



RESOLUTION 2025-01-22 (1)

Date: January 22, 2025

To: THA Board of Commissioners

From: April Black
Executive Director

Re: Creation and Addition of THA Policy HR.10.30.01 Assigned Uniforms

This resolution would create a new employee policy titled "HR-10.30.01 Assigned Uniforms". This separates policies for uniformed and non-uniformed employees. It also provides further detail on the values, standards, expectations, and prohibitions for employees required to wear uniforms to perform their job functions.

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Advisor worked with Human Resources, Property Management Maintenance Managers, and Maintenance Technicians to create a new policy that ensures Maintenance employees have detailed and clear uniform standards.

This work was done alongside updates the standards for workplace attire. The Strategic Advisor engaged Maintenance employees at a Monthly Maintenance Safety meeting. They presented a draft updated policy, answered questions, and gathered comments to incorporate into an updated version of the policy. Representatives from the Trades Union also met with the Strategic Advisor to review the policy and share feedback.

Adding this policy and the detailed uniform standards will have minimal impact on Tacoma Housing Authority's (THA) finances.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Tacoma Housing Authority Board of Commissions approve the proposed policy HR-10.30.01, "Assigned Uniforms".



RESOLUTION 2025-01-22 (1)

(THA HR 10.30.01 – Assigned Uniforms Policy)

A **RESOLUTION** of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma

WHEREAS, the Tacoma Housing Authority endeavors to be a great employer; and

WHEREAS, THA is committed to embedding a DEIB lens in all its practices and programs; and

WHEREAS, THA staff have shared feedback about the original version of THA policy HR-10.30; and

WHEREAS THA Maintenance staff and Union representatives participated in engagement efforts to review draft policy updates and share feedback; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington that:

1. Employees who are required to wear uniforms to perform their job functions follow updated values, standards, and prohibitions regarding uniforms.
2. This resolution supersedes any conflicting policies or resolutions previously adopted by the Board of Commissioners.
3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Approved: January 22, 2025

Derek Young, Chair

ASSIGNED UNIFORMS POLICY

Policy No. HR-10.30.01

OVERVIEW

This policy applies to Maintenance Technicians. Workplace attire standards for other employees can be found in policy HR – 10.30

THA's workplace attire and assigned uniform policy prioritizes **safety, authenticity, approachability, and agency representation**. Even more, we welcome and appreciate when employees present themselves in ways that balance the four values as they relate to their role, is relevant to their culture or background, and is in line with their gender identity or expression. This policy is intended to create clear standards of THA's Assigned Uniform Policy, while also encouraging employees to present themselves in ways that are authentic, comfortable, and culturally relevant within these standards. By following this policy, residents, visitors, and other partners will find us approachable and trustworthy.

Of additional importance for Maintenance Technicians is **recognizability**. It is vital that employees are easily recognized as Maintenance Technicians. Adhering to uniform standards enhances recognizability which in turn increases safety for employees and residents.

Values for Workplace Attire

Safety means that the clothes we wear prevent and/or mitigate the extent of any harm that may be encountered at work, including workplace accidents.

Authenticity means we encourage employees to bring the version of themselves they're willing to share at work. This may look different for each and every one of us. And we think that's what makes us special.

Approachability means THA residents feel like they can relate to us and come to us for support. Approachability can be conveyed through how we dress and our general demeanor.

Agency representation means that we're asking employees to balance approachability with their roles as ambassadors of the agency and our work. Our work is sensitive and high impact. And we want residents and external partners to know that we at THA can meet the mark every day we show up for work. Like approachability, this can be conveyed through dress and general demeanor.

MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN ASSIGNED UNIFORM STANDARDS

“Blues”: THA issued pants, shirts, and jackets are required while on the job. These items cannot have holes or other damage and must fit properly so that the Technician can move freely and complete their jobs safely. There are some situations where a Maintenance Technician may wear a different shirt or jacket outside of the “Blues” uniform.

Turn Team: When a Maintenance Technician is on the Turn Team, they may wear their THA-issued Turn Team cotton t-shirt. When the Technician’s rotation on Turn Team is over, they must return to wearing their “blues”. Turn Team members do not need to change into their blue uniform shirt when moving around the property to pick up tools, drive a van, etc. if they are still in the middle of a turn.

Jackets: The THA-issued blue jacket and the THA-gifted fleece (which employees received in Winter 2023) are preferred jackets for Maintenance Techs. The THA sweatshirt (“hoodie”) that was gifted in Winter 2022 is not permissible to wear while performing work duties because it does not provide adequate coverage and both the hood and draw strings pose a grab hazard. If a Maintenance Technician wishes to wear a different coat due to weather, they may do so as long as they are wearing the rest of their THA issued uniform. Techs should be mindful of hoods and strings on jackets.

Shirts: Shirts must be tucked in while working to prevent a grab hazard and to adhere to electrical safety standards.

Hats: Acceptable hats include THA-issued baseball hats, THA-issued winter beanies, and personal baseball hats or beanies. Personal baseball hats and beanies may be any color, display logos, and must adhere to the standards on prohibited statements, graphics, or imagery (see page 4). Other head coverings for religious, cultural, or medical reasons are also permissible.

Sweat Rags: Maintenance Technicians may carry THA-issued cooling cloths or another form of rag (cotton, preferred) to wipe sweat or keep cool while working. Personal sweat rags can be any color or pattern. These items cannot be worn on the head or forehead unless covered by a baseball cap or beanie (this does not apply to religious, cultural, or medical head coverings). They can also be placed around the neck or stored in a pocket.

Shoes: It is required that Maintenance Technicians wear work boots or similar footwear. These shoes must be closed toe and offer stable ankle support.

Prohibited Clothing Items: Any form of sneaker (i.e., walking, running, tennis, basketball, climbing, or canvas shoes, etc.), sweatpants, sweatshirts, shorts, bandanas, and hats that are not baseball caps or beanies (with the exception of head coverings that are for religious, cultural, or medical reasons).

Requesting New, Additional, or Replacement THA-Issued Uniform Pieces: Tacoma Housing Authority provides Maintenance Employees with 11 uniforms, a jacket, and a pair of overalls. Employees who may

need new, additional, or replacement uniform pieces due to damage, medical condition (including pregnancy), or religious reason should contact their manager. Those requests may or may not be fulfilled depending on availability.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

MAKEUP, JEWELRY, HAIR, AND PIERCINGS

Employees may choose how to present themselves regarding makeup, jewelry, hair style, hair color, hair covers (i.e., hats, accessories, cloth covers, etc.), or body piercings within the parameters of this Policy. **We welcome and appreciate it when employees express themselves in ways that are authentic, culturally relevant, and in line with their gender identity or expression.**

TATTOOS

Employees can display tattoos. Tattoos that display prohibited statements or graphics must be covered.

PERFUMES AND SCENTS

THA is not explicitly a fragrance-free workplace. However, we employ individuals with sensitivities to strong scents. **We encourage employees to use their discretion when applying perfumes or other scented products.** If you work near someone with a sensitivity to strong scents, you may be asked to make an adjustment. We encourage open and caring conversations when navigating these dynamics. Those requests and accommodations can be made between employees with support from supervisors or Human Resources.

CLEANLINESS

We expect employees to use healthy hygiene habits and identify what is healthy for themselves. Employees with distracting odor or dirty clothing will be asked to address the matter. Employees who are distracted by another employee's hygiene or cleanliness are asked to discuss those concerns directly or to contact a supervisor or the Human Resources Department for support.

PROHIBITED STATEMENTS, GRAPHICS, OR IMAGERY

Employees may not wear clothing articles or jewelry or display tattoos that contain any of the following references:

- Profanity (all languages)
- Drugs or alcohol
- Sexual or lewd
- Violence
- Weaponry
- Hate speech
- References to political parties, campaigns, candidates, elected officials, or ballot initiatives.

Employees are also required to cover any tattoos that violate this policy.

Other types of statements: Clothing that display references to cultural or social matters is allowable. However, we ask employees to be mindful of the statements they display. When wearing something with a cultural statement consider whether it would make a resident, visitor, or partner feel excluded, unwelcome, or if it might distract from conducting your core duties.

Hate speech is explicitly prohibited. "Hate speech" is defined as abusive, threatening, or derogatory language that expresses a prejudice against someone or a group of people based on an identifying feature. Washington state (WAC 162-04-010 and WLAD) identifies the following protected classes: race / color, presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; use of a trained dog guide or service animal; HIV/AIDS and Hep-C status; creed; national origin; sex (including pregnancy); marital status; age (40+); sexual orientation and gender identity; honorably discharged veteran or military status.

Employees are also required to cover any tattoos that violate this policy.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Any employee who believes they may need a reasonable accommodation concerning THA's Workplace Attire and Assigned Uniform policy for a religious or medical reason should contact the Human Resources Department.

ENFORCEMENT

We ask that employees hold open and honest conversations with each other regarding perfumes, scents, cleanliness, and allowable statements on clothing. Supervisors and the Human Resources Department are available for support. When an employee violates the dress code policy, management may send the employee home without pay to change into acceptable attire and / or may take appropriate disciplinary action.