



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL POLICY

Body Modifications

Distribution:	All Employees	Policy Number:	PER 0703
Responsible Unit:	Human Resources	Rescinds:	
Original Issued Date:	6/15/18	Revision #:	1
Latest Required Review was Completed:	03/26/24	Latest Revision Date:	03/26/24
		Next Review Due:	03/26/27

1. Purpose

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

2. Policy

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

3. Definitions

BODY ART: will include the following: tongue splitting or bifurcation, complete or trans-dermal implantation of any objects other than hair replacement, abnormal shaping of ears, eyes or nose, unnatural contact lens colors or color variations that detract from a professional appearance, gauging, branding, or abnormal filing of teeth.

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

EXTREMIST TATTOOS AND BODY ART: any tattoo or body art affiliated with, depicting or symbolizing extremist's philosophies, organizations, or activities. Extremist philosophies, organizations and activities are those which can be interpreted to advocate, promote and support hatred and/or violence towards any person or group of persons based on race, national origin, gender, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

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

INDECENT TATTOOS OR BODY ART: any tattoo or body art that can be interpreted as grossly indecent, lewd, or sexual that shocks the moral sense because of their crude, vulgar, filthy, or disgusting nature or would be inappropriate to be viewed by any minor child.

OFFENSIVE TATTOOS AND BODY ART: any tattoo or body art depicting words, pictures or symbols which can be interpreted to advocate, promote, or support racial, gender or ethnic hatred or intolerance. This will also include any tattoos or body art that can be interpreted to advocate, promote or support discrimination towards any race, national origin, gender, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

RACIST TATTOOS OR BODY ART: any tattoos or body art that can be interpreted to advocate, promote or support degrading, demeaning, or insulting to any person or group of persons based on race, ethnicity, or nation origin.

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

SEXIST TATTOO OR BODY ART: any tattoos or body art that can be interpreted to advocate, promote or support degrading, demeaning, or insulting any person or persons based upon gender, but that may not meet the same definition of "Indecent Tattoos or Body Art".

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

4. 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. Body art;
 - c. Tongue splitting or bifurcation;
 - d. Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, or nose;
 - e. Abnormal filing of the teeth;
 - f. Branding or scarification;
 - g. Trans-dermal implantation of any object (other than hair replacement); and
 - h. Gauging.
3. Prohibited body modifications include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Tattoos or body art depicting extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities: those that advocate racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance; advocate, create, or engage in illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion, or national origin, or advocate violence or other unlawful means of depriving individual rights under the U.S. Constitution and federal or state law;
 - b. Tattoos or body art that are grossly offensive to modesty, decency, or propriety;
 - c. Tattoos or body art that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on gender, race, ethnicity, or national origin;
 - d. Symbols likely to incite a strong reaction in the workplace (e.g., swastikas);

- e. Tattoos or body art of names, initials, symbols, acronyms, or numbers that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations or street or prison gangs [e.g., Aryan Brotherhood (“AB”), Ku Klux Klan (“KKK”), the Nazi Party or Third Reich, Black Guerilla Family (“BGF”), Mexican Mafia (“MM”), Hells Angels (“HA”), Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)];
- f. Tattoos or body art depicting illegal drugs or names, symbols, acronyms, or numbers related to illegal drugs;
- g. Tattoos or body art that a reasonable person would find offensive;
- h. **Tattoos to the scalp or face;**
- i. **Tattoos to other areas are permitted as long as they meet the other guidelines listed in 4.A.3.a-g;**
- j. **Other body modifications** of the head, scalp, face, neck, and hands: head, scalp, face, and neck areas include the visible skin while wearing a collared uniform shirt with an unbuttoned top button; hands will include area from wrist to fingertips; and
- k. Teeth, whether natural, capped or veneers, that are ornamented with designs, jewels, etc.

B. Exceptions

- 1. Micropigmentation, derma pigmentation or cosmetic tattooing of the lips, eyebrows, or eyelashes is permitted as is restorative tattooing that is subdued and moderate in tone and application.

C. Deputy/Uniformed Civilian 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.

D. Violations

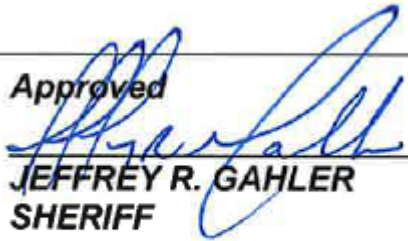
- 1. Failure to comply with this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

5. Summary of Changes

- A. On 7/15/23 a 3-year review was conducted by HR, and no changes were made.
- B. On 3/19/24 the Human Resources Director requested the following changes:
 - 1. Added: Section 4.A.h. Prohibits tattoos to the face and scalp;
 - 2. Added: Section 4.A.i. Tattoos to other areas are permitted as long as they meet the other guidelines

listed in 4.A.3.a-g; and

3. Removed: Section 4.B.2 Exceptions to hand tattoos were removed.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 3.26.24