

Model Tool: Sample dress code

Why you need this dress code:

It would be nice if everyone understood what it means to be professional, but they don't. The reality is that staff often have to be taught how to behave. And part of being an administrator is teaching staff.

How this dress code helps you:

A written dress code is important, especially as business dress becomes more casual. If your firm doesn't have a dress code, you can modify this sample to meet your needs.

How to use this dress code:

To be effective, the firm's dress code must be specific so there is no room for misunderstanding. Staff must understand that the firm's image is at stake and how they dress reflects either positively or negatively on how the firm is viewed.

Be sure to consider your firm's culture, geographic location (urban or rural) and what goals you want to achieve.

The dress code should outline what is, and is not, appropriate in every category of clothing from shirts to shoes. For example, if staff are required to wear socks, say so. If jeans are prohibited except on special occasions, then say so.

Include guidelines related to grooming details such as hair, accessories, piercings, and tattoos.

If the office has casual days, spell out what is, and isn't, acceptable. Business casual taboos should include items such as sweatshirts, athletic shoes, sleeveless blouses or shirts, shorts, and t-shirts with slogans.

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Model Tool: Model law firm dress code

ABC Law Firm

How our staff members dress is a direct reflection of our firm's image, either positively or negatively. To ensure that a positive and professional image is projected, our dress code is as follows:

Please exercise good taste and common sense when selecting appropriate business attire.

Casual and business attire should be clean, pressed, and without holes or frayed areas. Small logos are acceptable; however, pictures and large promotional information are not.

If firm personnel are scheduled to meet with clients or visitors, traditional business attire is expected when appropriate. (Use discretion).

Attorneys and senior administrators must be prepared for unplanned court appearances, client meetings, and other events requiring formal business attire. Storing such attire at work is highly recommended.

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