

OCA CIRCULAR NO. 5-2003, January 06, 2003

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TO:

ALL EXECUTIVE JUDGES, PRESIDING JUDGES and PERSONNEL of the REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS, METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS, SHARP A DISTRICT COURTS and SHARI' A CIRCUIT COURTS

SUBJECT:

GUIDELINES IN THE WEARING OF THE PRESCRIBED OFFICE UNIFORMS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2003

The prescription of a dress code for all government officials and employees conforms to the provisions of Republic Act No. 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees). Its intent goes beyond maintaining modesty and proper decorum in the civil service. The wearing of the appropriate office attire leaves as well an impression on the public on whether or not government officials and employees perform and discharge their duties with the highest degree of, inter alia, excellence, professionalism and skill.

Being at the line with direct citizens' exposure in the administration and dispensation of justice and being housed in temples of justice, lower court officials and employees must always set the example not just of modesty and proper decorum in their day-to-day transactions with the public but also of utmost professionalism. For this reason and pursuant to Administrative Circular Nos. 10-99 and 10-A-99, series of 1999, requiring all employees of the Judiciary to wear the prescribed office uniforms on designated days of the week, the following guidelines are set for strict compliance by all lower court officials and employees:

- Entitlement to the CY 2002 Clothing Allowance. All officials and employees of the RTCs, MeTCs, MTCCs, MTCs, MCTCs, SDCs and SCCs shall be granted clothing allowance for CY 2002

1.1 National Capital Judicial Region (NCR). The clothing allowance shall be in the form of office uniforms. The following cut-off dates shall be observed in the granting of the office uniforms:

1.1.1. Entry to service on or before 1 January 2002: complete set of uniforms

1.1.2. Entry to service from 2 January 2002 until 31 December 2002: one set for each of the uniforms issued, namely:

For the males one polo barong/barong tagalog and one pair of pants (for every design)

For the females: one blouse and one skirt (for every design)

1.2. Other Judicial Regions. The clothing allowance to be given in check shall be mailed by the Checks Disbursement Division of the Financial Management Office (FMO), Office of the Court Administrator at the appropriate time that the FMO shall determine. Said allowance shall be strictly used as payment for the cost of the

materials and labor of the uniforms which may be purchased from the official modistes in the NCJR.

1.3. Male officials with Salary Grade 23 and above shall be entitled to two pieces Barong Tagalog (long-sleeved) and those with Salary Grade 22 and below shall receive two Polo Barongs (short-sleeved) for each design.

2. Schedule. The new office uniforms shall be worn starting Monday, 6 January 2003, in accordance with the following schedule:

DAY

MALE UNIFORM

FEMALE UNIFORM

Monday and Wednesday Light gray barong

Light gray pants Yellow and dark silver gray blouse with embroidery Gray pants/skirt

Tuesday and Thursday Mint green barong Dark green pants Mint green and olive green blouse with embroidery Olive green pants/skirt

Friday Appropriate office attire[*] Appropriate office attire[*]

[*]Appropriate office attire as herein mentioned refers to the requirements prescribed by Civil Service Memorandum Circular No. 19 s. 2000 (Revised Dress Code Prescribed For All Government Officials and Employees in the Workplace), the pertinent provisions of which read, as follows:

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Appropriate Attire. On those days when there is no prescribed office uniform for the day, employees shall be dressed in appropriate business attire.

The wearing of "maong" pants, although generally prohibited, may be considered as appropriate attire when paired with a collared polo/shirt (for male employees), or any appropriate blouse or shirt (for female employees).

4. Prohibited Attire[*]. The following attire shall be prohibited for all government employees when performing official functions inside the workplace:

4.1 Gauzy, transparent or net-like shirt or blouse;

4.2 Sando, strapless or spaghetti-strap blouse (unless worn as an undershirt), tank-tops, blouse with over plunging necklines;

4.3 Micro-mini skirt, walking shorts, cycling shorts, leggings, tights, jogging pants;

4.4 Rubber sandals, rubber slippers, "bakya".

5. Other Prohibitions. The following shall also be prohibited during office hours and within office premises:

5.1 Ostentatious display of jewelry, except for special occasions and during official celebrations;

5.2 Wearing of heavy or theatrical make-up.

6. Exemptions That May Be Allowed. In the implementation of this Dress code, certain exemptions may be allowed, on the following grounds:

6.1 When the nature of work of the official or employee demands that he/she wears clothing other than those prescribed above;

6.2 When religious affiliation or creed or any legitimate practice by the employee in relation thereto, requires him/her to wear a particular clothing;

6.3 Physical disabilities, and other legitimate health reasons;

6.4 Pregnant female employee are allowed to wear maternity dress during the period of their pregnancy;

6.5 Employees who lost a loved one can wear mourning clothes during the period of mourning;

6.6 Other circumstances analogous to the foregoing.

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Skirt Length. Female officials and employees shall see to it that their skirts are knee-length. Definitely, mini and micro-mini skirts are restricted.

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Appropriate Footwear. Appropriate Footwear shall mean closed formal shoes. This was clarified by the Memorandum dated 20 September 2002 of the Uniform Committee to include mules or slip-ons (step-in with toes covered), sling back shoes (shoes covering the toes but open at the back), and shoes with small opening in front but closed at the back (half-moon").

4.1 Prohibited Footwear - The following, even when worn only inside the office premises, are prohibited:

4.1.1 Step-in exposing the toes;

4.1.2 Sandals exposing the toes; and

4.1.3 Rubber sandals, slippers, bakya.

- **Non- wearing of Office Uniforms.** Except for very special and meritorious reasons, all officials and employees who have been granted the uniform allowance or issued uniforms shall wear them in accordance with the Schedule provided in Section 2 hereof. In single-sala courts, officials and employees who will seek exemptions from the wearing of the prescribed uniform shall get the permission from the Presiding Judge of their respective courts. The written exemption shall indicate the period during which they are so exempted.

In multiple-sala courts, the Executive Judge shall constitute a Uniform Committee of three (3) members, with the Clerk of Court as Chairperson, which shall act on all requests for exemption from the wearing of the prescribed uniforms.

Reports on the personnel granted exemption shall be submitted to the Uniform Committee, Office of the Chief Justice, Supreme Court.

- **Wearing of Identification Cards.** The wearing of the I.D. at all times forms part of the official uniform of the court.

- **Judges.** Being the official representatives of the entire Judiciary and the most visible symbol of Lady Justice as well as being the overall managers in their respective areas of jurisdiction, judges are not required to wear the office uniform. However, they may do so should they wish to.

- The following are not entitled to the clothing allowance for CY 2002 and hence, shall not be issued the office uniforms:

8.1 Compulsory retirees for CY 2003;

8.2 Optional retirees of CY 2002;

8.3 Transferees within the Judiciary for CY 2002; and

8.4 Transferees from the other branches of government who have already received the clothing allowance for CY 2002.

Retirees and transferees for CY 2003 are required to wear the office uniforms at their own expense. However, these retirees are entitled to receive the money value of their clothing allowance for CY 2002.

- Non-inclusion of personnel entitled to uniforms. Those who are entitled to the uniform allowance but were not included in the master list of employees should coordinate with the Office of Administrative Services, Office of the Court Administrator.

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Administrative Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance with the Guidelines. Item C of Section 22, Rule XIV (Discipline) of the "Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order No 292 (Administrative Code of 1987) and Other Pertinent Civil Service Laws" provides to wit:

"The following are light offenses with their corresponding penalties:

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(c) Violation of reasonable office rules and regulations (This includes violation of MC 19, s. 2000 [Revised Dress Code])."

Thus, subject to the requirements of due process, the following penalties shall be strictly imposed in administrative disciplinary proceedings for non-compliance with the Guidelines:

A. 1st Offense -

Reprimand

B .2nd Offense - Suspension for one (1) day to thirty (30) days

C. 3rd Offense - Suspension for two (2) months

D. 4th Offense - Dismissal from the service

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All the other pertinent guidelines provided in Circular No. 19-2001 dated 15 January 2001 of then Court Administrator Alfredo L. Benipayo on the Guidelines in the Wearing of the Prescribed Office Uniforms for the 2001 shall continue to be applicable.

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Monitoring of Compliance with the Guidelines. All Presiding Judges, Clerks of Court and Branch Clerks of Courts are hereby directed to implement the provisions of these Guidelines and to closely monitor compliance therewith. The Clerk of Court or the Branch Clerk of Court, as the case may be, shall submit a monthly report of any violation to the Uniform Committee, Office of the Chief Justice, Supreme Court, for appropriate action.

6 January 2003.

PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.

Court Administrator

[*] In addition to the above, wearing of "Capri" pants and pedal pushers are likewise prohibited.

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