

709.00 TATTOO AND BODY ART

709.01 Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for displaying tattoos and body art by employees while on or off duty in uniform or on duty in civilian attire.

709.02 Policy

Tattoos or brands that are prejudicial to good order are prohibited. Additionally, while on or off duty in uniform or on duty in civilian attire, employees are prohibited from exhibiting tattoos, body art, or brands that are offensive or demeaning to persons of ordinary sensibilities. This policy may be rescinded or modified at any time by the chief of police.

709.03 Definitions

Body modification: a deliberate altering of the human anatomy or human physical appearance

Brand: a picture, design, or other marking that is burned into the skin or other areas of the body. Body markings are pictures, designs or other markings because of using means other than burning to permanently scar or mark the skin.

Extremist: extremist tattoos or brands are those affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities. Extremist philosophies, organizations, and activities are those which advocate hatred or intolerance based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, economic status, age or disability; advocate create, or engage in illegal discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, economic status, age or disability; or advocate violence or other unlawful means of depriving individual rights under the U.S. Constitution, and Federal or State law.

Indecent: indecent tattoos or brands are those that depict nudity or are offensive to modesty, decency, propriety, or professionalism.

Political: relating to the symbols, causes, ideas or strategies of a particular party or group in politics, including special interest groups

Racist: racist tattoos or brands are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person or group of people based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.

Sexist: sexist tattoos or brands are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person or group of people based on gender.

Tattoo/body art: defined as a picture, design, or marking made on the skin or other areas of the body by staining it with an indelible dye, or by any other method including pictures designs or markings only detectible or visible under certain conditions (as in an ultraviolet light or invisible ink tattoo). The term tattoo and body art are interchangeable.

709.04 Tattoos/Body Art/Brands and Body Modifications Prohibited or Required to be Concealed

- A. The following tattoos, body art, and brands are prejudicial to good order and are prohibited for all employees, regardless of visibility:

1. Extremist
 2. Indecent
 3. Sexist
 4. Racist
- B. Officers are prohibited from having tattoos on any part of the hands, neck, face, head, eyelids, mouth, and ears with the following exceptions:
1. Tattoo of one wedding band on a ring finger
 2. Permanent facial make-up on the eyebrows, eyeliner, and lips that is conservative
- C. Any tattoo/body art or brand that implies a negative bias toward any group will cause the employee to be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- D. The department reserves the right to require employees to conceal their tattoos/body art or brands if deemed necessary to comport with evolving community standards, attitudes, or beliefs. This policy and its exceptions do not grant permanent approval to display any tattoos/body art or brands subsequently deemed unacceptable for display and employees may be required to cover them at any time.
- E. The following tattoos/body art and brands must be concealed in accordance with this policy while in uniform, on or off duty or on duty in civilian attire:
1. Symbols or markings likely to elicit a strong negative reaction in the workplace or public or that are inconsistent with the department's values or community relations objectives, including but not limited to symbols or markings that promote or are associated with violence or weaponry
 2. Anything contrary to the purpose of law enforcement, including, but not limited to: depictions symbolizing or indicative of alcohol or narcotics, illegal or gang related activity, or symbols suggestive of activity that undermines the purpose of law enforcement
 3. Illustrations, references, symbols, acronyms or the like that denigrate the United States, State of Texas, or the Irving Police Department
 4. Symbols or markings that represent political beliefs, political parties, political slogans, or that cast any political group in a negative light
- F. Sworn and uniformed civilian employees may have pierced ears but body piercing of the face, head, neck, nose, mouth, and hands is prohibited. For all employees, piercing or alteration to any area of the body visible in any authorized uniform or civilian attire that is distracting, inconsistent with a professional appearance or noticeably distorts normal anatomical features and that is not medically required, nor a reasonable elective cosmetic surgery performed by a licensed physician, is prohibited. Such prohibited body alterations includes, but are not limited to:
1. Tongue splitting or bifurcation
 2. Complete or transdermal implantation of any objects other than hair replacement or other reasonable elective cosmetic surgery performed by a licensed physician
 3. Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, or nose

4. Outlandish or unnatural contact lens colors or color variations that detract from a professional appearance
 5. Gauging or gradually increasing the radius of a surgically induced opening in the flesh in areas such as the earlobes or lips
 6. Abnormal filing or filling of the teeth
 7. Dental jewelry or unnatural appearing covers such as “grills”
 8. Extraocular implants
- G. Procedures medically necessary because of illness, deformity, or injury and performed by a licensed physician shall not be considered body modifications for the purpose of this policy

709.05 Authorization for Visible Tattoos/Body Art

- A. Prospective employees
1. Employment packages will include the information on all tattoos/body art of the applicant to ensure the applicant does not have any tattoos/body art that is prohibited by this policy.
 2. The Administrative Services Bureau Chief or chief of police will make the final determination as to whether an applicant's tattoos/body art comply with this policy.
- B. Tattoos that must be concealed under this policy must be kept entirely from view by the authorized uniform or plainclothes when an employee represents the department on duty or off duty.
- C. If when considering a new tattoo, an employee is in doubt about the tattoo/body art following this policy, the employee should submit the design to the office of Professional Standards for approval.
1. Any tattoo/body art that is believed to not conform to this policy should be brought to the attention of a supervisor. The supervisor will notify Professional Standards.
- D. The chief of police or designee shall make the final determination as to whether tattoos/body art conform to this policy.