

UNIFORM ALLOWANCE AND WEARING GUIDELINES

1. PURPOSE

This Directive covers uniforms, uniform allowances, and wearing guidelines applicable to PPQ employees, under the Federal Employees Uniform Allowance Act.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Policy supplements MRP Directive 4591.1, dated 9/19/07.

3. AUTHORITY

The Federal Employees Uniform Allowance Act (5 U.S.C. 5901-5902), as amended by Public Law).

4. POLICY

It is PPQ policy to pay allowance to employees for acquiring or replacing uniforms if the employees are required to wear a prescribed uniform to perform their official duties. Expenses for altering, laundering, dry cleaning, and repairing the uniforms must be borne by employees. Allowances will be paid directly to the approved contractor for orders placed by the employees.

5. COVERAGE

This Directive covers all employees of PPQ who are required to wear uniforms.

6. EMPLOYEES REQUIRED TO WEAR UNIFORMS

Employees required to wear uniforms to perform their official duties are:

- (1) Full-time permanent PPQ employees involved in import and export inspections and, on a case-by-case basis, domestic and emergency plant pest programs.
- (2) PPQ employees not in the full-time permanent category who are in contact with the public and require identification via a uniform, will be determined by management.
- (3) Employees who are not required to wear a uniform at their permanent duty station but are required to wear a uniform at an emergency program project.

7. UNIFORM ALLOWANCE ENTITLEMENT

- a. Permanent, Part-Time and Term Employees required by the Deputy Administrator, Plant Protection and Quarantine, or his delegated officials to wear the PPQ Uniform, shall be furnished said uniform at a cost not to exceed \$800. The amount of the Annual Uniform Allowance shall be determined by a delegated official and shall not exceed \$800 a year.
- b. Emergency programs will be responsible for authorizing and budgeting the Uniform Allowance Authorization for Emergency Program employees.
- c. Employees not required to wear a uniform but who request authorization to purchase a uniform item (i.e. windbreaker, hat, etc...) will be placed in the uniform system. All purchases will be out of pocket. The Uniform Allowance Authorization will indicate a zero dollar amount.
- d. Replacement allowance entitlement ceases upon resignation, retirement, transfer to another department, reassignment to a position that does not require a uniform and other similar separations. Employees may be asked to refund any whole remaining quarter(s) of the uniform allowance authorizations. The employees may be asked to refund the difference between the appropriate allowance entitlement and actual amount spent. PPQ will provide advanced written notice to the affected employee with the opportunity to repay the difference by means of personal check, money order, salary deduction or deduction from other funds due the employee.

8. ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

- a. Authorization. Directors or the designated subordinate supervisor will be responsible for approving Uniform Allowance Authorization (UAA). UAA's are used to submit employee information and allowance amounts to the contractor to establish or change employee accounts. If an employee entitlement changes or stops at any time, an updated UAA must be submitted in a timely manner to the contractor by the Director or designee.
- b. Limitations.
 - (1) The uniform allowance is dependent on approval of the annual Appropriation Bill or a continuing resolution as enacted by Congress.

- (2) No allowance may exceed the current maximum initial allowance or the current maximum replacement allowance in subsequent years. Exceptions due to an emergency or natural catastrophe may be made by the Deputy Administrator or designee.
 - (3) Employees may not carry over an unobligated allowance balance from one fiscal year to the next.
 - (4) An employee becomes eligible for a uniform allowance only when the employee is required to wear a uniform.
 - (5) An employee is entitled to the full initial allowance even if he or she becomes eligible with less than a full fiscal year remaining.
 - (6) Initial and replacement allowance amounts will be announced through an annual bulletin.
 - (7) An employee may not place orders from September 15, to the end of the fiscal year, or as negotiated in the contract specifications which ever is later. This will allow for end of year budgetary close out.
- c. Uniform Year. The annual uniform allowance period begins with the Fiscal Year (October 1) or the date an employee first becomes eligible for a uniform allowance and ends with the Fiscal Year (September 30).
 - d. Nonpay Status. For each period of 90 continuous calendar days in a nonpay status, the employee's replacement allowance will be discontinued for the next full fiscal quarter.

9. REFUNDING ALLOWANCE

- a. Initial Allowance. No employee will be asked to refund any portion of a properly made advanced payment for the initial year of uniform service.
- b. Replacement Allowance. The allowance is allotted annually in advance and may be spent in portions or all at once, anytime during the year. Only refunds will be figured on a quarterly basis. When the entire uniform allowance is allotted in advance and the employee ceases to be entitled to a uniform allowance, a refund may be required if there are whole remaining quarters in the fiscal year. Entitlement ceases upon resignation, retirement, transfer to another department, reassignment to a position that does not require a uniform and other similar separations. The employee may be asked to refund the difference between the appropriate allowance entitlement and the actual amount spent. PPQ will recover the difference

by salary deductions or deductions from other funds due the employee and/or will also require the employee to return all uniforms.

10. REVIEW AND REPORTS

- a. In accordance with the National Basic (NAAE) Agreement between the National Association of Agriculture Employees and Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), a standing uniform committee will consider and make recommendations for changes concerning the uniform, uniform allowances, and the uniform directive. The committee will meet on an annual basis, and if necessary, more often. The National Association of PPQ Managers (NAPPQM) will be represented on this committee.
- b. The uniform committee will review uniform allowances annually and make recommendations to management. This review determines the adequacy of allowances based on actual operating experience.

11. UNIFORM GUIDELINES

- a. General:

When wearing a uniform, officers are required to have their official badges and identification on their person.

- b. Uniforms are divided into three classes:

(1) Class "A" This uniform consists of sage green dress pants, a sand service shirt and optional green tie. Black slacks/skirts and white shirt will be worn for passenger pre-departure personnel at Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

(2) Class "B" This uniform consists of sage green cargo pants, a sand button down shirt. (See Attachment #1) This type of uniform may be worn for cargo trade verifications or domestic field activities. The sand shirt may be substituted with the polo shirt with USDA logo as negotiated on a work unit by work unit basis. This uniform may be used for any PPQ function other than passenger pre-departure.

(3) "Utility" This uniform consists of coveralls, cargo shorts, walking shoes, boots, polo shirt, and button down sand work shirt. This uniform may be used in combination with parts of the other uniforms for PPQ functions that are not in direct contact with the public.

- c. Wearing guidelines for the Class “A”, Class “B”, and Utility uniforms are found in Attachment 2. The items listed as (C) in Attachment 2 may be purchased outside the approved contracted source but must meet the wearing guidelines in Attachment 1 and will not be reimbursed when purchased outside the approved source. The items listed as (A) in Attachment 2 may be purchased from approved source or out of pocket from other than approved source.
- d. Supervisors and employees are responsible to ensure that uniforms are properly worn and replaced, as necessary to maintain the professional image of the Agency.
- e. Employees performing domestic activities may negotiate on a work unit-by-work unit basis the wearing of non-uniform apparel in combination with uniform apparel.
- f. Union officers may wear a plate identifying the employee as a “NAAE Official”.

ATTACHMENT I

ADDITIONAL UNIFORM WEARING GUIDELINES

- A. The items listed below may be purchased outside the approved source, but must meet the following guidelines and will not be reimbursed:
1. Socks may be black or green.
 2. Gloves must be black plain design.
 3. Belts must be made of black leather up to 1 ¼ inch width with a plain prong gold buckle that will not exceed the width of the belt by more than 1 inch.
 4. Black baseball style cap, cloth or mesh, with embroidered USDA on crown.
 5. Black pullover style ski caps.
 6. Shoes purchased outside the source may be boots, pumps, fitness shoes, oxfords, loafers, or flats, but they must conform to the following:
 - a. closed heels and toes
 - b. inconspicuous logos
 - c. plain black leather
 - d. maximum heel height 2 inches
 - e. fitness shoes may have high or low tops

For additional guidance, review approved contractor uniform shoe types.

7. Hosiery must be plain, neutral or black colors, with no patterns visible during wear.
- B. Conformance guidelines. These guidelines will be adhered to when wearing the uniform:
1. Skirt length may vary 2 inches above and below the knee.
 2. Walking shorts may be altered not more than 2 inches above the knee.

3. Low top shoes will be worn with the skirts.
4. The USDA patch will go on the left sleeve of the Class A dress shirt.
5. Ties are not mandatory with the uniform. Ties may be worn with long or short sleeve dress shirts.
6. Shirts, except maternity, will be tucked in.
7. Shirts without ties will have only the collar button unbuttoned.
8. Only plain white T-shirts are authorized to be worn with uniform.
9. When practical, long sleeves will have cuffs buttoned.
10. Uniforms must be neat, clean and in good repair at the start of the tour of duty.
11. All uniform parts w/belt loops will be worn with a belt.

ATTACHMENT 2

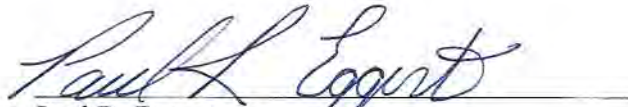
CLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES

UNIFORMS		CLASS A	CLASS B	UTILITY	CLASS C
White or Sand shirt /p	(M)	X			
Black or Green pants	(M)	X			
Black or Green skirt	(A)	X			
Black socks	(A)	X	X	X	X
Black shoes	(A)	X	X	X	X
Black belt	(A)	X	X		
Black sweater /emb	(O)	X	X	X	X
Black sweater vest /emb	(O)	X	X		
Black Commando Sweater	(O)	X	X	X	
Black Ranger Vest	(O)		X	X	
Black blazer	(A)	X			
Light Windbreaker /emb	(O)	X	X	X	
Heavy Windbreaker /emb	(O)	X	X	X	X
Parka /emb	(O)	X	X	X	X
All weather overcoat	(O)	X	X	X	X
Black gloves	(A)	X	X	X	X
Work gloves	(A)	X	X	X	X
Black ball cap	(O)	X	X	X	X
Black ski cap	(A)	X	X	X	X
Broad brim hat	(A)	X	X	X	X
Work Sand shirt /emb			X	X	
Green Cargo pants	(O)		X	X	
Green Cargo shorts (unpleated)	(O)			X	
Sand polo type shirt /emb	(O)		X	X	
Green Socks	(A)	X	X	X	X
Tan	(C)		X		X
Khaki or Green coverall	(O)			X	X
Patch	(M)	X	X		X
Black and Green tie	(M)	X			
Rain coat /e	(O)	X	X	X	X
Rain suit (yellow) /e	(O)	X	X	X	X

MATERNITY ITEMS

Black or Green Pants	(A)	X			
White or Sand Shirt	(A)	X			
Fabric for maternity uniforms	(A)	X			

- /e USDA silk screen emblem on back
 /emb Embroidered USDA Logo
 /p Patch with USDA shield
 (M) mandatory and must be purchased from approved source
 (O) optional but must be purchased from approved source
 (C) items which may be purchased out of pocket from other than the approved source
 (A) may be purchased from approved source or out of pocket from other than approved source.


 Paul R. Eggert
 Associate Deputy Administrator
 Plant Protection and Quarantine

4-19-2010
 Date


 Sarah C. Rehberg
 President
 National Association of Agriculture Employees

4/8/10
 Date