

Colorado State University
College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Dress Code

Adopted to Ensure Professional Appearance and Biosecurity at the VTH and VDL

Effective 14 January 2002

Revised 24 May 2007

Background

In addition to providing outstanding patient care and client service, the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must put forth a professional appearance and maintain a high level of biosecurity to protect hospital personnel and patients. Students must understand the importance of professional appearance as they move from the university to the business environment. It is the role of the faculty and the administration to be the role models and managers to assure that the standard is met and maintained. The overall concept of this dress code is to require a uniform work clothing standard for all faculty, house officers, classified staff, students, hourly employees, volunteers, and Front Range Community College technicians working on the first floor of the VTH. The code will apply to the VTH and the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL) by their respective directors and faculty. This dress code is considered official VTH and VDL policy effective January 14, 2002.

General Attire

General guidelines for professional attire on the first floor of the VTH for all Hospital Services and the VDL include: clean, pressed, collared shirts and long pants for men; collared or other acceptable shirts, knit tops, sweaters, long pants or appropriate dresses or skirts for women. Clean and cleanable solid toed shoes appropriate to the working environment are required for all personnel working with patients and in laboratories where feet are subject to potential injury or contamination with infectious agents. Open toed footwear may be worn in an office environment. Exceptions to the dress code to accommodate special individual needs must be approved by the Hospital Director.

Tee shirts with or without graphics, tank tops, sweats, shorts, excessively worn or soiled clothes, exposed navels and skirts/dresses that are too short to be professional while carrying out duties as a VTH or VDL employee, volunteer, or student are not acceptable. Other clothing restrictions may be enacted by individual section leaders or supervisors subject to mediation by the VTH Board and the Biosecurity Committee.

Several areas of the VTH have already selected special uniforms as their work clothing that conforms to the general dress code. The color of the scrub suits may need to be modified to meet the following guidelines.

Scrub Suits

Scrub suits may be selected by VTH employees as primary protective clothing in certain laboratories and service units of the VTH instead of the general dress code described above. These scrubs are considered the selected primary clothing for the personnel in the area. The scrubs and smocks or other outer protective garments selected by the Service or VTH will be

supplied by the VTH or VDL depending on the administrative employer. These scrub suits will not be used in Surgery or Anesthesia. Single color scrub suits other than colors currently in use (green, tan, royal blue/purple, or orange) will be provided by the VTH for those services. Scrubs suits purchased by the VTH for dedicated hospital service will be laundered by Central Supply. A yearly allotment of scrub suits will be made to each individual and additional suits requested will be paid for by the requesting employee. “Designer scrubs” may be requested by a service and the VTH will provide an equal amount of money toward the purchase of the designer scrubs as would have been spent on the VTH-issued scrubs. Students provide their own scrubs.

Surgical Scrub Suits

Green surgical scrub suits are to be worn only in Anesthesia or Surgery. The purpose of changing into scrub suits before entering surgery is to prevent or significantly decrease the transfer of contamination from the less clean part of the VTH to the Surgery area. Surgical scrub suits may be worn to nearby areas of the VTH if a clean outer garment is worn over the scrub suit continuously protecting the suit from contamination. Scrubs or street clothing that become contaminated or soiled when worn outside the area must be exchanged by the wearer for clean surgical scrubs upon return to the Surgery/Anesthesia locker room. VTH green scrub apparel is never to be worn outside the VTH. Personal surgical scrubs worn outside of the VTH are automatically considered to be contaminated and must be washed before being worn in Surgery or Anesthesia.

Footwear worn in Surgery or Anesthesia must be clean and may be dedicated for that purpose (not worn outside the Anesthesia and Surgery areas) or clean and covered by appropriate clean shoe covers while being worn in Surgery and Anesthesia. Footwear dedicated to use in Surgery/Anesthesia may be worn in surgery without shoe covers. Dedicated Surgery/Anesthesia footwear may be worn to nearby areas of the VTH if appropriate shoe covers are used to protect them from contamination while they are outside of surgery. “Crocs” or other surgery clogs may only be used in the Surgery/Anesthesia area.

Other Alternatives and Requirements

An alternate “uniform” unique to a specific Service may be substituted for the required dress code and smock. Students on such a Service may opt not to wear the unique uniform and instead wear clothes required by the dress code and a smock or coverall allowed or required by that service.

Coveralls and boots are required for the Food Animal Hospital and Ambulatory Services, Isolation Unit, and the northeast wing (“colic aisle”) of the Equine Hospital. Special colored coveralls are provided for personnel (including students) working in the Isolation Unit and the northeast wing of the Equine Hospital. Color-coded smocks are required for Equine Outpatient and Ambulatory Services as outer protective garments. Boots are not required for the Equine Outpatient Service or in the northwest or south wing of the Equine Hospital. Foot disinfectant pads, not foot dips are used in these areas. Foot dips are used throughout the rest of the Equine and Food Animal Hospital and in the Isolation unit where boots are required.

Color-coded smocks and lab coats are required in the Small Animal Hospital (doctors-white, students-blue, staff-may vary by area). These are worn in conjunction with the required dress code.

Services that support both large and small animal patients in the VTH will follow the dress code for the particular area and patients that they are working with. For example, those working in Radiology would follow the general dress code and wear a shielding apron or smock for small animals and equine outpatients, and apron or coveralls for high-risk large animal patients. Scrub suits may be selected as the general clothing for the Service instead of the general dress code. Personnel taking radiographs in the Equine or Food Animal Hospital, where animals are housed, will require the dress code for the area.

Main Hospital, Large Animal Barn and Isolation Unit custodial/animal care personnel will continue to wear color-coded scrubs specific for their area as protective clothing. In addition, boots and coveralls may be required in the Large Animal and Isolation areas per the biosecurity dress code.

Maintenance personnel will follow the general dress code or must wear coveralls over their street clothes when working in the VTH or VDL, depending on the area of the facility requiring service.

All personnel who interact with patients must have an extra set of clean clothes available at the VTH, or with them when on Ambulatory Service, to use if their worn clothing (including smock or overall) becomes too soiled to continue wearing.

Consequences for Lack of Compliance

Employees not meeting clothing standards as identified in the dress code will be required to leave the first floor of the VTH and obtain appropriate clothing before they return. Classified staff will need to “clock out” for the time required to change clothing and return. Faculty, house officers, other doctors, and students will be required to leave the first floor of the VTH to obtain appropriate clothing. Students will be on an unexcused absence while they are gone from the hospital. VTH faculty, house officers, fellows, other clinicians, staff, or students refusing to follow the dress code will face disciplinary action through their appropriate supervisors.

Changing the Dress Code

Requested changes to the dress code must be submitted to the VTH Director for review by the VTH Biosecurity Committee. Decisions will be reported to the Director and transmitted in the VTH Hospital Board minutes and to the individual requesting the change.