

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

Policy 9.5.1: Dress Code and Appearance Standards



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY		
POLICY and PROCEDURE 9.5.1	Subject: Dress Code and Personal Appearance	
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1.0 Policy Statement

The University recognizes the growing popularity of casual business dress as a means to promote a more comfortable work environment. It is believed that a more relaxed environment can have a positive effect on employee morale, promote more open, collaborative communication and increase overall productivity. This policy is intended to define appropriate "business attire" and "casual business attire" on those days and within those business units where it is permitted. It is the intent of University leadership that work attire will continue to be reflective of an environment that is professional, efficient, orderly and congruent with our code of conduct standards of respect for self and others.

Enforcement of this guideline is the responsibility of department management and supervisory personnel.

2.0 Examples of Acceptable Workplace Attire

Business attire is to be worn Monday and through Friday. Appropriate business attire for employee includes the following:

Men:

- Sport coats or blazers
- Slacks, chinos or Dockers
- Polo shirts with collars
- Oxford button-down shirts
- Sweaters and cardigans
- Sweaters
- Clean and pressed denim (if approved by department manager)
- All business professional attire
- Business attire that is customary for specific cultures/ethnic groups

Women

- Work wear (daywear) dresses
- Slacks
- Leggings (with a full coverage top)
- Polo shirts
- Culottes, split skirts
- Sweaters
- Clean and pressed denim (if approved by department manager)
- All business professional attire
- Business attire that is customary for specific cultures/ethnic groups

Examples of Unacceptable Attire

- Midriff length tops
- Denim with holes or tears
- Cutoffs
- Shorts
- Spandex or Lycra such as biker shorts
- Tube tops, halter tops
- Underwear as outerwear
- Flip Flops
- Provocative attire (e.g., cat suit, sheer blouses, etc.)
- Strapless or spaghetti strap dresses
- Mini-skirts
- See through revealing apparel

3.0 Enforcement

Department managers and supervisors are responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy. The policy will be administered according to the following action steps:

1. If questionable attire is worn in the office, the respective department supervisor/manager will hold a personal, private discussion with the employee to advise and counsel the employee regarding the inappropriateness of the attire per this policy.
2. If an obvious policy violation occurs, the department supervisor/manager will hold a private discussion with the employee and ask the employee to go home and change his/her attire immediately. The time spent correcting the dress code violation (time it takes for the employee to go home, change and return to work) will be unpaid.
3. Repeated policy violations will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending upon the nature and severity of the offenses.

4.0 Entities Affected By This Policy

All employees of the University

5.0 Progressive Disciplinary Procedures

Clark Atlanta University's progressive discipline policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a reoccurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues. Disciplinary steps should be viewed as part of a communication process to help ensure that staff members clearly understand their supervisor's expectations regarding job performance and conduct. These procedures have been created to be consistent with Clark Atlanta University organizational values, the Office of Human Resource (HR) and State/Federal employment laws.

Step 1: Counseling and verbal warning

Step 1 creates an opportunity for the immediate supervisor to schedule a meeting with an employee to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct or attendance issue. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or the violation of company policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly describe expectations and steps the employee must take to improve performance or resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to keep a record of the date and subject matter discussed in reference to the verbal **counseling/warning**.

Step 2: Written warning/reprimand:

If the verbal counseling/warning meeting failed to correct any performance, conduct or attendance issues, it will become necessary to move to the next step in the progressive discipline process. The Step 2 written warning involves more formal documentation of the performance, conduct or attendance issues and consequences. During Step 2, the immediate supervisor (and, if requested, a unit leader or representative from the Office of Human Resources) will meet with the employee to review any additional incidents or information about the performance, conduct or attendance issues as well as any prior relevant corrective action plans. Management will outline the consequences for the employee of his or her continued failure to meet performance or conduct expectations. A warning outlining that the employee may be subject to additional discipline up to and including termination if immediate and sustained corrective action is not taken may also be included in the written warning.

Step 3: Suspension and final written warning

There may be performance, conduct or safety incidents so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the immediate supervisor may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.

Suspensions that are recommended as part of the normal progression of this progressive discipline policy and procedure are subject to approval from a next-level manager and HR.

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the employee may be suspended without pay in full-day increments consistent with Federal, state and local wage-and-hour employment laws. Nonexempt/hourly employees may not substitute or use accrued paid vacation or sick day in lieu of the unpaid suspension. Due to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compliance issues, unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. HR will provide guidance so that the discipline is administered without jeopardizing the FLSA exemption status. Pay may be restored to the employee if an investigation of the incident or infraction absolves the employee.

Step 4: Recommendation for termination of employment

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline procedure is a recommendation to terminate employment. Generally, Clark Atlanta University will try to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, a final written warning or suspension from the workplace before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate employment. However, Clark Atlanta University **reserves the right to combine and skip steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense.** Furthermore, employees may be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action. Management's recommendation to terminate employment must be approved by HR and/or the division director or designate. Final approval **may** be required from the University President or the Office of the Provost.

Appeal Process

Employees will have the opportunity to present information that may challenge information management has used to issue disciplinary action. The purpose of this process is to provide insight into extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the employee's performance or conduct issues while allowing for an equitable solution.

If the employee does not present this information during any of the step meetings, he or she will have five business days after that meeting to present such information.

