

A Guide to Career-Wear Basics for Extension Employees Levels of Professional Dress

Professional Dress

When you are asked to dress at a certain level of Professional Dress as an Extension professional, do you know what that means? This guide has been developed to gain understanding of the basics. Extension Professional Dress can be broken down to 3 levels as follows:

- **Extension Business Professional**

This level is for conservative dress. Examples of venues: Interviews, formal affairs (banquets, awards programs, and fundraising events) where high level executives/ sponsors attend and dining and/or seating is formal

- Female – Business suit, Pant suit, Blazer/dress slacks, Dress and/or Jacket, Dress shoes
- Male – Business suit, Blazer/dress pants, Tie, Dress Shoes

- **Extension Business Casual**

This level is semi-conservative and for a more relaxed professional setting, but not casual. Very appropriate for Extension Offices and most events

- Female – Sweater or shirt with a collar, Dress pants, Khakis, Moderate length Dress or Skirt, nice shoes. **Non-tattered jeans may be acceptable on some days in the office or attending events, but would not be appropriate on all occasions for Business Casual.**
- Male – Collared Shirt and/or sweater, Polo Shirt, Dress pants, Khakis, Dress Shoes. No tie is required. **Non-tattered jeans may be acceptable on some days in the office or attending events, but would not be appropriate on all occasions for Business Casual.**

- **Extension Casual**

This level is very relaxed and not a typical, acceptable category of dress for the workplace. There are occasional Extension work environments that would find this dress acceptable such as 4-H Camp, Farm Visits, Field Days, Farmers Markets, Networking Events, etc.

- Female – Jeans (**non-tattered**), Shorts (below thigh), Capris, Organizational/University T-Shirts, Athletic Shoes, Sandals
- Male – Jeans (**non-tattered**), Shorts (below thigh), Organizational/University T-Shirts, Athletic Shoes

Extension Employees need to be mindful that they are always a representation of the University of KY and the Cooperative Extension Service. Employees are held to an acceptable standard of dress; therefore, it is unacceptable to wear “social wear” or “every day wears at home” items such as the following when “at work”.

- Female - Tops with spaghetti straps, that show cleavage, midriff or “see through”; Tee/Sweat shirts with alcohol, drug or sexual innuendos; Shorts that are above the thigh or exposing hip area; Leggings in place of pants; Jeans that are soiled, frayed, have holes or rips, or show hip area; Beach style flip flops unless as a shower accessory; Sweat suits or athletic gear unless teaching an exercise workshop or participating in an athletic event
- Male – Shirts that are cut-off or sleeveless; Tee/Sweat shirts with alcohol, drug or sexual innuendos; Shorts that are above the thigh or exposing hip area; Jeans that are soiled, frayed, have holes or rips, baggy or exposing hip area; Beach style flip flops unless as a shower accessory; Sweat suits or athletic gear unless teaching an exercise workshop or participating in an athletic event