



Treasury Board of Canada
Secrétariat

Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor
du Canada

Canada

Uniforms Directive

Published: Apr 15, 2005

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Published by Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat
90 Elgin, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0R5, Canada

Catalogue Number: BT43-177/2005E-PDF
ISBN: 978-0-660-20435-2

This document is available on the Government of Canada website, Canada.ca

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

Aussi offert en français sous le titre : Directive sur les uniformes

Uniforms Directive

General

Collective agreement

This directive is deemed to be part of collective agreements between the parties to the National Joint Council (NJC), and employees are to be afforded ready access to this directive.

Grievance procedure

In cases of alleged misinterpretation or misapplication arising out of this directive, the grievance procedure, for all represented employees within the meaning of the *Public Service Labour Relations Act*, will be in accordance with Section 7.0 of the *National Joint Council By Laws*. For unrepresented employees the departmental grievance procedure applies. (revised April 1, 2005)

Effective date

This directive is effective on July 1, 1997.

Purpose and scope

It is the policy of the government to provide appropriate items of clothing to employees where the nature of the work is such that special protection is required or where special identification at the local, national or international level will aid in the effective performance of duties and in meeting program objectives.

When clothing provided under this directive also meets the purpose of the Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Directive, departments shall ensure that the requirements of both directives are met.

Departments and agencies shall review their existing clothing policies to ensure that they comply with this directive.

This directive is intended to assist departments in ensuring that their practices provide adequate protection and identification for employees, are economical, equitable and reasonably consistent with those throughout the Public Service and are comparable with those for similar occupations outside the Public Service.

Application

This directive applies to all departments and agencies listed in Schedules I, I.I and II of the *Financial Administration Act*.

This directive does not apply to portions of the public service which are subject to other authorities, the Canadian Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or to commissions designated as departments under the *Inquiries Act* for the purpose of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Authorities

This directive was approved by the President of the Treasury Board under Section 7 of the *Financial Administration Act*, following consultation within the National Joint Council.

This directive replaces Part II / Uniform Clothing of the former Clothing Directive and supersedes all previous Treasury Board authorities on the provision of uniform clothing but does not affect those authorities dealing with allowances or the provisions contained in collective agreements. Part I of the former Clothing Directive dealing with protective clothing has been incorporated into the revised Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Directive.

The President of the Treasury Board has delegated authority to approve exceptions to the directive. Requests for such exceptions should be made in the form of a letter to the Chief, Human Resources Officer, Human Resources Branch.

Such requests should be signed by departmental officials who have authority to sign submissions and should contain the same information as submissions.

Deputy heads have the authority to issue necessary items of clothing and determine the requirements for identification items except when the design of a uniform is changed. In this case prior Treasury Board approval must be obtained.

The introduction of new uniforms, or changes to present departmental uniform policy, shall be subject to Treasury Board authorization.

Requirements

1. Responsibilities

1.1 Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) provides clothing advisory services to departments and agencies, through the Clothing Advisory Service.

1.2 These services are listed in Appendix A.

1.3 It is the responsibility of each department:

- to ensure that appropriate consultation takes place including the participation of the workplace safety and health committee or representatives;
- to identify the situations where the provision of clothing is necessary;
- to determine that the type of clothing provided is adequate and suitable; and to develop and to maintain up-to-date clothing standards and scales of issue.

1.4 Departments are required to incorporate controls to ensure that practices are consistent with the policy directives. The internal controls shall include the maintenance of a record containing the following information:

- the number of employees provided with clothing;
- the composition of standard clothing issues;
- the value of clothing issued (in total and by unit);
- the average cost per employee provided with clothing;
- the value of clothing allowances (in total and individually);
- copies of relevant departmental bulletins or directives.

1.5 Corporate and personal identification items such as shoulder flashes, shall be consistent with the requirements of the Federal Identity Program (Chapter 2, Communications Volume, *Treasury Board Manual*) and the Official Languages Policy (Official Languages Volume, *Treasury Board Manual*).

2. Union management consultation

2.1 Departments shall consult with employee representatives at the local, regional or national level, as appropriate, regarding the application of this directive, and prior to any planned changes in existing practices.

2.2 Departments and agencies should be aware of the consultation provisions of the relevant collective agreements when applying this directive.

2.3 When clothing serves for both identification and personal protection, departments shall ensure that workplace safety and health committees or safety and health representatives, if any, assist in the determination of personal protective equipment and clothing requirements. (see Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Directive).

3. Consultation with the Clothing Advisory Service

3.1 Departments shall consult with the Clothing Advisory Service:

- before introducing new items of clothing or replacing existing issues;
- to ensure that the quality and quantity of clothing to be provided to employees performing similar functions in similar working environments are reasonably consistent from department to department;
- to ensure fabrics selected for protection meet good industrial safety practices, and fabrics selected for uniforms meet the PWGSC criteria;
- not later than two years prior to introduction of new uniforms;
- when clothing purchases are expected to exceed \$10,000.

3.2 A department that finds the PWGSC recommendations unacceptable shall submit the dispute to the President of the Treasury Board, as provided for in the authorities section.

4. Inquiries

4.1 All inquiries regarding this directive should be routed through departmental headquarters.

4.2 For interpretation of specific policy statements contained in this directive, designated members of the departmental headquarters should contact the:

Safety, Health and Employee Benefits and Services Group Labour Relations and Human Resources Management Division
Human Resources Policy Branch Treasury Board Secretariat

5. Credit revenue

5.1 Unless authority to credit revenue to the vote has been obtained by either vote-netting authority or a revolving fund authority, departments and agencies must credit the proceeds of sales to non-tax revenue.

5.2 Where there is a charge to employees, the GST and PST must be collected and remitted in accordance with the applicable federal and provincial laws.

6. References

6.1 Directives referred to in this directive may be found in either the *Treasury Board Manual*, Personnel Management volumes, or the *National Joint Council Agreements*, Volumes 1 and 2.

Provision

7. General

7.1 Uniforms and other items of identification shall be issued to employees free of charge when there is a requirement for identification of employees. There are four distinguishing conditions under which identification of the employee may be required:

- a. when identification of the employee is required by management to provide a sign of vested authority in directing, inspecting or enforcing specific laws and regulations;
- b. when identification of the employee is required by management to provide an appropriate identification of the employee's function;
- c. when identification of the employee is required by management, either permanently or in an emergency, to control emergency equipment and direct persons during an emergency. Such employees must be readily identifiable by the local public;
- d. when identification of an employee's authority is required by management to access and work in a secure area. (Identification clothing may supplement the primary form of identification.)

7.2 Items of wearing apparel of the same pattern or material or colour are supplied free of charge for the following purposes:

- for occupational identification and worn as required by local management;
- for image distinctiveness and worn uniformly throughout a sector in accordance with orders.

7.3 Regular shoes of a specific type or colour, which serve only to provide co-ordination with clothing, are not considered essential to identify the employee. Departments shall not provide regular shoes free of cost, nor shall they demand that employees wear specific types or colours of shoes. Departments may, however, specify that the footwear be of a type generally considered as acceptable and to co-ordinate with the uniforms provided.

7.4 Departments may, however, utilize the provisions of 12.2 to make such footwear available to employees for purchase at cost.

7.5 Bulletins shall be issued to employees when the wearing of uniform clothing is required. Such bulletins normally will identify and enumerate clothing commodities, state the employee's responsibility for clothing received and specify the manner of accounting for clothing when the employee is no longer eligible to receive or retain it (e.g. on promotion, demotion, separation or due to a change in working conditions)

7.6 Normally, clothing which is issued to employees shall be worn only on duty and will not be worn away from the workplace. When employees are provided with specific items of clothing for wear on duty, substitute items shall not be worn. Clothing which is issued to employees may be worn in public to travel to and from work when the safe storage of personal clothing is not possible.

7.7 When, as a condition of employment, an employee receives any item of clothing as an individual issue, that employee will be expected to wear and maintain it in a clean, pressed and repaired condition, in accordance with departmental directives and in accordance with care labels permanently attached to each garment.

Acquisition

8. Selection

8.1 Clothing shall be selected to ensure that it is hazard free, based as much as possible on comfort, serviceability and ease of care. Natural fabrics, natural fabric blends and fabrics not requiring dry-cleaning are the preferred choice.

8.2 When departments and agencies are reviewing their uniform policy, and the current or planned uniform requires dry-cleaning, employee representatives, at the local, regional or national level, as appropriate, and the Clothing Advisory Service shall assist in the selection of the uniforms.

8.3 Uniforms that require dry-cleaning shall only be selected when easy-care uniforms are clearly unsuitable, the Clothing Advisor agrees, and the employee representative has been fully informed.

8.4 Care labels, as designated by Industry Canada, should be attached to each new item of clothing.

8.5 Normally, it will be advantageous to have clothing for identification manufactured from all-season fabric, requiring minimum care. Commercially available items in standard sizes are more economical than custom-tailored special designs.

9. Sun protection

9.1 Sun protection shall be made available to employees who wear uniforms outdoors in summer. This means the provision of summer-weight long pants and summer-weight long-sleeved shirts for sun protection in addition to skirts, shorts and short-sleeved shirts and hats designed to protect from sunrays.

9.2 Clothing shall be selected to minimize total body heat burden. Employees shall have the option of choosing, from the clothing provided, the combination they prefer. Sun protection provisions shall be in compliance with the Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Directive.

10. Quantities

10.1 The quantity of each commodity to be provided initially to each employee shall be based on conditions of wear and tear and the expected wear-life of each commodity.

11. Replacement

11.1 Replacement items of clothing shall be issued free of charge when existing items are no longer serviceable.

11.2 Employees will be responsible for the replacement of clothing that is lost while in their custody, when it is demonstrated that the loss was only within the employee's control.

12. Personal clothing

12.1 Personal clothing does not include items which are designated as essential for identification within the context of this directive. Employees will normally be expected to provide, wear and maintain personal clothing as appropriate and necessary for their duties.

12.2 In special circumstances departments may make arrangements for employees to purchase reasonable amounts of personal clothing for use while on duty.

12.3 Items of personal clothing may be made available for employees to purchase when:

- a. the department is providing clothing and employees are responsible for wearing items of personal clothing that foster neatness and uniform appearance and complement clothing which is provided;
- b. employees request items of personal clothing that are not essential for identification, but the department considers that it would be beneficial, in order to improve the general appearance and comfort of employees while on duty;
- c. employees desire additional items of clothing, over and above the amount of authorized issue.

12.4 Such a service will be provided only when there are positive assurances that employees will purchase and use any items of personal clothing that are made available under this arrangement.

12.5 Departments may purchase through Public Works and Government Services Canada a number of items at cost for resale to employees. These may include, but shall not be restricted to:

- headgear,
- jacket, blazer and windbreaker,
- trousers (work pants) and skirt,
- shirt or blouse, turtleneck shirt,
- tie,
- socks,
- gloves or mitts,
- topcoat or other similar type of raincoat,
- parka (non-distinctive),
- belt,
- scarf,
- footwear,
- maternity clothing.

13. Clothing allowance

13.1 The Treasury Board prefers the direct issue of clothing to the payment of clothing allowances. However, Treasury Board does not wish to preclude payment of such allowances in cases where the practice is established or the economy of introducing a new allowance can be clearly demonstrated.

13.2 No new allowances or changes in existing allowances shall be introduced without the prior authorization of the Treasury Board.

13.3 No allowances shall be paid for:

- repair, cleaning, pressing and laundering;
- personal clothing.

Identification

14. Requirement

14.1 The requirement of management for identification of the employee shall be determined by the degree to which the identification will aid in the effective performance of duties.

14.2 Employees may be identified by the use of readily available identity cards or by a card at their workstation in an office or other setting where special clothing would not be required.

14.3 Where the use of employees' full names represents a security problem, departments shall use alternate forms of identification.

14.4 The amount of identification depends upon the following:

- the continual contact of the employee with either the local, national or international population;
- the requirement for promotion of Canada-wide departmental services; and
- promotion of the federal identity and the image of Canada.

14.5 Items such as shirts, which are normally considered as personal clothing, may be provided as clothing when essential for a distinctive and consistent image as part of the identifying clothing.

14.6 Outer identifying clothing is provided only when the employee is required to wear it while on duty outdoors for a significant portion of the working period.

14.7 Clothing provided for identification may also serve to protect employees. Duplication of issue for identification and protection should be avoided.

14.8 In some situations only one "identifier" will be required; in others, a combination of two or more may be necessary.

14.9 Identification clothing consistent with job requirements should be provided to probationers and casual or part-time employees. Items for identification may differ from those provided to full-time employees with the same job requirements (e.g. armband instead of headgear and tunic). The scale of issuance may also vary.

15. Local image

15.1 Clothing is provided when required for continual identification of employees, while on duty at the local level, when in continual direct contact with the local public whom they are serving.

15.2 Clothing for local image includes the following identifiers to wear with personal clothing:

- identification card, badge (i.e. for attachment to personal clothing),
- armband,
- headgear,
- smock or coveralls with identification markings,
- identification vest.

16. National or international image

16.1 Clothing is provided when required for identification of an employee while on duty as an official representative of the federal government and when formal identification of vested authority is required to aid the employee in the effective performance of duties. The appearance of the employee must be readily distinguishable from other employees working in the area and must also enhance federal visibility and the image of Canada.

16.2 Clothing for national or international image consists of uniform clothing of a distinctive design and includes:

- headgear,
- tunic,
- pants and skirt,
- outer identifying clothing including one of: parka, pea jacket, ski jacket, cape, overcoat, rainwear,
- badges or rank insignia that could vary with department and unit.

Appendix A - Clothing Advisory Service

The Clothing Advisory Service of the Commercial and Consumer Products Directorate, Public Works and Government Services Canada, will:

- a. provide information on commercially available commodities and advise on materials, apparel, their components and their availability;
- b. produce information for materiel managers dealing with all aspects of apparel purchasing, expected future costs and the latest available technology in the apparel fields;
- c. advise on or produce purchase descriptions and specifications, including quality assurance requirements in both official languages;

- d. evaluate the design of present and proposed apparel;
- e. produce and arrange for new design apparel;
- f. determine the best product or fabrics which would provide maximum safety protection as required for employees.
- g. maintain contact with the Treasury Board Secretariat with respect to the Federal Identity Program. (Departments and agencies may consult FIP officials directly when this approach is desirable);
- h. arrange for the production of samples;
- i. assist in cost-benefit analyses against actual field performance of clothing commodities using commodity performance reports;
- j. arrange for the testing of materials and apparel;
- k. arrange for outside inspection services to be carried out at a plant or a consignee point;
- l. promote the use of common terminology;
- m. assist departments and agencies to follow Treasury Board guidelines on the provision of clothing and related items to federal employees, with:
 - guidance in the procurement of clothing according to the guidelines set out by the Treasury Board, the Federal Identity Program and according to national objectives, e.g. domestic purchases, regional considerations, scale of issue, economics, design, functionalism, protection, etc.;
 - assistance in fabric selection consistent with the demand for standardized fabrics;
 - forecast of fabric required to meet anticipated scale of issue, cost-benefit of maintaining inventories of fabric and garments, average allowance for normal maintenance;
 - cost estimates related to current prices falling within budgetary limitations as set out in the departmental objectives;
 - assistance with requisitions that clearly state to contracting officers the precise requirements, including purchase descriptions provided by the Clothing Advisory Service;
 - a critical path from first advice to product delivery, showing involvement of all parties;
 - arrangement for consolidation and distribution of all clothing items; and
- n. act as the design authority when requested.