



Policy Title		
Standard of Professionalism		
Control Number	Policy Date	Revision Date
HR004	06/06/2016	new

Purpose

To establish expected behaviors for professional conduct

Scope

Elected Officials; Governing Boards; Employees; paid and unpaid Interns; Volunteers (collectively referenced as “County Team Members”)

General Statements

Scotland County is committed to a high standard of professionalism by all County Team Members in the performance of their positions.

County Team Members are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which exemplifies courtesy and respect to all.

If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, contact your supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources Manager or other appropriate authority.

Standard of Professionalism: Ethics

Individual and team adherence to high ethical standards is critical for the continuance of public trust and confidence in our local government. County Team Members are expected to maintain a positive image in the workplace and in the community

County Team Members should exemplify personal integrity, honest and fair dealing, and observance of all applicable laws and regulations. We have this duty to Scotland County, its citizens, customers, and all members of the local government.

Appropriate Behaviors

- Promote decisions which benefit public interest.
- Promote public confidence in Scotland County government.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility by making decisions that provide the best service and protect all funds and County property.
- Perform the work of the County diligently, promptly and with excellence.
- Comply with all laws, policies, rules and regulations.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding all non-public records and interactions.

Inappropriate Behaviors

- Engage in outside interests not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of duties.
- Engage in business or professional activity which might require or induce disclosure of confidential information.



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- Improperly influence or attempt to influence others to secure privileges or exemptions in his/her own interest.
- Accept anything of value (compensation, gift, reward or gratuity) from any source except the County for any matter related to his/her service, unless otherwise provided by law.
- Use County resources for personal or private benefit.
- Engage in political activity prohibited under the Personnel Policy.

Standard of Professionalism: Customer Service

The Standard of Professionalism encourages County Team Members to achieve Customer Service Standards by understanding right, wrong and situational appropriateness. Individual and team adherence to such a standard is critical in the delivery of exceptional customer service.

Professionalism in Customer Service not only exhibits courtesy and respect to our Customers, but also demonstrates the pursuit of opportunities to elevate the level of our service to customers.

The positive approach to Customer Service:

- Make eye contact.
- Call people by name when possible and introduce yourself to those you do not know.
- Ask if you can help when someone appears confused.
- Communicate with others in a positive, considerate manner; avoid the spread of misinformation and negative phrases such as "It's not my job".
- Try to achieve mutual understanding when misunderstanding exists.
- Respond to requests as quickly as circumstances permit.
- Anticipate the needs of the customer; be proactive rather than reactive.
- Conclude interactions by asking if there is additional need for assistance and follow up with the customer as required.
- Find someone to provide the needed or required assistance if you are unable to assist.
- Always answer your telephone whenever possible.
- Check voicemail, email and texts regularly and respond within a minimum of 24 hours if possible. Utilize out of office features with alternate contact when away.
- Apply excellent telephone skills with courtesy, professionalism, helpfulness and understanding.
- Refer telephone calls to others only when appropriate or necessary.
- Maintain high standards of work daily.

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- Maintain a respectful attitude toward citizens and other County Team Members.

Standard of Professionalism: Appearance

This policy establishes guidelines for the appearance of County Team Members in the performance of their duties and in conducting business for the County. It ensures all County Team Members project and maintain a positive public image. Regulations pertaining to acceptable attire and grooming are flexible due to the changing nature of fashion. However, there are certain expected norms of professional appearance, personal neatness, cleanliness, and good grooming which are applicable to all County Team Members.

County Team Members are expected to represent the County in an exemplary manner both in conduct and appearance. County Team Members should be well-groomed and dressed in a manner suitable for public service and in attire that allows the employee to work comfortably in the workplace.

While the County observes a business casual dress environment, there may be situations requiring more formal attire. If you are conducting or attending a meeting, seminar, conference, etc., where you come in contact with other business professionals or customers, you are expected to represent the County in a professional manner and dress appropriately. This also applies when such events occur on “Casual Fridays”. Departments, units, or divisions of Scotland County may establish more specific guidelines consistent with this Professional Image Standard.

Minimum Guidelines

- All clothing should be neat, clean, pressed and in good condition in keeping with the nature of the duties performed.
- Any clothing with words, terms or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, controlled substances, violence, or is of a sexual or political nature is inappropriate.
- Clothing that is revealing that shows your back, chest, stomach, or underwear is not appropriate for a place of business.
- Dresses and skirts should be at a length where the wearer can sit comfortably in public without being revealing (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee).
- County Team Members in departments that require uniforms must adhere to the uniform code of dress appropriate for that department.
- Reasonable accommodations will be considered for County Team Members who, because of a sincerely held religious belief of a recognized religious organization, cultural heritage, or medical reason, request a waiver of a particular part of this policy for dress or appearance. The waiver request must be made in writing and signed by the



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County Team Member and approved by the County Manager based on the recommendation of the Department Head.

- Chewing of gum or eating while in contact with customers and clients is unacceptable.

Examples of Appropriate and Inappropriate Dress

Appropriate

- Dress slacks, trousers or crop/capri pants
- Casual dresses, skirts, or jumpers
- Casual (golf type/polo) or dress shirts
- Sweaters or turtlenecks
- Suit or sport jackets
- Athletic or walking shoes, loafers or deck-type shoes
- Clogs, boots, flats or sandals (open or closed toe)
- Dress shoes or heels (not to exceed 3 inches ; open or closed toe)

Inappropriate

- Denim blue jeans, unless approved for a specific event or job task, or Casual Fridays; must be without holes or fraying, with finished seams
- Sweatshirts/pants, athletic outfits, jogging suits, wind suits, exercise pants, unless approved for a specific event or job task, or Casual Fridays
- Shorts or skorts, unless approved for a specific event or job task (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee); short shorts and cutoffs
- Spandex or form-fitting pants
- Dresses, shirts, or tops with inappropriate cutouts, excessive armpit cutouts, or see-through elements
- Dresses, shirts, or tops that do not cover the back, waist and midriff
- T-shirts, tank, spaghetti, halter, tube tops or tops with bare shoulders, unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress

Examples of Appropriate and Inappropriate Grooming

Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is very important. Daily baths, shaving, use of deodorant, and daily mouth hygiene are essential to providing a professional image.



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Makeup, Perfume, Cologne

Because some people are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, these substances should be worn with restraint.

Hair, Hairstyles

Hair (including facial hair) must be neat and clean. Hairstyles that obstruct eye contact and/or extreme hairstyles or extreme hair colors, are inappropriate for the workplace.

Jewelry

Jewelry should not be worn in excessive amounts and must not interfere with the County Team Member's ability to perform his/her job duties. Visible body piercing should be limited and the wearing of facial jewelry, such as nose rings, tongue rings, and lip and eyebrow rings are not allowed at work or at any County function.

Tattoos

Tattoos bearing offensive language or logos that are or could be seen by others as profane, racist, sexist or discriminatory in nature are to be covered.

Enforcement

(Enforcement is applicable to employees, interns and volunteers.)

Any violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the Scotland County Personnel Policy.

Additional Enforcement Requirement: Dress Code Violations

The department head and/or supervisor will discuss personal appearance with any employee who does not comply with this standard. Any employee deemed to be inappropriately dressed or groomed will be asked to return home in order to correct the infraction. Employees will not be compensated for the time they do not work unless vacation leave or compensation time is used. Repeated violations will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the Scotland County Personnel Policy.

Reference

Whistleblower Policy (HR001)

Personnel Policy, Article IV Conditions of Employment

- Section 2: Gifts and Favors
- Section 3: Political Activity Restricted
- Section 5: Outside Employment
- Section 8: Use of County Property



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Personnel Policy, Article VIII Separation and Disciplinary Action
- Section 10: Disciplinary Action

Code of Ethics for the Board of County Commissioners of Scotland County, North Carolina