

## **TATTOOS, BRANDS, BODY MODIFICATIONS**

The Sherman Police Department is a professional organization that has a responsibility to avoid offending or appearing unprofessional before the diverse public we serve. For this reason, the Department prohibits the display of tattoos/body art that are profane, demeaning, patently offensive, give the appearance of a preference or bias to the public or other members of the Department or that contain messages that may be disruptive in the workplace or impact productivity. For the purpose of this policy, the term tattoo and body art shall have the same meaning and guidelines.

A. Body Art Location - Visible tattoos, brands or other body art are prohibited in the following locations on the body:

1. On the head, face, neck, or scalp to include inside the eyelids, mouth and ears, and
2. On the hands, fingers, or wrists (below the wrist bone).
3. Exceptions are listed in IX. E

B. Unauthorized Body Art - The following body art is prohibited, regardless of visibility:

1. Extremist - Body art affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities, including those advocating racial, gender, ethnic, sexual orientation hatred or intolerance, or illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin and/or tattoos advocating violence or other unlawful means of depriving individual rights under the U.S. Constitution, and Federal or State law.
2. Indecent - Body art grossly offensive to modesty, decency, propriety, or professionalism, including but not limited to, vulgar images, nudity, or sexually implicit images, words, or phrases.
3. Sexist - Body art advocating a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on gender.
4. Racist - Body art advocating a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.
5. Contrary to the purpose of law enforcement – Depictions symbolizing or indicative of alcohol or narcotics, illegal or gang related activity, or symbols suggestive of activity that undermines the purpose of law enforcement.
6. Gauges, or large holes in the ears, body piercing of the face (other than ears), head or mouth.
7. Excessive or unprofessional jewelry.
8. Dental Ornamentation.
9. Intentional mutilation of the parts of the body including, but not limited to, tongue bifurcation (splitting), ear gauging (enlarged holes in the lobe of the ear), or foreign objects

inserted under the skin to create a design, effect or pattern that would be visible when wearing the standard or specialized uniform are not authorized.

#### C. Authorization of Visible Body Art

1. Prospective Employees –The Office of Professional Standards is responsible for ensuring that prospective employees' body art is acceptable as outlined in this policy. Employment packages will include the information on any visible tattoos/body art of the applicant.
2. After the authorized date of this policy revision, employees are required to acquire authorization prior to the addition of any new visible body art in accordance subsection (E) below.

#### D. Process for Seeking Authorization to Display Body Art

1. The employee will submit the following to their immediate supervisor for determination of whether or not the tattoo follows the guidelines and may be visible, i.e., does not have to be covered:
  - a. A graphic depiction of the body art;
  - b. The size, and;
  - c. The location on the body where it will be visible.
2. The employee's immediate supervisor will electronically submit the information regarding the requested body art through the chain of command, up to the three Assistant Chiefs. A panel consisting of the Assistant Chiefs will determine if the employee may display the tattoo.
3. If the employee requesting to be allowed to display a tattoo holds the rank of Assistant Chief, the approval process will be decided by the Chief of Police. The decision will be final.
4. If an employee disagrees with a determination of the chain of command, the employee may appeal for a review by Chief of Police who will make a final determination as to whether or not the employee may display the tattoo.
5. Intentional mutilation of the parts of the body including, but not limited to, tongue bifurcation (splitting), ear gauging (enlarged holes in the lobe of the ear), or foreign objects inserted under the skin to create a design, effect or pattern that would be visible when wearing the standard or specialized uniform are not authorized.

#### E. Exceptions

1. Tattoos that substitute for the application of cosmetics are acceptable provided that it is applied in shades appropriate to natural skin tones, does not create an extreme appearance, and otherwise complies with this policy or any other applicable policy.
2. A tattoo that substitutes for a wedding band may be visible on the left ring finger. No more than one tattoo will be allowed. X.JEWELRY