



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DAFI 36-2903_DAFGM 2025-03
29 October 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION C
MAJCOMs/FLDCOMs/FOAs/DRUs

SUBJECT: Department of the Air Force Guidance Memorandum to DAFI 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance of Department of the Air Force Personnel

By Order of the Secretary of the Air Force, this Guidance Memorandum immediately implements changes to DAFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personnel Appearance of Department of the Air Force Personnel*. Compliance with this memorandum is mandatory. To the extent its directions are inconsistent with other publications, the information herein prevails, in accordance with Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 90-160, *Publications and Forms Management*.

The guidance reissues and changes instruction from DAFI 36-2903-DAFGM 2025-01 and DAFGM 2025-02, as follows: 1) changes combat boot height requirement to 6-12 inches, 2) provides Airmen until 30 September 2026 to comply with new boot height requirement, 3) specifies the date by which officers must obtain a full set of an OCP uniform to 9 October 2025, 4) changes shaving waiver authority to unit commanders, 5) updates sideburns policy to reflect above the ear opening, and 6) updates mustache policy to prohibit mustaches beyond the corners of the mouth or into a respirator seal zone. This guidance incorporates instruction from DAFGM2025-02 which 1) added the requirement for officers to maintain one complete set of an OCP uniform, 2) removed authorization for wear of eyelash extensions unless for medical reasons, 3) clarified folding of OCP shirt sleeves, 4) replaced the term "gender" with "sex" as (applicable) and removed all references to transgender. It further incorporates guidance from DAFGM2025-01 which 1) removed the authorization to wear duty identifier patches, 2) changed authorized nail polish to be clear or French or American Manicure only, 3) clarified that male Airmen must be clean-shaven at the start of the duty day unless they have a current medical profile or religious accommodation, 4) clarified male hair will not touch the ears and 5) added the definition of a "gig line".

Ensure all records generated as a result of processes prescribed in this publication adhere to Air Force Instruction (AFI) 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, and are disposed in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule which is located in the Air Force Records Information Management System.

This memorandum becomes void after one year has elapsed from the date of this memorandum, or upon publication of an interim change (IC) or rewrite of the affected publication, whichever is earlier.

RICHARD L. ANDERSON
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for
Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Attachment:
Guidance Changes to DAFI 36-2903

Attachment

Guidance Changes to DAFI 36-2903

Basic Philosophy

(Changed) 1.1.2. Pride in an Airman's personal appearance and uniform wear greatly enhances the discipline essential to an effective military force. Therefore, Airmen must maintain a high standard of dress and personal appearance through adherence to the five elements of this standard: neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. The first four are absolute, objective criteria needed for the efficiency and well-being of the Air Force; the fifth, military image, is subjective, but still necessary. Appearance in uniform exemplifies one's military image. The American public and its elected representatives draw certain conclusions on military effectiveness based on the image Airmen present. The image of a disciplined and committed Airman instills public confidence that Airmen live by a common standard and respond to military order and discipline. Every Airman has a responsibility to maintain a professional military image as identified in this DAFI.

Acquiring Uniforms Items

1.5.1. Officer Personnel. Procure and maintain all items necessary to meet standards of dress for assigned duties and mission requirements. All Air Force officers, regardless of AFSC or career field, are required to maintain at least one complete set of an operational camouflage pattern (OCP) uniform, as referenced in Chapter 5 of this instruction. **Note:** Officers have until 9 October 2025 to comply with obtaining the OCP uniform.

Grooming and Appearance Standards

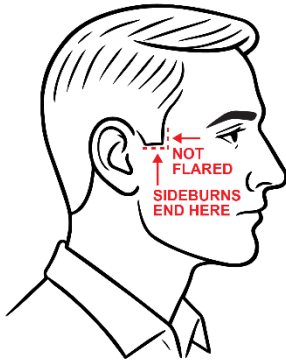
(Changed) **3.1. Personal Grooming Standards.** This chapter outlines personal grooming standards while wearing any Air Force uniform or civilian clothing in an official capacity. Commanders' discretion will be used to determine if an individual's personal grooming is within standards of this instruction. The personal grooming standards listed are minimum standards that represent common appearance issues and are not all-inclusive. The Air Force defines what is and what is not an acceptable, professional military image for Airmen. Except for minor variations based on differences in sex, all Air Force personnel must comply with the same personal grooming standards. Supervisors have the responsibility to determine compliance with this DAFI and to correct obvious violations regardless of whether the situation identified is clearly defined in this DAFI.

(Changed) 3.1.2. Hair (**Male**). Tapered appearance on both sides and the back of the head, both with and without headgear so that when viewed from any angle the member's hair conforms to the shape of the head, curving inward to the natural termination point without eccentric directional flow, twists, or spiking. A block-cut is permitted with tapered appearance. Hair will not exceed 2 ½ inches in bulk, regardless of length and 1/4-inch at natural termination point; allowing only closely cut or shaved hair on the back of the neck to touch the collar (see **Figure 3.3**). Hair will not touch the ears or protrude under the front band of headgear. Cleanly shaven heads, military high-and-tight or flattop cuts are authorized. Airmen may have one (cut, clipped, or shaved) front to back, straight-line part, not slanted or curved, on either side of their head, above the temple. Part will not exceed 4-

inches length or 1/4-inch width (See **Figure 3.5.**). See **Figure 3.4** for examples of appropriate sideburns, mustache, and male hair standards.

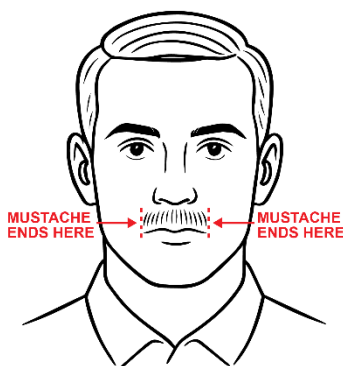
(Changed) 3.1.2.1. Sideburns. If worn, sideburns will be straight and even width (not flared) and will be above the ear opening. Sideburns will end in a clean-shaven horizontal line. See **Figure 3.4.**

(Changed) **Figure 3.4. Male Hair Standards Examples.**



(Changed) 3.1.2.2. Mustaches. Male members may wear mustaches. No portion of the mustache shall extend below the upper lip line, and it must not go beyond the corners of the mouth or into a respirator seal zone. Mustaches must be neatly trimmed and should match the natural hair color of the Airman's head. Handlebar styles, twists, curls, and goatees are strictly prohibited. See **Figure 3.6.**

(Changed) **Figure 3.6. Mustache.**



(Changed) 3.1.2.3. Beards. At the start of each duty day, male Airmen must be clean-shaven. Beards are not authorized unless for medical reasons, when recommended by a medical official, and approved by applicable unit commander or as authorized pursuant to a request for a religious accommodation. When authorized for medical reasons, members will keep all facial hair trimmed to the same length and it may not exceed 1/4-inch in length. Individuals granted a shaving profile may shave or trim their facial hair to present a neat,

clean, professional military image (**Figure 3.7**). Members may not overly shave, shape, or taper beard to achieve different styles of beard (e.g., goatees, faded beards, etc. are not authorized). Beards must present a natural appearance to the Airman's hair color of the head. Beards are not authorized to be bleached or dyed. Beard wear authorized for religious reasons is governed by **Chapter 11** of this instruction.

(Changed) 3.1.4. Fingernails. Fingernails must not exceed 1/4-inch in length beyond the tip of the finger and must be clean and well groomed. Fingernails must not interfere with the performance of assigned duties or hinder proper fit of prescribed safety equipment or uniform items. Male Airmen are not authorized to wear nail polish. If worn by females, nail polish will be clear or French or American Manicure. French manicures include white tips with a base of clear and American manicures include ivory white or cream tips with a base of clear. Ombre manicure style is not authorized. Do not apply designs to nails.

(Changed) **Figure 3.14. DELETED**

(Changed) 3.1.5. Cosmetics. Male Airmen are not authorized to wear cosmetics. Female Airmen may wear conservatively styled cosmetics. Lipstick, if worn by female Airmen, will be a conservative shade that does not detract from the uniform. Eyeliner, if worn by female Airmen, cannot extend past the corners of eye opening (i.e., winged liner not authorized). Cosmetics will not be worn during field conditions. Eyelash extensions are not authorized unless for medical reasons and documented on an Air Force Form 469, *Duty Limiting Condition Report*. If medical authorization is obtained from a military medical treatment facility provider and documented on an Air Force Form 469, eyelash extensions will be Airman's natural eyelash color and will not exceed 12mm in length.

(Changed) **Figure 3.15. DELETED**

(Changed) 3.2.1. Unauthorized content/locations. Tattoos/brands/body markings will not be on the head, face, tongue, lips, eyes, and scalp. Tattoos/brands/body markings anywhere on the body that are obscene, commonly associated with gangs, extremist, and/or supremacist organizations, or that advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination are prohibited in and out of uniform. Indecent tattoos/brands/body markings are grossly offensive to modesty, decency, or propriety, or shocks the moral sense, because of its vulgar, filthy, or disgusting nature, or its tendency to incite lustful thought. It is indecent if it tends reasonably to corrupt morals or incite libidinous thoughts. It must not violate community standards. Commanders should contact their servicing Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) unit for additional information on potential identification of gang/hate group, tattoos/brands/body markings. Extremist tattoos/brands/body markings are those affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities. Sexually discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on sex. Racially discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Religiously discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on religion. Tattoos/brands/body markings with unauthorized content that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, or the content is of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the DAF are prohibited both in and out of uniform.

Airmen and Guardians may not cover up tattoos, brands, and/or body markings with bandages or make-up in order to comply with unauthorized content tattoo policy.

Service Dress Uniform (Class A and B – Male and Female)

(Changed) 4.5.1. The service dress uniform is worn as Class A and the service blue uniform as Class B. The Class A uniform is worn with the service dress coat. The Class B uniform is worn without the service dress coat. Gig Line will be straight and neat.

Operational Camouflage Pattern Uniform

(Changed) **5.1. The Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP), Male and Female.** The OCP may be worn off base for short convenience stops and when eating at restaurants where people wear comparable civilian attire. Do not wear OCPs off base to eat in restaurants where most diners wear business attire or at establishments that operate primarily to serve alcohol. Do not starch or hot press the OCP; Light ironing is authorized; however, repeated hot pressing or heavy ironing will accelerate the overall wear of the fabric. OCPs purchased by Air Force personnel through the Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) Military Clothing Sales Stores (MCSS), or issued through Individual Equipment Elements or contract equivalent, are certified as fully compliant with all specifications. No other suppliers are approved for organizational/unit purchases, or any appropriated, or overseas contingency operation funds expenditures. If personnel choose to use personal funds to purchase from non-AAFES suppliers, the Air Force is not responsible if the uniform is not fully compliant. The non-fire-retardant and improved hot weather combat OCP uniforms are the only OCP uniforms authorized to be worn by all Airmen. (**Exception:** Airmen in jobs that have occupational safety and health administration (OSHA) requirements for wear of the 100% cotton fire-retardant OCP (e.g., deployed members operating in outside the wire mission sets) will be authorized to wear this distinctive uniform/equipment item.) Additionally, firefighters and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel are authorized to wear the two-piece flight duty uniform and their uniform will be worn in the same configuration and manner as instructed in **paragraph 9.12** within this instruction. (**Exception:**

The firefighter badge will be worn in-lieu of the higher headquarters patch on the left sleeve.)

All Air Force officers, regardless of AFSC or career field, are required to maintain at least one complete set of an operational camouflage pattern uniform, as referenced in **paragraph 1.5.1** of this instruction. **Note:** Officers have until 9 October 2025 to comply with obtaining the OCP uniform.

(Changed) 5.1.1. OCP Coat (Shirt). The coat is worn outside the trousers. **Note:** Commanders may authorize the coat to be tucked in for duty (e.g., Security Forces Airmen) if necessary. The coat will not extend below the top of the cargo pocket on the trousers and will not be higher than the bottom of the opening of the side (hip) pocket on the trousers. Airmen may roll up sleeves on the OCP coat; however, the cuffs will remain visible, and the sleeve will rest at, or within 1-inch of, the forearm when the arm is bent at a 90-degree angle. When sleeves are not rolled up, cuffs may remain visible or be folded inward up to twice. Commanders may prohibit rolling of sleeves and folding of cuffs. Patches or badges will not be affixed to the front pockets. Alterations that affect the functionality of the uniform are not authorized, (e.g., sewing down collars, or pockets). The OCP coat may be removed in the immediate work area as determined appropriate by local leadership, however, the OCP coat will be worn while interacting with customers or clients.

(Changed) 5.1.6. Patches. Patches will not extend past the boundary of the Velcro®. Airmen will comply with the shoulder patch placement configuration found in **paragraphs 5.1.6.1.1 through 5.1.6.1.2** and **paragraphs 5.1.6.2 through 5.1.6.2.4** of this instruction. Airmen assigned, attached, detailed, or activated in support of sister service units or joint organizations may wear the sister service's or joint organization's organizational badges/patches in accordance with their respective wear instructions. Sister service and joint organization badges/patches can be worn in their current color configuration and will not be converted to the spice brown color criteria. Additionally, Airmen assigned to Department of Air Force organizations that support both Air and Space Force are permitted to wear both Air Force spice brown and Space Force full color organization patches. Award criteria for other Services' qualification badges will be in accordance with awarding Service's directives. Temporary qualification badges are not authorized for wear on the uniform. **Note:** The Airborne tab is a temporary tab and is only authorized to be worn while assigned to an organization that prescribes wear as part of the organizations shoulder sleeve insignia. This instruction will take precedence if joint or sister service wear instructions will cause a conflict in Air Force patch configuration guidance (i.e., changes the location of the U.S. flag patch, switches a patch designated as a "left sleeve" patch to the right sleeve, etc.).

(Changed) 5.1.6.2.3. Duty/Qualification Tabs. Wear a spice brown subdued cloth tab centered at the top of the Velcro® area.

(Changed) Table 5.1. Authorized Duty/Qualification Tabs (Left Sleeve).

CURRENT DUTY	APPROVED TAB
Air Advisor (Note: With documented classification identifier (SEI/SDI), authorized for permanent wear (POC AF/A3TM))	Air Advisor or Advanced Air Advisor (tab)
Special Warfare Tactical Call Sign	Alpha-numeric call sign, e.g., A01 or HR44
Arctic Domain and Security (Note: Completion of Arctic Defense Security Orientation and awarded applicable SEI)	ARCTIC (tab)
USAF Installation Honor Guard (Base Honor Guard)	BASE HONOR GUARD (tab)
Courier	COURIER (tab)
Evaluator	EVALUATOR (tab)
Instructor	INSTRUCTOR (tab)
Master Instructor	MASTER INSTRUCTOR (tab)
Raven	RAVEN (tab)

Recruiter	RECRUITER (tab)
Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape	SERE (tab)
USAF Honor Guard	USAF HONOR GUARD (tab)

Footwear

(Changed) 7.4.2.1. Coyote Brown Combat Boots. Wear Coyote Brown combat boots only with the OCP. Athletic shoes may be worn if medically necessary, as determined by competent medical authorities at a civilian or military treatment facility and approved by the commander.

Exception: Commanders may authorize wear of black combat boots in some situations. See **paragraph 7.4.2.3**. Boots must be between 6-12 inches in height (measured from the bottom of the heel tread to the top of the back of the boot) and soling material will not exceed 2 inches in height. **Note:** Airmen have until 30 September 2026 to comply with new boot height standard.

Airmen may wear taps on their boots to preserve the heels as long as the taps do not change the intended appearance of the boots. Boots will be laced up with plain rounded toe or rounded capped toe with or without a perforated seam. Laces will either be tied and tucked in the boot or tied and wrapped around the boot. A zipper or elastic inserts may be worn; however, if worn, they will be without design. Boots can be either with or without a safety toe. Logos will be the same color as the boot. Designs are not authorized.

(New) Figure 7.12. Authorized and Unauthorized Coyote Brown Combat Boot Examples.



Authorized Example



Unauthorized Example

Two Piece Flight Duty Uniform (2PFDU)

(Changed) 9.12.2.9.2.1. While performing their duties, certain AFSCs may wear spice brown cloth, or subdued infra-red (IR) call sign patch centered at the top of the Velcro® area. Authorized duty/qualification tabs are listed in Table 5.1 (**Note:** Only tabs listed in Table 5.1 are authorized. The tactical call sign patch should only be worn for tactical (radio) call signs assigned/ordered by the unit commander. When not required for operations or training, the Tactical Call Sign patch should not be worn.

(Changed) 9.12.2.9.2.2. The HHQ patch is mandatory and will use the spice brown color criteria (cloth) centered under the functional badges or duty/qualification tabs if worn, or

under the top of Velcro® area reserved for functional badges or tabs. Higher Headquarters include, but are not limited to, the following organizations: HAF, DRUs, FOAs, and MAJCOMs. **Note:** Current subdued version of HHQ patch or no patch may be worn until the patch color conversion has been completed by the Institute of Heraldry.

(Changed) 9.12.2.11.2. GLINT US Flags and Special Warfare Airman Tactical Call Sign patches may be worn in place of cloth patches in the deployed environment in accordance with mission or theater directives.

(Changed) 12.8. Duty/Qualification Tabs

(Changed) 12.8.1. MAJCOMS and/or Functional communities may request the creation of a new tab. New tab requests should follow guidance as outlined in **paragraph 12.7.3.1** through **12.7.3.4**. **Note:** Duty/qualification tabs differ from patches; a tab's design includes a small arch e.g., "AIR ADVISOR", "RAVEN" signifying a special, unique qualification and/or training.

(Changed) 12.8.3. DELETED

(Changed) 12.8.5. Functional communities proposing new tab development, or changes to their existing tab will fund all costs associated with proposed design and development. Organizations submit a DD Form 448, *Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request*, to the Institute of Heraldry for the amount required for initial development.

(Changed) 15.5. Exception to Policy. All exception to policy requests will be submitted through MAJCOM/A1 channels (chain of command) for recommendations then to the AF/A1PA Workflow Box AF.A1PA.workflow@us.af.mil for processing.

(Changed) 15.5.1. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.1. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.2. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.3. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.4. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.5. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.6. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.7. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.8. DELETED

(Changed) 15.5.1.9. DELETED

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

References

(DELETED) DoDM 6025.18

(DELETED) DSM-V

Acronyms and Abbreviations

(DELETED) GMC

(DELETED) MTP

(DELETED) RLE

(DELETED) SCCC

(DELETED) THMEU

Terms

(DELETED) Biological Sex

(DELETED) Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy

(DELETED) Gender Dysphoria

(DELETED) Gender Identity

(DELETED) Gender Marker

(DELETED) Gender Transition

(DELETED) Social transition

(New) Gig Line—When members wear shirt tucked into trousers or slacks with front fly opening, the button front edge of the shirt, the outside of the belt buckle (when required) and the edge of the fly will align. This alignment creates a gig line.

(DELETED) Self-identified gender

(DELETED) Real Life Experience

(DELETED) Service Central Coordination Cell

(DELETED) Transgender Health Medical Evaluation Unit

(DELETED) Transgender

Attachment 2 (DELETED)