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Interim Uniform Manual Change: Female Hair Styles—28 August 2018

The U.S. Navy recently implemented new female hair regulations. This change will replace Section 2202.2, Hair Styles—Female. The link provides an interactive 360-degree view of each new style. http://www.navy.mil/ah_online/um/femalehair.html

b. Women. This policy applies to female Sailors while wearing the Navy uniform and when wearing civilian clothes in the performance of duty.

(1) Acceptable Hairstyle Criteria. Hairstyles and haircuts shall present a professional and balanced appearance. Appropriateness of a hairstyle shall be evaluated by its appearance when headgear is worn. All headgear shall fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without distortion or excessive gaps. Hairstyles will not interfere with the proper wearing of headgear, protective masks or equipment. When headgear is worn, hair shall not show from under the front of the headgear. Hair is not to protrude from the opening in the back of the ball cap, except when wearing a bun hairstyle. All buns shall be positioned on the back of the head to ensure the proper wearing of all headgear.

Lopsided and extremely asymmetrical hairstyles are not authorized. Angled hairstyles will have no more than a 1-1/2 inch difference between the front and the back length of hair. Layered hairstyles are authorized provided layers present a smooth and graduated appearance.

Hair length, when in uniform, may touch, but not fall below a horizontal line level with the lower edge of the back of the collar. With jumper uniforms, hair may extend a maximum of 1-1/2 inches below the top of the jumper collar. Long hair, including braids, shall be neatly fastened, pinned, or secured to the head. When bangs are worn, they shall not extend below the eyebrows. Hair length shall be sufficient to prevent the scalp from being readily visible (with the exception of documented medical conditions).

Hair bulk (minus the bun) as measured from the scalp will not exceed 2 inches. The bulk of the bun shall not exceed 3 inches when measured from the scalp and the diameter of the bun will not exceed or extend beyond the width of the back of the head. Loose ends must be tucked in and secured.

Hair, wigs, or hair extensions/pieces must be of a natural hair color (i.e. blonde, brunette, brown, red, gray, or black). Hair extensions/pieces must match the current color of hair. Wigs, hairpieces and extensions shall be of such quality and fit so as to present a natural appearance and conform to the grooming guidelines listed herein. Tints and highlights shall result in natural hair colors and be similar to the current base color of the hair.

(2) Hairstyles. Hairstyles shall not detract from a professional appearance in uniform. Styles with shaved portions of the scalp (other than the neckline), those with designs cut, braided, or parted into the hair, as well as dyed using unnatural colors are



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not authorized. The unique quality and texture of curled, waved and straight hair are recognized. All hairstyles must minimize scalp exposure. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are authorized.

a. Three strand braids and two strand braids (also referred to as twists) are authorized. Braided hairstyles shall be conservative and conform to the guidelines listed herein.

b. Multiple braids. Multiple braids consist of more than 2 braids and encompass the whole head. When a hairstyle of multiple braids is worn, each braid shall be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (no more than 1/4 inch), and tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional, well-groomed appearance. Foreign material (e.g., beads, decorative items) shall not be braided into the hair. Multiple braids may be worn loose, or may be pulled straight back into a bun, within the guidelines herein.

c. Two individual braids. One braid worn on each side of the head, uniform in dimension and no more than one inch in diameter. Each braid extends from the front to back of the head near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., braids are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head to prevent interference with wearing of headgear). A single French braid may be worn starting near the top of the head and be braided to the end of the hair. The end of the braid must be secured to the head and braid placement shall be down the middle of the back of the head.

d. Corn rows. Must be in symmetrical fore and aft rows, and must be close to the head, leaving no hair unbraided. They must be no larger than 1/4 inch in diameter and show no more than approximately 1/8 inch of scalp between rows. Corn row ends shall not protrude from the head. Rows must end at the nape of the neck and shall be secured with rubber bands that match the color of the hair. Corn rows may end in a bun conforming to the guidelines listed herein, if hair length permits.

e. Rolls. Two individual rolls, one on each side of the head, must be near the lower portion of the hair line (i.e., rolls are closer to the top of the ear than the top of the head and will not interfere with wearing of headgear). Rolls must be of uniform dimension and no more than one inch in diameter.

f. Locks. The Lock hairstyle (Locks) for the purpose of Navy Uniform Regulations grooming standards consists of one section of hair that twists from or near the root to the end of the hair and creates a uniform ringlet or cord-like appearance. Locks may be worn in short, medium, and long hair lengths in the following manner:

(1) Locks must continue from the root to the end of the hair in one direction (no zig-zagging, curving, or ending before the end of the lock to dangle as a wisp or loose hair) and should encompass the whole head. Locks partings must be square or rectangle in shape in order to maintain a neat and professional appearance.

(2) Locks can be loose (free-hanging where no hair is added to the lock once it is started other than hair extensions that are attached at the end of the natural hair). When



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worn loose, locks will be spaced no more than three-eighths of an inch apart, diameter/width will not exceed three-eighths of an inch, and locks will be tightly interlaced to present a neat and professional military appearance. Locks may also be worn in a bun provided all hair grooming requirements are met. Locks may not be worn in combination with other hair styles (e.g. twists, braids).

(3) New growth (defined as hair that naturally grows from the scalp and has not yet been locked) will not exceed one-half inch at any time.

(4) Locks that do not meet the above standards and do not present a neat and professional military appearance will not be worn in uniform. Commanding Officers have the ultimate responsibility for determining when hairstyles are eccentric, faddish, or out of standards.

g. Ponytails. The wear of a single braid, French braid, or a single ponytail in Service, Working, and PT uniforms is authorized. The initial accessory for the ponytail will not be visible when facing forward. Authorized accessory devices must be consistent with the color of the hair. The end of the braid or ponytail may extend up to three inches below the lower edge of the collar of the shirt, jacket or coat. In spaces or environments where there are operational hazards such as rotating gear, etc., the hair may not be worn below the bottom of the collar.

(3) Hair Accessories. When hair accessories are worn, they must be consistent with the hair color. A maximum of two small barrettes, similar to hair color, may be used to secure the hair to the head. Bun accessories (used to form the bun), are authorized if completely concealed. Additional hairpins, bobby pins, small rubber bands, or small thin fabric elastic bands may be used to hold hair in place, if necessary. The intent is for pinned-up hair to be styled in a manner that prevents loose ends from extending upward or outward from the head. For example, when using barrettes or hairpins, hair will not extend loosely from the head; when hair is in a bun, all loose ends must be tucked in and secured. Hair accessories shall not present a safety or foreign object damage (FOD) hazard. Hair nets shall not be worn unless authorized for a specific type of duty. Headbands, scrunchies, combs, claws and butterfly clips, are examples of accessories that are not authorized; this list is not to be considered all inclusive.

(4) Unauthorized Hairstyles. While this list shall not be considered all inclusive, the following hairstyles are not authorized: Pigtails; braids that are widely spaced and/or protrude from the head.

(5) Grooming Standards Exception.

a. During group Command/Unit physical training, Commanding Officers are authorized to standardize unit policy for the relaxation of female hair grooming standards with regard to having hair secured to head (e.g., ponytails). Hair restraining devices, if worn, will be consistent with the current hair color.