



SYKESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Body Modification Policy

General Order 2-4 Effective: 03/24/17

Authorized By: *Michael A. Spaulding* Chief of Police

I. PURPOSE

To establish standards for acceptable and unacceptable body modifications applicable to all employees.

II. POLICY

Officers and civilian employees will present themselves in a manner that complies with this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

BRANDING: intentionally burning the skin to create a design, form, figure or art.

GAUGING: gradually increasing the radius of an opening in the flesh in areas such as the ear lobes.

SCARIFICATION: intentional cutting the skin to create a design, form, figure or art.

TATTOO: permanent mark on the skin made by puncturing the skin and inserting pigment.

IV. REFERENCES

- A. Annotated Code of Maryland, Public Safety Article, Section 2-205
- B. CALEA Standard 26.1.1

V. PROCEDURES

A. Body Modifications

1. Body modifications that are medically necessary due to deformity or injury are not covered by this policy.
2. Body modifications covered by this policy include:
 - a. tattoos;
 - b. tongue splitting or bifurcation;

- c. abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes or nose;
 - d. abnormal filing of the teeth;
 - e. branding or scarification;
 - f. trans-dermal implantation of any object (other than hair replacement); and
 - g. gauging.
3. Prohibited body modifications include, but are not limited to:
- a. depictions of nudity or violence;
 - b. sexually explicit or vulgar art, works or phrases;
 - c. profane language;
 - d. symbols likely to incite a strong reaction in the workplace (e.g., swastikas);
 - e. initials, acronyms or numbers that represent criminal or historically-oppressive organizations (e.g., AB, KKK, SS, MM, BGF, HA, 666) or street gang names, numbers or symbols;
 - f. body modifications of the face, ears and neck; and
 - g. teeth whether natural, capped or veneer, that are ornamented with designs, jewels, etc.

B. Tattoos

1. Officers who had tattoos that are visible while the officer is wearing an SPD uniform prior to June 13, 2014, will not:
 - a. be required to remove or cover the tattoos or markings;
 - b. add to the tattoos or markings or receive additional tattoos or markings that would be visible while wearing any SPD uniform;
2. Officers who did not have tattoos that are visible while wearing an SPD uniform prior to June 13, 2014, will not receive a tattoo or marking that would be visible while in any Department uniform.
3. Failure to comply with subsection B may be grounds for disciplinary action.

C. Police Officer Applicants

1. Applicants will be screened to ensure compliance with this policy.
2. Applicants will be informed that, if hired, they will be required to comply with this policy.
3. If an applicant is denied employment based on prohibited body modifications, a picture of the body modification will be taken and placed in the applicant's file whenever possible.

4. The Chief of Police may grant an exception to this policy for tattoos only if the applicant is willing to commit to wearing long sleeves year round and/or other suitable covering while in SPD uniform.