelry: In addition to the restrictions on earrings in section 121.04.07, uniformed employees may wear only the following jewelry items:

1. One wrist watch;
2. Medic alert bracelet(s);
3. Jewelry worn around the neck only if it is not visible;
4. No more than one ring or ring set is to be worn on each hand.

42.04.09 Fingernails: The length of employee's fingernails shall not exceed one quarter inch (¼"). Excessive length of fingernails interferes with the safe and efficient operation of equipment and machinery. Excessive length of fingernails can also contribute to an unintentional discharge of a firearm.

42.05 **Uniform Specifications:** In addition to the uniform regulations above, all uniformed police officers, including reserve officers, and all other uniformed employees working in contact with the public outside the police building shall conform to the following additional regulations.

42.06 **Uniform Items:** Uniformed employees shall wear the uniform and equipment items issued to them as needed or items approved by the Chief of Police or his/ her designee.

42.06.01 Bulletproof Vests: Bullet Proof Vests (BPV), either internal or exterior, will be issued to all personnel. BPV will be worn while on duty and in uniform unless conducting administrative duties. BPV may be optional for temperatures with a heat index of 90 deg F or more and when the officer's duties require them to be outside of their patrol cars un interrupted for operations over an hour or longer that does not include potential contact with citizens in a law enforcement action (Parades, extended outside events, etc). Officers are reminded that not wearing a BPV may impact any medical or payments of life insurance awarded to them. BPV will be worn when answering calls for service, checkpoints and traffic stops at all times.

42.06.02 Trousers: The official uniform trousers shall be Coyote in color unless otherwise specified by the Chief of Police.

42.06.03 Shirts: All uniformed employees shall be issued shirts as determined by the Chief of Police.

1. Sworn police officers:
 - a. Shall be issued dark blue dress uniform shirts and black polo (Polo or dress).
 - b. Shall be issued the following Polo Shirt (Class C), Dress Shirt (Class B) and Dress Long Sleeve shirts(Class A) and shall wear them according to the respective summer and winter uniform seasons as designated by their commander.
 - c. Uniform shirts shall be worn with either the issued tie, appropriate colored undershirt or issued mock turtleneck shirt.

- d. Undershirts shall be black in color and the sleeves of undershirts must not extend beyond the uniform shirt sleeve.

42.06.04 Tie: The issued blue, clip-on tie shall be worn with long sleeve shirts, secured by an appropriate tie tack pin when reporting for court or meetings. Dickies can be purchased for wear when no ties are required.

42.06.05 Shoes/Boots: Shoes worn with the uniform shall be of a smooth, solid black material capable of retaining a shine. Shoes may be high or low cut or boots. Boots must be of smooth leather with a plain round toe. Department issued tactical boots are permitted. Loafers, slip-ons (other than boots), shoes with ornamental buckles, platform shoes, canvas or athletic-type shoes, or shoes or boots having a heel higher than one and one-half inches are prohibited.

42.06.06 Socks: Socks worn with low cut shoes or ankle boots shall be black or dark blue. Sock color is optional when wearing approved boots which conceal the socks at all times. Socks worn with shorts and tennis shoes shall be plain white crew or tennis type socks.

42.06.07 Hat: A black billed hat (“baseball style”) with thin-blue line flag is permitted for wear during normally working conditions/shifts. The wearing of the uniform hat is optional under most circumstances. The uniform hat shall be worn for ceremonial occasions and as otherwise directed by supervisory authority.

When worn, the hat will be worn with the sweatband resting on the forehead ensuring that no hair protrudes onto the forehead. The hat shall rest squarely on the head and shall not be cocked to the side.

Personal winter weight hat/toboggan worn during inclement weather will be black or navy blue in color and shall not bear any logos, designs or advertisements other than POLICE in block letters.

42.06.08 Hat shield: The issued hat shield, appropriate to the rank of the employee, shall be positioned in the center of the front of the hat and $\frac{1}{2}$ " below the top seam.

42.06.09 Badge: The badge appropriate to the rank and assignment of the employee shall be worn above the left breast pocket of the outer most garment. An embroidered badge patch may be utilized on outer garments (jackets) and selected uniform shirts.

42.06.10 Name plates: All uniformed personnel shall wear a name plate. Name plates shall be worn only on the uniform shirt centered directly above the right breast pocket. The two securing pins should be touching the top seam of the pocket flap. The wearing of the “Serving Since” addition is optional.

42.06.11 Gloves: Gloves, if worn, must be black, except when other gloves are specifically indicated for special events. Mittens, gloves with fancy details, and weighted gloves are prohibited.

42.06.13 Rank insignia: Rank insignia for Sergeants and below will be on the sleeve & lieutenants and above shall be worn on both collars of the uniform shirt. Reserve Officers will wear their ranks on the shirt collars.

42.06.15 American Flag Ribbon: The issued American Flag Ribbon may be worn by all uniformed personnel. The ribbon will be senior to all ribbons and worn closest to the heart. When worn

singularly the ribbon shall be centered above the name tag. The American Flag Ribbon shall be worn on top of or closest to the center of the chest.

42.06.16 Qualification Awards: If an officer chooses to wear qualification awards with the Class B uniform, the qualification award ribbons will be worn as described above. The ribbons will be placed after all personal award ribbons and in the following order:

1. Accident Reconstruction: Must have completed Accident Reconstruction Training through the North Carolina Justice Academy.
2. Bike: Must be currently assigned as a Bike Officer.
3. EMT: Must be currently certified as an Emergency Medical Technician.
4. Firearms: Must be currently certified by North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission as a Firearms Instructor. This ribbon replaces the General Instructor ribbon.
5. Firearms Qualification: Ribbon will be worn on the bottom, furthest from the center of the chest.
6. FTO: Must be currently assigned as a Field Training Officer or Field Training Officer Supervisor and have attended the one week Basic FTO course.
7. Instructor: Must be currently certified by North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission as an Instructor.

42.06.17 Uniform Classes: The “uniform of the day” for uniformed police officers may be any of the following uniform classes as chosen by the Division/Section Commander. The entire uniform class shall be worn.

1. Class A: Dress uniform consists of dark blue pants, with or without gold piping; white uniform shirt, blouse, and tie with appropriate rank insignia and department authorized medals or ribbons.
2. Class B: Long or short sleeve shirt, long pants, and black shoes/boots. The wearing of Department authorized ribbons is optional.
3. Class C: Polo short sleeve, long pants and black shoes/boots. Not authorized for court and no ribbons will be displayed.

42.06.18 Employees under disciplinary suspension shall not wear any part of the official uniform.

42.07.01 Each employee shall be required to produce any article or item of issued uniforms or equipment, or any other item worn or carried while on duty which affects the employee’s appearance or performance of duty, upon the demand of a supervisor.

42.07.02 An employee, who loses, misplaces, or damages issued property shall immediately report such loss or damage to his/her immediate supervisor, in writing, and shall be held responsible for the replacement of the property if the loss or damage is due to the employee’s negligence.

42.07.03 Official uniform items and issued equipment which become unsuitable for continued use due to normal wear or size change may be replaced.

42.08 **Surrendering Departmental Equipment**

42.08.01 When an employee resigns, retires, is suspended, or is discharged the employee shall surrender to the Chief of Police all issued items of uniforms, and equipment. The employee’s final paycheck may be withheld until all issued items are accounted for.

42.08.02 Whenever an employee is suspended from duty, is going to be away from work and not available for callback for more than 180 days due to extended military leave, or any other long term absence which, as determined by the Chief of Police, shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Employee's badge,
2. Identification card,
3. Radio and all equipment issued with the radio, and
4. Vehicle and all associated contents.

42.08.03 Service weapon(s) to include less lethal weapons being surrendered for ANY reason will be turned into a Department Firearms Instructor. A Firearms Transaction Form will be completed to document the transfer of a firearm into the armory.

42.08.04 The Chief of Police will store the equipment as appropriate until the employee returns to work or employment with RBPD is officially terminated.

42.08.05 The employee should contact his immediate supervisor as soon as notice to return to work is received and request issuance of equipment.

42.08.06 Upon return to active duty, the employee will be reissued the equipment.

42.08.07 Officers shall not purchase uniform equipment items and request reimbursement from the town unless prior approval from the Chief of Police.

42.09 **Damage Reimbursement:** Employees may be entitled to reimbursement when personal clothing is damaged as a direct result of police duties. Employees will submit a letter requesting the reimbursement, detailing the events surrounding the damage and the replacement cost. In cases where the damage is caused by a person who assaults an officer and is the direct result of an arrest or other official action, reimbursement should first be sought from the judicial system by charging the suspect with Damage to Personal Property NCGS 14-160 and requesting reimbursement by the court.

This procedure should also be followed when department issued clothing and/or equipment is damaged.

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