

Dress Code Policy

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and contractors of SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd present in a professional, respectful, and safe manner while delivering or supporting services. This includes wearing clothing that upholds participant dignity, does not cause distress or sensory discomfort, and reflects the values of inclusion, safety, and trauma-informed care.

This policy also promotes a consistent standard of professional appearance, while acknowledging the diverse cultural, religious, gender, and health-related needs of our workforce.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors of SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd when working on organisational premises, in participants' homes, or in community settings where they represent the organisation.

3.0 Policy

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd is committed to ensuring that all representatives of the organisation present professionally and respectfully, in line with the NDIS Practice Standards, the NDIS Code of Conduct, the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, and relevant anti-discrimination legislation.

Our dress code supports the following principles:

- Upholding participant dignity, comfort, and safety at all times
- Reducing risk of harm, distress, or sensory triggers, particularly for participants with trauma backgrounds, mental health conditions, autism, or other sensory sensitivities
- Maintaining a professional and hygienic workplace appearance
- Accommodating staff diversity, including cultural, religious, gender identity, and disability-related needs, while maintaining safety and role requirements

All staff, volunteers, and contractors must:

- Present in clean, neat, and appropriately professional attire suitable for their role and service context
- Ensure clothing is non-restrictive and permits freedom of movement for tasks such as personal care or manual handling
- Wear appropriate, closed-toe footwear that is in good condition and safe for the work environment

- Wear personal protective clothing and equipment when required, in line with Work Health and Safety standards
- Avoid wearing clothing that is torn, ripped, revealing, or overly casual (e.g., offensive slogans, excessive skin exposure)
- Maintain a high level of personal hygiene, including grooming and cleanliness, to ensure respectful and pleasant interactions with participants, colleagues, and the public

Jewellery and accessories:

- Jewellery should be minimal and not pose a safety risk when working with participants
- Visible body piercings may be removed or covered if there is a safety or sensory concern, or if their presence is inconsistent with professional standards in high-risk roles

Staff are encouraged to raise any personal, cultural, or medical requirements that may require an adjustment to the dress code. Requests should be directed in the first instance to their supervisor and, if needed, escalated to the Manager. All requests will be considered confidentially and fairly.

In cases of uncertainty regarding dress code expectations, supervisors should provide clarification and support to ensure staff feel safe, included, and confident in their professional presentation.

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will ensure that this policy is communicated clearly to all staff and included in onboarding, orientation, and ongoing training. Any breaches of the dress code will be addressed sensitively and respectfully, with opportunities for discussion, clarification, and corrective action.

3.1 Female example

- Shirt - collar and short-sleeved
- Pants - dress shorts, $\frac{3}{4}$ length pants or long pants
- Jacket, windcheater or cardigan
- In summer, dress shorts to the knee are acceptable
- Footwear
 - enclosed
 - lace-up or slip-on
 - non-slip soles

3.2 Male example

- Shirt - collar and short-sleeved
- Pants - slacks, trousers, or dress shorts
- Footwear
 - enclosed
 - lace-up or slip-on
 - non-slip soles

3.3 Inappropriate clothing examples

The following items specifically are not to be worn:

- Sleeveless tops or singlets
- Short, tight skirts or dresses
- Thongs
- Gumboots
- Crocs
- Ugg boots

3.4 Footwear

We aim to meet our work health and safety obligations and protect our staff. Footwear must be professional, incorporate a non-slip sole, and be fully enclosed. In some roles, ankle protection may be required. Check with the Manager if unsure.

Staff must **never** wear open-toed, sling-back shoes, thongs, gumboots or crocs.

3.5 Personal Hygiene/Grooming Overview

Due to the nature of our work with vulnerable participants, high hygiene standards are expected. Staff, volunteers and contractors are to be made aware of poor hygiene's negative impact on our participants, particularly offensive odours, including stale cigarette smoke and strong perfumes. Staff must not smoke near or before working with participants to prevent offensive odours.

In line with participant safeguarding, staff and volunteers must be mindful of participant sensitivities, including avoiding strong fragrances, excessive jewellery, or attire that could cause distress, distraction, or safety risks (e.g., flowing scarves around machinery).

To support infection control and participant safety, staff are required to:

- Ensure all clothing is clean and free from contaminants (e.g., bodily fluids, dirt, pet hair)
- Change into fresh clothing daily and when clothing becomes soiled during shifts
- Wash any uniforms or work clothing regularly in line with infection control guidelines
- Not share personal protective equipment or uniforms

Staff must not wear clothing contaminated with smoke or other strong odours when working with participants, especially those with sensory sensitivities or respiratory issues.

3.6 Make-up

Staff must keep make-up to a minimum and be applied neatly.

3.7 Hair

- Hair must always be clean
- Long hair must be tied back off the face if it reaches below collar length
- Long loose hair is a hazard as it can be caught in machinery or pulled by participants

3.8 Nails

- Nails are to be kept short and clean to avoid the following:
 - Scratching or damaging participants
 - Bacteria gathering and potentially spreading
- Clear nail varnish is permitted
- Remove chipped nail polish, as this could be a health risk

3.9 Jewellery

For staff, volunteers or contractors working directly with participants, minimal jewellery should be worn; if possible, remove all jewellery whilst at work.

Jewellery is to be minimal and not interfere with any role tasks. Some jewellery may cause damage to a participant, such as scratching or tearing their skin. Participants may accidentally pull at necklaces and earrings, causing staff skin and tissue damage.

Non approved jewellery

- Dangling earrings or other sharp jewellery
- Body piercing jewellery must be removed when in attendance at work or covered
- Necklaces are to be tucked away inside blouses/shirts

The Manager determines the acceptability of jewellery and has the right to enforce the removal of any jewellery during work hours based on safety, acceptable appearance and clear communication.