

Leamington Mennonite Home
Long Term Care

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

CATEGORY: Personnel	SUBJECT: Dress Code & Safety Equipment	SECTION: D POLICY: 1
DATE: September 2004 REVISION DATES: June 2007, May 2009, January 2011, March 2012, July 2012, May 2013, June 2013, June 2014, May 2016, January 2023, September 2025	Administrator's Signature: 	

DRESS CODE & SAFETY EQUIPMENT

POLICY:

Applies to all employees, students/trainees, and volunteers while on the LMH premises or representing the Home. Additional role-specific requirements apply to direct care staff and indirect care staff.

PURPOSE:

- To set clear, inclusive, and safety-focused dress, identification, and personal safety equipment standards for all LMH staff, supporting resident dignity, infection prevention and control (IPAC), and worker health and safety, and aligning with applicable Ontario legislation and standards.
 - Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 (FLTCA) and O. Reg. 246/22 – licensee duties for safe, quality care and competent staffing.
 - Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) – employer/worker duties; workplace violence risk assessments; protective equipment; Health Care & Residential Facilities O. Reg. 67/93.
 - Public Health Ontario / PIDAC IPAC best practices (hand hygiene; nails/jewelry; routine practices & additional precautions).
 - Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) – inclusive, non-discriminatory dress and equipment standards; duty to accommodate to undue hardship.
 - AODA Employment Standard – individual accommodation processes.
 - WHMIS 2015 – safe handling of hazardous products (labels/PPE) where applicable.
- **Guiding Principles:**
 - Resident-centred care, dignity, and respect
 - Safety first (hazard-based requirements)
 - IPAC best practices
 - Inclusion, equity and accommodation (sex, gender identity/expression, creed, disability, etc.)
 - Professionalism and identification

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS – ALL STAFF

1. **Professional Appearance:** Clean, neat, and in good repair. Clothing must be opaque, provide adequate coverage, and be free of offensive imagery or wording.
2. **Identification:** LMH-issued photo ID must be worn above the waist and visible at all times while on duty. Lanyards/badges must be breakaway.
3. **Footwear (minimum standard):** Closed-toe, closed-heel, low-heel (1.5" or less) footwear with slip-resistant soles suitable to the work area.

4. **Fragrance-reduced/scent-free:** Staff must avoid perfumes, colognes, and strongly scented products to protect residents with sensitivities.
5. **Jewelry & accessories:** Must be minimal and not pose a safety or IPAC risk. Dangling or hoop items that can be grabbed are prohibited in resident areas. Smart devices/watches allowed if silent and in line with privacy rules; no audio/video recording unless authorized for work.
6. **Hair & head coverings:** Hair must be clean and secured away from the face and off the collar when in clinical/food service tasks. Head coverings for religious, cultural, or medical reasons are welcome; they should be secured and meet IPAC/food safety standards where applicable.
7. **Tattoos/body art:** Permitted; content must be professional and not offensive or discriminatory. Cover if requested due to resident distress.
8. **Nails:** Kept clean and short. Artificial nails, nail enhancements, and chipped nail polish are not permitted for direct care, food handling, or cleaning roles.
9. **Personal devices:** Personal phones used only during breaks in designated areas. No photography/audio/video of residents, staff, or documents unless explicitly authorized (privacy/PHIPA).

NAMETAG/ID BADGE STANDARDS

1. **Visibility:** Worn above the waist (chest or collar area), facing forward, unobstructed, and visible at all times while on duty.
2. **Identification Content:** Must include first name, role/title, recent professional photo, and the Home's name or logo. Last name is optional for staff privacy.
3. **Safety & Design:** Breakaway lanyards or retractable clips only; no pins, sharp edges, or dangling items. Badges must be durable and easy to sanitize.
4. **Infection Prevention & Control:** Surfaces must be disinfectable with hospital-grade cleaner. Cloth lanyards discouraged; if used, they must be washable.
5. **Security & Privacy:** Badges must not be lent or altered.

PERSONAL ALARM STANDARDS

1. **Requirement to Carry:** All staff must carry a personal alarm at all times while on duty.
2. **Accessibility:** Alarms must be worn and remain immediately accessible. They may not be kept in lockers, bags, or desks while working.
3. **Use:** Activate the alarm in any situation where immediate help is required (workplace violence or aggression, medical emergency, imminent safety threat). Training will be provided on how and when to use devices.
4. **Design & Safety:** Devices must be lightweight, easy to activate under stress, durable, and cleanable/disinfectable. Breakaway features required for lanyard-style devices.
5. **Maintenance:** Staff are responsible for ensuring devices are functional. Malfunctions must be reported immediately to a supervisor.
6. **Privacy & Misuse:** Devices are for emergency use only. Intentional misuse or tampering is prohibited.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF WORKING ON THE FLOOR

1. **Clothing:** Scrubs or other role-appropriate uniforms in solid colours or LMH-approved patterns. Must allow full range of movement and be laundered regularly.
2. **Outerwear:** No outdoor jackets/cardigans in resident care/food prep areas.
3. **Footwear:** Slip-resistant, closed-toe/heel, low-heel shoes. Where hazard assessment indicates (e.g., environmental services/maintenance tasks with puncture or crush risk), CSA-approved protective footwear is required. Shoes must be cleanable; no mesh in housekeeping/laundry.
4. **Jewelry:** Rings limited to smooth, non-adorned band; no bracelets or hand/wrist jewelry during care. Small stud earrings only. Necklaces tucked in and breakaway if worn.

5. **Nails & hand/forearm adornments:** No artificial nails, nail enhancements, nail jewelry, or hand/forearm jewelry while providing care or cleaning; sleeves above the wrist for hand hygiene.
6. **Makeup/beards:** Modest makeup permitted; ensure no flaking/glitter. Beards must be kept short and tidy; staff requiring tight-fitting respirators must be clean-shaven in the seal area when respirator use is required by hazard assessment/fit-testing.
7. **Head coverings:** Religious/cultural coverings permitted and must be secured. Disposable caps provided/required where indicated by IPAC or food safety.
8. **Food service on floor:** Staff serving food must comply with food safety and IPAC requirements; hair restraint required; no hand/wrist jewelry; clean, intact clothing/aprons.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF NOT WORKING ON THE FLOOR

1. **Clothing:** Business-casual attire that is professional and allows safe movement (e.g., dress slacks/khakis, skirts/dresses of modest length, blouses/shirts, sweaters). Denim permitted if clean, dark, non-distressed.
2. **Footwear:** Closed-toe recommended. If visiting resident areas, footwear must meet Floor-Based standard (Section 9.3). Elevated heels are discouraged.
3. **Transition to resident areas:** Office staff entering care/food areas must don required PPE and follow Sections 6–8 (e.g., securing hair, removing hand/forearm jewelry, hand hygiene).

PROHIBITED CLOTHING/ITEM EXAMPLES

- Over the head garments (sweaters/sweatshirts) with or without hoods and ties, Ripped/torn clothing; sheer or revealing garments; sleepwear; slogans/images that are violent, discriminatory, sexualized, or otherwise unprofessional.
- Open-toe/open-heel shoes, flip-flops, slippers, platform/high-heel footwear in resident areas.
- Dangling scarves, ties, lanyards, and accessories in resident care areas unless secured or breakaway.
- Artificial nails or nail enhancements in any role involving direct care, food preparation/service, or cleaning.

RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, GENDER, & DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

- The Home will accommodate dress and grooming related to creed, culture, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, and disability to the point of undue hardship.
- Staff seeking accommodation should contact their leader or HR. Interim accommodations will be considered while requests are reviewed.
- Examples include modified head coverings, long-sleeve undergarments, alternative footwear, or exemption from certain items where safe and feasible.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Employer/Leadership:** Conduct hazard assessments; supply and maintain required PPE/uniform items; provide personal alarms as required; provide training; post area-specific requirements.
- **Supervisors:** Enforce this policy fairly; complete risk-based decisions; consult IPAC/JHSC as needed.
- **Workers/Volunteers/Students:** Comply with this policy, IPAC practices, and PPE/personal alarm requirements; report hazards and equipment issues; participate in fit-testing and alarm training.
- **IPAC Lead:** Advise on IPAC requirements, signage, and exceptions during outbreaks.
- **Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC):** Consult on hazard assessments, footwear standards, and safety equipment needs.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Progressive, education-first approach: reminder/coaching → written reminder → removal from area to correct attire/equipment → disciplinary action as per HR policy. Refusal to comply with required PPE or personal alarm standards is grounds for removal from duty pending investigation.

POLICY REVIEW

Reviewed at least annually or when legislation/IPAC directives change, in consultation with IPAC and JHSC.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Quick Reference by Role

- **Nursing/PSW/Rehab/Recreation (on floor):** Scrubs/uniform; closed-toe/heel, slip-resistant shoes; nails short, no artificial nails; minimal jewelry; visible ID; personal alarm; PPE per IPAC.
- **Environmental Services/Housekeeping/Maintenance:** Durable uniforms; slip-resistant shoes (CSA protective footwear where hazards indicate); gloves and other PPE as assessed; personal alarm.
- **Dietary/Food Service:** Hair restraint; clean apron/uniform; no hand/wrist jewelry; closed-toe/heel, slip-resistant shoes; PPE as required.
- **Office/Admin:** Business-casual; closed-toe recommended; follow floor standards when entering resident areas.

Appendix B – Compliance Cross-Walk (Key Requirements)

- **Footwear:** Closed-toe/heel; slip-resistant; no mandatory high heels; CSA protective footwear where hazards warrant (e.g., EVS/maintenance).
- **Nails & Jewelry:** Short nails; no artificial nails; remove hand/forearm jewelry for care/food/cleaning; secure hair.
- **Nametag/ID:** Must be visible, above the waist, and legible at all times.
- **Personal Alarms:** Must be carried by staff in identified roles/areas; accessible, functional, and for emergency use only.
- **Inclusion & Accommodation:** Non-gendered standards; accommodate creed/disability/gender identity/expression; AODA process for individual needs.

Appendix C – Examples of Acceptable/Unacceptable Attire

- **Acceptable (floor):** Solid-colour scrubs; scrub jacket; closed-toe slip-resistant shoes; hair tied back; minimal studs; plain band ring.
- **Unacceptable (floor):** Open-toe shoes; mesh sneakers in EVS; dangling earrings; acrylic nails; scented body spray; Over the head garments (sweaters/sweatshirts) with or without hoods and ties; graphic slogan tees.
- **Acceptable (office):** Dress slacks, blouse, cardigan; knee-length dress; clean dark denim.
- **Unacceptable (office):** Crop tops; ripped jeans; shorts; flip-flops; strong perfumes.