



# YARMOUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### TATTOOS AND BODY ART

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Revised: N/A

Issuing Authority:

Chief Frank G. Frederickson

Certification Standards: N/A

Accreditation Standards: N/A

Optional Accreditation Standards: N/A

#### I. Policy

The Chief of Police has the responsibility and authority to set the highest possible standards of uniform and appearance such as tattoos and body art that will ensure that our officers maintain a positive image while on duty. Under the current **Yarmouth Police Rule and Regulation: Uniforms & Appearance 7 -A**, the Chief of Police, after consultation with the appropriate unions may allow for certain body art to be displayed. As per Rule and Regulation 7-A the following standards have been adopted by the Chief, Deputy Chief, IBPO and the Superior Officers Union:

#### II. Police Officer/Reserve Police Officer Tattoo's

Any Officer or Reserve Officer who desires to get a tattoo on their arms or legs may do so but there is a strong likelihood that those tattoos may have to be covered when an officer is working.

Any Officer who wishes to display a tattoo/body art and would like to have their tattoo considered by the Chief as possibly being approved to be visible while on duty, may exercise the following steps.

- Meet with your shop steward or union official to arrange a meeting with the Chief of Police or his designee.
- Bring a copy of the exact tattoo along with a detailed description of where you intend to wear the tattoo to this meeting.
- At this time the Chief, after consulting with the officer and a union representative, may make the determination that a particular tattoo may be visible while the officer is working. The Chief and union officials must unanimously agree that a tattoo may be exposed while working. If there is not a unanimous agreement, the Chief's decision is final and not subject to a grievance.
- If, after this meeting with the Chief of Police, if he/she determines that the tattoo must be covered, the officer may still get the tattoo but the officer must agree that it will be covered at all times while on duty with a department approved covering.
- Should the officer return with a different tattoo, or in a different location other than those discussed at the meeting, the officer will most likely be ordered to cover the tattoo while on duty.
- **The approved covering will be the following product: TatJacket: Arm Sleeve Tattoo cover. Product Code: TAT-14.**

- Purchase of this product will be at the expense of the officer. All sleeves purchased must be presented as worn to the Patrol Division Commander before being approved to wear on duty.

### **III. Forbidden Tattoo's**

The following tattoos will always be forbidden to be worn or be visible while on duty.

- A. Extremist tattoos or brands. These are tattoos or brands which denote affiliation with groups or organizations that are considered extremists, who advocate racial, gender or ethnic hatred or intolerance. Any and all tattoos which depict or symbolize a particular group which engage in illegal discrimination of any person or group based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion, or national origin will be forbidden.
- B. Indecent tattoos or brands. These are tattoos or brands that are grossly offensive to modesty, decency or propriety; shock the moral sense because of their vulgar, filthy or disgusting nature.
- C. Sexist tattoos or brands. These are tattoos or brands that degrade or demean a person based on their gender or sexual preference.
- D. Racist tattoos or brands. These are tattoos or brands that degrade or demean a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.

Officers who get tattoos described in section A-D may be ordered to have them removed, at the officer's expense, or covered up at all times.

### **IV. Professionalism**

It is imperative that officers of the Yarmouth Police Department are always portrayed as approachable, trustworthy, sincere and impartial. While this policy recognizes an officers wish to express him or herself in the form of tattoos or brands while off duty, it is the public image of the on duty officer that in most cases will be used to determine the appropriateness of any tattoo that may be visible while on duty.

Prior to hiring, candidates will be subject to the above guidelines. Any non-conformance will result in the candidate not being hired.

### **V. Amending guidelines**

The preceding guidelines may be amended by the Chief of Police from time to time after consultation with appropriate unions.

### **VI. Recourse/Grandfather Clause**

Any body art, whether approved or not, does not preclude any civil action or complaint by any organization or individual.

Any current Officer who has obtained a tattoo prior to 9-1-12 must meet with the Chief and Union representation in order to identify tattoos that they currently have and wish to be allowed to expose while on duty. Current tattoos will be allowed provided they are not considered in the category of A-D above.