

Uniforms and Civilian Attire

1023.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office-authorized uniforms and civilian attire regulations. It is established to ensure that uniformed members will be readily identifiable to the public through the proper use and wearing of office uniforms, and that the appearance of members who wear civilian attire reflects favorably on the Office.

This policy addresses the wearing and maintenance of office uniforms, accessories, insignia, patches and badge; the requirements for members who wear civilian attire; and the authorized use of optional equipment and accessories by members of the Office.

Other related topics are addressed in the Badges, Patches and Identification, Office-Owned and Personal Property, and Personal Appearance Standards policies.

1023.2 POLICY

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office will provide uniforms for all employees who are required to wear them in the manner, quantity and frequency as needed to ensure a professional appearance. The Office may provide other office members with uniforms at the direction of the Sheriff.

All uniforms and equipment issued to office members shall be returned to the Office upon termination, resignation, or retirement.

1023.3 UNIFORMS

The Sheriff or the authorized designee shall maintain and update uniform and equipment specifications, which should be consulted by all members as needed. Uniforms shall be worn as described therein and as specified in this policy.

The following shall apply to those assigned to wear office-issued uniforms:

- (a) Uniforms and equipment shall be maintained in a serviceable condition and shall be ready at all times for immediate use. Uniforms shall be neat, clean and appear professionally pressed. Should a uniform become damaged, defective, or worn, it shall be replaced.
- (b) Deputies in a non-uniformed assignment shall possess and maintain at all times a serviceable uniform and the necessary equipment to perform uniformed field duty.
- (c) Uniforms shall be worn in compliance with any applicable office specifications.
- (d) Members shall wear only the uniforms specified for their ranks and assignments.
- (e) Civilian attire shall not be worn in combination with any distinguishable part of a uniform.
- (f) Uniforms are only to be worn while on-duty, for court, at official office functions or events, while in transit to or from work, or when authorized by the Sheriff or the authorized designee.

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- (g) Members are not to purchase or drink alcoholic beverages while wearing any part of office-issued uniforms, including the uniform pants.
- (h) All supervisors will perform periodic inspections of members under their command to ensure conformance to this policy.
- (i) Supervisors are to ensure serviceability, cleanliness and exemplary appearance. Subordinates having damaged, defective or worn uniforms will be directed to have them replaced and discontinue their use.

For procedures related to Replacement Uniforms, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual Replacement Uniforms/Equipment (Procedures 701)

1023.3.1 ACCESSORIES

Members shall adhere to the following when wearing office uniforms:

- (a) Sunglass frames should be dark colored and professional in appearance.
- (b) Jewelry shall be in accordance with the specifications in the Personal Appearance Standards Policy. Unless specifically authorized by the Sheriff or the authorized designee, only the following jewelry may be worn with the uniform:
 - 1. Earrings shall be stud-style and only one earring may be worn in each ear.
 - 2. Necklaces must be worn inside the uniform shirt and must not be able to fall out.
 - 3. Rings
 - 4. Wristwatch
 - 5. Medical alert bracelet

1023.3.2 INSIGNIA, PATCHES AND BADGE

Only the following elements may be affixed to office uniforms unless an exception is authorized by the Sheriff:

- (a) Shoulder patches - The authorized shoulder patches supplied by the Office shall be machine stitched to the sleeves of all uniform shirts and jackets. Velcro patches may be worn on the EST uniform.
- (b) Badge - The office-issued badge must be worn on all Class A, B and C uniforms. An authorized sewn-on cloth replica must be worn on the Class D uniform.
- (c) Nameplate - The regulation nameplate must be worn on all Class A, B and C uniforms. An authorized sewn-on cloth nameplate must be worn on the Class D uniform.
 - 1. When a jacket is worn, the nameplate, or an authorized sewn-on cloth nameplate, shall be affixed to the jacket in the same manner as the uniform.
 - 2. The nameplate shall be centered over the right breast pocket and the bottom edge of the nameplate will touch the top of the pocket seam. The "Serving Since" plate may also be worn with the nameplate.
- (d) Rank insignia - The designated insignia indicating the member's rank must be worn at all times while in uniform.

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- (e) Assignment insignias - Assignment insignias (e.g., EST, FTO) may be worn on Class A, B and C uniforms.
- (f) Awards insignia - Wearing of award and specialty insignias is optional. If worn, awards insignia will be worn on the uniform in accordance with procedure.

For procedures related to Insignia, Patches and Badge, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Insignias](#)

1023.3.3 MOURNING BAND

Uniformed members shall wear a black mourning band across the office badge as directed by the Sheriff.

1023.3.4 UNIFORM HAT

- (a) Uniform Eight-Point Hat
 - 1. The uniform eight-point hat is an intricate part of the professional image of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and an essential part of the uniform. The uniform eight-point hat is only authorized for the Class A uniform.
- (b) Ball Cap
 - 1. The Sheriff's Office ball cap is optional, except when required as part of the Uniform of the Day and may be worn with the Class B, C or D uniform.
- (c) Watch or Fur Caps
 - 1. In cold weather (40 degrees Fahrenheit or colder), an issued plain dark navy-blue watch cap or issued fur cap may be worn with the Class B, C or D uniform.
- (d) Uniform hats shall be replaced once they become faded, misshapen, or damaged and detract from the appearance of the uniform.

1023.4 UNIFORM CLASSES

Effective June 30, 2024, the previously issued light blue uniform shirt and associated trousers will no longer be authorized for wear as the Class B or C uniform. All short sleeve light blue uniform shirts will be returned to Police Services by this date. Until this date, the member is encouraged to wear the classes of uniforms as outlined below, however, may still wear the short sleeve light blue uniform until the inventory of the new dark blue uniforms are adequately stocked.

The Sheriff or the authorized designee shall determine the uniform of the day to be worn by each office member or any deviations that may be authorized. All uniformed employees shall display uniformity in appearance. Failure to wear proper uniform, hat, equipment or other items as designated within this policy will result in administrative action. Uniformed employees will wear the badge, nametag and rank insignia. If the t-shirt is visible, it must be dark navy blue in color.

Uniforms are classified as follows:

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1023.4.1 CLASS A UNIFORM (FORMAL)

The Class A uniform consists of the following:

- (a) Blouse (if issued)
- (b) Uniform eight-point hat
- (c) Long-sleeve light blue shirt with a necktie
- (d) Tie tack or tie bar
- (e) Trousers (light blue with stripe on outside of legs)
- (f) Black leather belt with gold buckle
 - 1. Belts shall be equipped as needed for the member's assignment.
- (g) Black socks
- (h) Black polished dress shoes or polished boots
 - 1. Boots with pointed toes are not permitted.
- (i) White gloves (optional except for color guard)

1023.4.2 CLASS B UNIFORM

The Class B uniform consists of the following:

- (a) Long-sleeve dark blue shirt with a necktie
 - 1. Long-sleeves must be buttoned at the cuff.
- (b) Trousers (dark blue)
- (c) Black leather belt with gold buckle
 - 1. Belts shall be equipped as needed for the member's assignment.
- (d) Black socks
- (e) Shoes or boots worn shall be black and made with material that maintains a shine or professional appearance.
 - 1. Tennis shoes are not permitted.
 - 2. Decorative stitching or adornment is not permitted.
- (f) Weather appropriate items
 - 1. Issued Ball Cap, Issued Watch Cap or Fur Cap
 - 2. Uniform Jacket
 - 3. Rain gear
 - 4. Uniform Sweater
 - (a) The sweater is worn tucked into the trouser waistband. The sweater will be worn with the uniform necktie.

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1023.4.3 CLASS C UNIFORM

The Class C uniform consists of the following:

- (a) Short-sleeve or long-sleeve dark blue shirt with the collar open and no necktie
 - 1. All shirt buttons must remain buttoned except for the top button at the neck.
- (b) Trouser (dark blue)
- (c) Black leather belt with gold buckle
 - 1. Belts shall be equipped as needed for the member's assignment.
- (d) Black socks
- (e) Shoes or boots worn shall be black and made with material that maintains a shine or professional appearance.
 - 1. Tennis shoes are not permitted.
 - 2. Decorative stitching or adornment is not permitted.
- (f) Weather appropriate items
 - 1. Issued Ball Cap, Issued Watch Cap or Fur Cap
 - 2. Uniform Jacket
 - 3. Rain gear

1023.4.4 CLASS D UNIFORM

The Class D uniform consists of the following:

- (a) Short-sleeve or long-sleeve dark blue shirt with the collar open and no necktie
- (b) Agency-issued under carrier shirts may be worn only with the outer carrier. If out of the view of the public and conducting administrative duties, the outer carrier may be removed.
- (c) Trouser (dark blue)
- (d) Black leather belt with gold buckle or agency approved nylon belt
- (e) Black socks
- (f) Shoes or boots worn shall be black and made with a material that maintains a shine or professional appearance.
 - 1. Tennis shoes are not permitted.
 - 2. Decorative stitching or adornment is not permitted
- (g) Weather appropriate items
 - 1. Issued Ball Cap, Issued Watch Cap or Fur Cap
 - 2. Uniform Jacket
 - 3. Rain gear
- (h) Badge - An authorized sewn-on cloth replica must be worn on the Class D uniform.

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- (i) An authorized sewn-on cloth nameplate must be worn on the Class D uniform
- (j) Assignment and Award insignias are not authorized to be worn with the Class D uniform.

1023.5 OUTER CARRIER

Every sworn deputy will be issued an outer carrier and when worn, it will contain the issued ballistic panels. The outer carrier should be worn with the Class D uniform only. Nothing will prevent the member from donning the outer carrier for officer safety reasons; including while off duty and not in uniform. The member will ensure the outer carrier remains clean and will have the carrier replaced when excessive wear and tear occurs or the dark blue color begins to fade. All pouches and equipment attached to the carrier will be issued or approved by the agency (via a Blue Team Detail Report). The front and back of the carrier will have a "SHERIFF" placard displayed and the Nameplate will consist of the First Initial, Last Name and ID #. The badge displayed on the carrier will be embroidered with a velcro backing. The rank insignia will be affixed to the center on the front of the carrier.

1023.6 CIVILIAN ATTIRE

There are assignments within the Office that do not require a uniform because recognition and authority are not essential to their functions. There are also assignments for which civilian attire is necessary.

- (a) Civilian attire shall fit properly, be clean and free of stains, and not damaged or excessively worn.
- (b) Members assigned to administrative, investigative and support positions shall wear business-appropriate clothing that is conservative in style.
 - 1. Certain positions in the Office may have specific uniforms issued for their assignment.
- (c) Variations from this policy are allowed at the discretion of the Sheriff or the authorized designee when the member's assignment or current task is not conducive to wearing such clothing.
- (d) No item of civilian attire may be worn while on-duty that would adversely affect the reputation of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office or the morale of the members.
- (e) The following items shall not be worn while on-duty or when representing the Office in any official capacity:
 - 1. Clothing that exposes the abdomen (midriff) or an inappropriate amount of cleavage, back, chest, or buttocks
 - 2. Shirts which are frayed/ripped, display any outside advertising or graphics which could be perceived as offensive, or exposed undergarments
 - 3. Swimsuits, tank tops, tube tops or halter tops
 - 4. Sweatshirts, sweatpants or similar exercise clothing
 - 5. Spandex-type pants or transparent clothing

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6. Blue Denim pants
7. Shorts, skorts, mini-skirts
8. Flip flops (open-toed shoes/sandals may be acceptable if it does not cause a hazard)
9. Clothing, buttons or pins displaying racial, sexual, discriminatory, gang-related or obscene language
10. Platform and/or stiletto heels more than 2.5 inches in height, unless part of a prescribed prosthetic, are prohibited.

1023.7 PLAINCLOTHES DEPUTIES

While on duty, deputies in plainclothes assignments shall be dressed in professional business attire that is neat, clean, pressed and properly tailored. Shoes shall be clean and shined.

- (a) The proper attire for male plainclothes deputies shall be:
 1. Suit or sport coat (required for court appearances, alcohol board meetings, etc.) with slacks or trousers;
 2. Dress shirt, tucked in the trousers;
 3. A necktie (optional except for court appearances, alcohol board hearing, etc.);
 4. Dress shoes; no sandals or tennis shoes shall be permitted; and socks shall be worn;
 5. Appropriate business casual attire at the discretion of the Division Commander.
- (b) The proper attire for female plainclothes deputies shall be:
 1. Suit jacket, blazer or sweater (required for court appearances, alcohol board meetings, etc.) with slacks;
 2. Blouses shall be tucked in the slacks;
 3. Shoes shall have low heels and closed toes. No sandals or tennis shoes shall be permitted; and socks or stockings shall be worn;
 4. Appropriate business casual attire at the discretion of the Division Commander.
- (c) Exceptions to this sub-section include deputies assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division, Vice/Narcotics Unit, and Special Operations Division may be permitted to wear civilian attire as directed and approved by the Division Commander.

For procedures related to Plainclothes Deputies, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Plain Clothes](#)

1023.8 OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Any items that are allowed by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office but that have been identified as optional shall be purchased entirely at the expense of the member. No part of the purchase cost shall be offset by the Office.

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Maintenance of optional items shall be the financial responsibility of the purchasing member (e.g., repairs due to normal wear and tear).

Replacement of items listed in this policy as optional shall be managed as follows:

- (a) When the item is no longer functional because of normal wear and tear, the member bears the full cost of replacement.
- (b) When the item is no longer functional because of damage in the course of the member's duties, it shall be replaced in accordance with the Office-Owned and Personal Property Policy.

Supervisors may immediately suspend the wearing of optional equipment in instances of abuse.

For procedures related to Optional Equipment, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Wearing Personal Equipment](#)

1023.9 UNAUTHORIZED UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office members may not wear any uniform item, accessory or attachment unless specifically authorized by the Sheriff or the authorized designee.

Office members may not use or carry any safety item, tool or other piece of equipment unless specifically authorized by the Sheriff or the authorized designee.