



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, DC

DAFI 36-2903 DAFGM 2025-XX  
29 January 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*.

This guidance is applicable to Regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel only. Other standards contained in DAFI 36-2903 continue to apply as outlined in the opening paragraph. The guidance: 1) removes the authorization to wear duty identifier patches, 2) changes authorized nail polish to be clear or French or American Manicure only, 3) clarifies 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) clarifies male hair will not touch the ears and 5) adds 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.

DEFILIPPI.GWENDOLYN.RUTH.11  
YN.RUTH.1123618960  
Digitally signed by  
DEFILIPPI.GWENDOLYN.RUTH.11  
23618960  
Date: 2025.01.29 13:21:33 -05'00'

GWENDOLYN R. DeFILIPPI, SES  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the  
Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Attachment:  
Guidance Changes

## Guidance Changes

### 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.

### Grooming and Appearance Standards

**3.1. Personal Grooming Standards.** This chapter outlines personal grooming standards while wearing any Air Force uniform or civilian clothing in an official capacity. Commander's discretion will be used to determine if 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 gender differences, 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 the obvious violations regardless of whether the situation identified is clearly written 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) 3.1.2.3. Beards. At the start of each duty day, male Airmen must be clean-shaven. Beards are not authorized unless for medical reasons, when authorized by a medical official, 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

### **Guidance Changes**

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 are 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. Do not apply designs to nails.

(Changed) Figure 3.14. DELETE

### **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) 5.1.6. 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.

## Guidance Changes

(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)

### 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

## Guidance Changes

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 para 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. DELETE

(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.

## Terms

(Added) 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.