

DISPLAY OF BODY GRAPHICS

General Order

No. 207

Effective Date

Page 1 of 3
22 JUL 16

I. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Murfreesboro Police Department to ensure an appearance consistent with professional law enforcement services by prohibiting employees from displaying offensive or excessive body graphics while on duty or acting in an official capacity. The display of body art and/or tattoos while on duty is discouraged; however, if worn, must be in full compliance with all provisions of this General Order.

II. DEFINITIONS:

“Body Graphics”, for purposes of this General Order, shall mean any body art, including but not limited to, temporary or permanent tattoos, branding, gauging, dental ornamentation, intentional body mutilation or scarification of any type, except for piercing of the ears. Body graphics shall not include body marks caused by the administration of a vaccine or by a bona fide medical procedure. Dental ornamentation in no way precludes employees from utilizing clinically necessary devices for the purpose of aligning their jaws or teeth, or from having their teeth capped in such a way as the teeth appear in their natural state.

“Offensive”, for the purposes of this General Order includes tattoos or other body ornamentation that depict, describe or otherwise refer to sexual conduct, acts, organs, or preferences and/or depict, describe or otherwise refer to intolerance of, or discrimination against, any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, those detrimental to good order and discipline and incompatible with MPD’s purpose, or as otherwise determined by the Chief .

III. PROCEDURES:

A. Display.

Non-offensive body graphics may be visible on employees while on duty as long as they meet the following restrictions:

1. Body graphics may not be visible above the collarbone, including the face, neck, and head, and must not be visible when wearing a crew neck t-shirt.

2. One single allowable body graphic may be displayed on **each** arm between the wrist and joint of the elbow. Body graphics on the arm that are visible wearing an untailed short sleeve uniform or short sleeve shirt may not exceed 3"x5".
3. One single allowable body graphic may be displayed on **each** leg. Body graphics on the leg that can be seen while wearing shorts (bicycle patrol or other assignment requiring shorts) may not exceed 3"x5". Body graphics below the ankle may not be displayed.
4. A single band body graphic completely wrapping one arm may be visible but must not exceed 3" at the widest part. A visible band body graphic on the arm or leg constitutes a single allowable body graphic.
5. The only permissible hand body graphic that may visible is a single band body graphic on one finger which shall not be wider than the width of the thumb of the wearer's opposite hand. A band body graphic on the finger constitutes a single allowable body graphic for that arm.
6. Partially visible body graphics between the bottom of an untailed short sleeve uniform shirt and to the point above an employee's elbow are not subject to concealment. The same standard will apply to civilian short sleeve shirts.

B. Method of cover.

Any body graphic that cannot be displayed in accordance with the restrictions in Section III (A) must be covered with a long sleeve uniform shirt, uniform pants, or other clothing consistent with General Order 608 entitled "Uniform and Attire." Only body graphics on the hands or feet may be covered with band aids or skin neutral makeup.

C. Exceptions.

1. Officers who are assigned to the CID Special Investigation's Division are exempt from this while actively engaging in undercover operations not in uniform.
2. Cosmetic tattoos (i.e. eyeliner, lips and eyebrows), provided they are natural in appearance, are exempt for this.
3. Body graphics may be visible while participating in department approved training activities where appropriate clothing is required to

complete the training and there is no direct contact with the general public. Such training includes SSGT, handcuffing, firearms, and other physical training. The General Department Instructor should approve the wearing of such attire in advance of the training. If an employee is uncertain if approval has been granted, they should inquire through their chain of command. Any body graphic so displayed must not be offensive.

If approval has not been granted, all requirements of this General Order must be complied with during training sessions.

While operating a police vehicle to and from training, body graphics must be covered in compliance with this General Order.

D. General.

1. In no way shall this policy be used to eliminate candidates from employment who can comply with its provisions, nor shall it be intended to limit the Constitutional rights of any employee.
2. Employees must comply with all requirements of the courts, other institutions, outside training facilities or agencies requiring body graphics to be covered.
3. Requests for other exemptions may be made in writing to the Chief.