



London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Dress Code for Uniformed Staff

Circulated To: Heads of Department
For Use By: All Uniformed staff

Introduction

The public and professional image of the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust (LAS) stems directly from the appearance, bearing and conduct of its staff. It is essential therefore that every member of the Service wearing uniform dress is smartly presented at all times.

Objective

1. To ensure that all staff are aware of and comply with the content of this policy document and clearly understand the standards expected of them whilst on duty, or when travelling to and from their place of duty or representing the LAS in an official capacity at places other than LAS premises and taking into account current Health & Safety advice and regulations.

Policy

1.0 General:

- 1.1 All staff are expected to be in possession of a full set of uniform.
- 1.2 All staff are expected to maintain their uniform in a good state of repair and adhere to the highest standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene.
- 1.3 When on duty staff will only wear uniform and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that is currently issued by the service and that complies with any relevant Health and Safety instructions.
- 1.4 Uniform must be kept clean, pressed and neatly presented at all times. However, from time to time operational demands may prevent such uniform maintenance. On those occasions staff are responsible for ensuring that the situation is rectified as soon as practicable.
- 1.5 Operational staff should keep a clean uniform available on station or, when employed away from their normal base, carry a spare uniform in the bag issued by the LAS so they may change in the event of their uniform becoming damaged or soiled during the course of their shift.
- 1.6 Staff travelling to and from their base Station, or to and / or between other LAS premises, must comply with this dress code in full.
- 1.7 Items of uniform issued to staff must not be altered in any manner except where those alterations relate to the size of a garment. It is not permitted to alter High Visibility clothing in any manner.

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- 1.8 Rank and job title markings will be worn on uniform as appropriate to the garment. No other badges will be worn except one recognised Trade Union badge of office and LAS name badges, which must worn on the right side of garment above breast pocket.
- 1.9 All Shirts will be tucked into waistbands at all times. Whilst wearing shirt styles that do not have a collar button, all buttons must be fastened. (For other staff see 1.11)
- 1.10 Only issued white T-shirts are permitted to be worn under operational uniform shirts.
- 1.11 Staff who wear ties or cravats as part of their normal working / dress uniform will wear these items at all times. In certain circumstances such as periods of hot weather, permission may be given to remove these items except when in dress uniform.
- 1.12 Skirts are not part of operational uniform. When the wearing of skirts is permitted, staff are not obliged to wear stockings or tights, however, socks are forbidden. If skirts are worn as part of Dress uniform, bare legs are not acceptable.
- 1.13 Staff shall not wear uniform whilst off duty except when representing the Service in an official capacity in their off duty time. Staff wishing to travel to and from work in uniform must either fully comply with this policy or wear a jacket or other item of clothing that covers LAS insignia and / or rank markings.
- 1.14 Head coverings required to be worn due to religious beliefs such as a Turban (Sikh men), Kippah (Jewish men) and Hejab headscarf (Muslim women) should be in a plain green colour, as near to LAS corporate green as possible. Headscarves should be securely fastened with no trailing ends and should not cover the face. (see 2.3 below)
- 1.15 All uniform items and PPE remains the property of the London Ambulance Service at all times. When staff leave the Service it is their responsibility to ensure all uniform items are returned to their line manager

2.0 Operational Dress – Number 2 Dress.

- 2.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure their own safety and that of their colleagues. Those who are normally issued with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must ensure that they possess a full set of those items which are currently issued and readily available to wear. Footwear must be clean and polished at all times – see Appendix 1 for modes of dress.
- 2.2 High visibility tabards, coats and over-trousers are issued for the protection of staff whilst undertaking operational duties. It is not permitted for staff to wear LAS issue High Visibility garments as a substitute for similar personal protective clothing when riding private motorcycles or pedal cycles when off duty and / or travelling to and from their place of duty.
- 2.3 Central Ambulance Control (CAC) staff who are required to attend incidents outside the Control Room must have High Visibility clothing available for use in such circumstances.

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2.4 High Visibility Clothing must be worn whilst on operational duties when:

- indicated by the prevailing weather conditions,
- the circumstances present a risk to the personal safety of the crew,
- at dusk and during the hours of darkness,
- at incidents in public places,
- or when instructed to do so by an LAS Officer or Team Leader.

2.5 Safety helmets approved for use by the LAS must be worn where crew / staff safety is at risk. In these circumstances it may be appropriate for a 'dynamic' risk assessment to be made by staff who wear head coverings for religious reasons to consider their own safety and comply with the following.

Helmets must be worn at all:

- major incidents,
- railway incidents,
- fire calls,
- incidents on motorways and major roads or where staff are at risk from moving vehicles and or flying debris,
- Road Traffic Accidents (RTA) where the patient is trapped and the Fire Service have been asked to effect a rescue,
- incidents on building sites and other industrial complexes,
- places where required to comply with Health and Safety notices and policies,
- or when instructed to do so by an LAS Officer or Team Leader.

2.6 Stab Vests will be worn in accordance with current policy.

2.7 Public Order equipment will be issued and worn only on the instruction of the Officer in charge of any Public Order incident.

2.8 Specialist equipment used for the decontamination of casualties from a chemical incident must only be worn by those staff specially trained in its use.

2.9 Only the Service utility belt and any approved issued attachments may be worn when engaged on frontline duties. Epaulettes will be worn to reflect the rank or position of the wearer. Non practicing uniform staff will wear 'London Ambulance Service' epaulettes.

2.10 Staff must wear operational uniform when in training. Trainee Emergency Medical Technicians (T/EMT) in training school will wear Service issued one piece overalls in accordance with training school provisions and requirements. All staff when engaged on operational duties will wear operational uniform and approved safety footwear as issued by the LAS.

3.0 Dress Uniform – Number 1 Dress:

3.1 Caps, black gloves, jackets and ties (gloves in extreme weather) will be worn when dress uniform is worn at ceremonial and public events – see Appendix 1.

3.2 Black shoes will be polished and in a good state of repair.

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- 3.3 For all occasions other than internal training courses, regular meetings and where otherwise specified, officers representing the service in an official capacity, should consider wearing Number 1 Dress uniform.
- 3.4 Awards, medals, orders and decorations authorised by the Sovereign may only be worn on the dress uniform and must be displayed above left breast pocket. The only exception to this rule is the award bestowed by the Royal Humane Society, which must be worn above right breast pocket. These medals should only be worn on those occasions when it is deemed appropriate by either the LAS or other authority, e.g. The Royal British Legion.
- 3.5 Only medal ribbons depicting medals authorised by the Sovereign may be worn above left breast pocket of the dress uniform jacket. All other medal / award ribbons are to be worn above the right breast pocket.

4.0 Non-Operational Duties and outside visits

- 4.1 LAS staff undertaking non-operational duties and visits to outside agencies, organisations and premises will wear operational uniform including high visibility coats if appropriate.

5.0 Personal Hygiene

- 5.1 It is essential for all staff to maintain the highest standards of personal hygiene.
- 5.2 Hands must be clean at all times; finger nails must be kept clean and cut to a length which will not damage medical examination gloves or risk causing injury to a patient.
- 5.3 Hair should be kept clean and tidy at all times whilst wearing LAS uniform. Hair that falls below the collar must be secured and retained in a fashion, e.g. ponytail, French plait or bun, so not to impede the effective use of service approved safety helmets. Long loose hair is not permitted. Whilst wearing Dress uniform hair will be secured above the collar in a bun.
- 5.4 If hair bands or decorations are worn they must be in keeping with the uniform. Extravagant hairstyles, excessive and unnatural hair colourings are not in keeping with a professional image and as such are not permitted.
- 5.5 Beards should be kept neat and tidy at all times. Personnel who wish to grow a beard or moustache should do so whilst on Annual Leave or extended periods of Off Duty days. Partial beard growth (stubble) is not acceptable.
- 5.6 Cosmetic make-up should be kept to a minimum and in keeping with the professional image of the LAS. Nail varnish must be neutral in colour and lipstick similarly muted.
- 5.7 A plain Bindi may be worn by Hindu women on their forehead.

6.0 Jewellery & Body Piercing

- 6.1 A single wrist watch may be worn whilst on duty. Bracelets and bangles are not permitted unless religious exclusions apply agreed by local line managers.

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- 6.2 A maximum of two rings may be worn at any one time on the hands. Rings with stones worn on operational duties must be covered by tape.
- 6.3 Necklaces when worn should not be visible, nor should they hang outside the uniform shirt.
- 6.4 Earrings and hoops are not permitted however staff can wear discreet studs or small sleepers (no more than 1cm in diameter) and are restricted to one in each ear.
- 6.5 The responsibility for damage / repair to or replacement of items of personal jewellery / watch worn by staff on duty lies with the member of staff and not the LAS.
- 6.6 The following items of jewellery are **not permitted** under any circumstances whilst on duty:
- Eyebrow studs or rings,
 - Lip studs or rings,
 - Cheek studs or rings,
 - Tongue studs or rings,
 - Nose studs or rings.

7.0 Tattoos

- 7.1 All Tattoos and other forms of body art must be covered up by standard uniform items. Visible tattoos that could cause offence either to patients, work colleagues, or members of the public, must be covered whilst at work.

8.0 Glasses and Sunglasses

- 8.1 Staff who wear corrective spectacles are reminded of the potential dangers related to those lenses which react to light especially when driving service vehicles.
- 8.2 Staff who wear spectacles and contact lenses should carry a spare pair of glasses in accordance with the instructions contained within *Section 6.32 of General Instruction 23, Part 1 Driving and Care of Service Vehicles (or section 30.0 of the revised procedure under review and pending issue)*.
- 8.3 Spectacles, sunglasses and contact lenses must be compatible with the image of a professional uniformed service and can be worn when appropriate. It is important however, that staff completely remove sunglasses from the head when dealing directly with patients as they can present an authoritative or aggressive image and act as a barrier to eye contact and thus inhibit effective communication.
- 8.4 When driving, sunglasses should only be worn in accordance with the instructions given in *Section 6.33 of General Instruction 23, Part 1 Driving and Care of Service Vehicles (or section 30.0 of the revised procedure under review and pending issue)*.

9.0 Identity Cards (ID)

- 9.1 All staff must carry a current valid identity card and it should be readily available as confirmation of identity and staff member of the LAS. It is not a requirement for staff to wear their ID cards when on operational duties. However, for security purposes all staff

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should display their ID when in the Headquarters buildings, Training Centres and at other LAS premises where they are not known.

- 9.2 Staff who are issued with a Heathrow Airport Identity Pass should display this at all times when on duty. Additionally they should carry and have available for inspection their London Heathrow Airside Driving Permit.

10.0 Conclusion

- 10.1 It is expected that operational uniform (Number 2 Dress) is the normal working dress for A&E Officers. However, when attending meetings or events where it is felt that a more formal appearance is appropriate, Number 1 Dress or civilian clothing may be worn.
- 10.2 This policy document is by necessity detailed. It reflects the need for staff to wear uniform so they can be recognised as part a professional organisation respected by colleagues, peers, patients and the public at large.
- 10.3 The instructions set out in this document will assist in that endeavour and should be used as a standard against which the London Ambulance Service can be measured.

References : Driving and Care of Service Vehicles.



Signature :

**Peter Bradley
Chief Executive and Chief Ambulance Officer.**

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Order of Dress.

Number 1 Dress: Dress Uniform.

Cap, tunic, white shirt, green tie, appropriate rank epaulettes, trousers or skirt, belt, black gloves, black socks, black shoes.

Number 2 Dress: Operational Dress.

Green shirt, epaulettes, white T-shirt, cargo trousers, belt, utility belt, stab vest when appropriate, High Visibility Jacket / Tabard, Fleece, over trousers, black socks and black safety shoes.

Number 3 Dress: CAC & Resource Centres Dress.

White shirt, green tie or cravat, appropriate rank epaulettes, jumper, trousers or skirt, belt, black socks and black shoes.

NB. For the specific Dress Code when attending a funeral see section 11.0, '**LAS Staff Service Funerals' (TP/020).**

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