



UNIFORM AND FOOTWEAR PROGRAM

Purpose

This instruction sets forth procedures for administering the uniform allowance and footwear programs.

Policy

Uniforms: All Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch personnel are required to wear uniforms (frocks) while performing duties described in Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations Part 54.31. Frocks must meet the specifications set forth in Exhibit A. Suppliers of acceptable frocks are listed in Exhibit B. The MGC Branch will pay allowances for purchasing, renting, or leasing frocks to meat graders and supervisors in accordance with the provisions of this instruction.

Footwear: The Employee Footwear Program strengthens the long-standing policies of the MGC Branch to ensure safe working conditions and to provide employees with the footwear necessary to protect their health and safety while performing meat grading and certification duties.

These Procedures comply with the Federal Uniform Allowance Act Title 5 U.S. Code 5901-5902 and Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations 591 Subpart A – Uniform Allowances. Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) Directive 4591.2 Uniform Allowance and Wearing Guidelines is incorporated by reference.

Eligibility Requirements

Uniforms: Meat graders and supervisors renting or leasing frocks must ensure that uniform allowances are used only to defray the cost of frocks and not for laundering or repairing. If frocks are rented or leased, meat graders and supervisors must provide a signed statement or copy of a rental contract showing the portion of the rental fee attributed to the frock rental for each uniform allowance claim.

Management has agreed to purchase frocks if an employee does not want to use a personal credit card. Employees should contact the Office of Field Operations (OFO) to make the request. If customized frocks are desired, then the employee must conduct their own purchase.

Meat graders and supervisors may use frocks that are supplied by applicants at that applicant's facility. If the applicant provides frocks, they must be available to all meat graders and supervisors working at that location.

With prior approval from their supervisor, part-time, mixed-tour, and intermittent employees are eligible for reimbursement of expenses associated with the purchase of frocks. Reimbursement amounts will be pro-rated based on the yearly time on duty, not to exceed the yearly maximum dollar amount.

Footwear: MGC Branch personnel regularly assigned to grading and certification activities are eligible to participate in the footwear program in accordance with the following:

1. Permanent, full-time employees are eligible for reimbursement expenses incurred in the purchase of qualifying footwear, on an as-needed basis, not to exceed the yearly maximum dollar amount. In order for footwear to qualify for reimbursement the following specifications must be met.
 - The footwear must be new; however, resoling of footwear purchased under this program is eligible for reimbursement.
 - Skid-resistant soles.
 - Water-resistant/repellent upper structure.
 - Closed heel and toe.
2. With prior approval from their supervisor, part-time, mixed-tour, and intermittent employees are eligible for reimbursement of expenses incurred in the purchase of qualifying footwear. Total reimbursements shall not exceed the yearly maximum dollar amount. In making the pre-purchase approval determinations, supervisors must consider the employee's total yearly time on duty and working conditions that affect the life of the footwear.

General Program Guidelines

Uniforms: Employees shall wear a prescribed frock in the performance of official duties. Employees may purchase frocks with personal funds and submit reimbursement requests to the OFO or they may order frocks from the OFO. Employees may only select one method of obtaining frocks.

Employees electing to use personal funds are limited to \$200.00 per fiscal year for defraying the expenses of obtaining such uniforms, including sales tax and freight charges. Allowances shall not be considered as pay, salary, or compensation for purposes of computing Federal income tax, Civil Service retirement contributions or Federal Insurance Contributions Act deductions.

Employees may elect to order frocks from the OFO in lieu of spending personal funds and submitting reimbursement requests. The OFO will distribute frocks according to the fiscal year monetary limits based on employment status (full-time, part-time, mixed-tour, intermittent). For

full-time employees, this equates to 10 frocks per year. The OFO will distribute the fiscal year limits at the time of the request. Requests for smaller quantities will not be allowed for full-time employees. Part-time, mixed-tour, and intermittent employees will receive an amount pro-rated based on their hours worked. When employees obtain their frocks from the OFO, they are not eligible to submit a claim for frock reimbursement.

Hardship replacement exceeding monetary or quantity limits is allowed under the following conditions:

1. When the employee's frocks have been lost or damaged beyond use, through an uncontrollable event for which the employee was not to blame, therefore, requiring the immediate acquisition of a new supply of frocks.
2. The Assistant Director must justify the request in writing, detailing the circumstances of the loss or damage and include a recommendation for replacement.
3. Replacement frocks are provided by OFO stock distribution, not salary reimbursement. The number of replacement frocks provided will correspond to the number of lost or damaged frocks.

Replacement Allowances for Subsequent Years:

Assistant Directors are authorized to approve payment for replacement allowances up to the annual maximum allowance of \$200.00 in the following circumstances:

1. Permanent, full-time employee replacement allowances will be on a fiscal year basis and employees will be entitled to claim the actual purchase plus applicable taxes and shipping charges or rental cost of frocks not to exceed \$200.00 per fiscal year. Employees will be entitled to a replacement allowance after the completion of the initial year's uniform allowance.
2. Part-time, mixed-tour, and intermittent employees may receive an adjusted annual replacement allowance. Assistant Directors must determine and justify the amount such employees are entitled to claim. In making such determinations, supervisors must consider the total amount of time on duty and the number of frocks required to perform the related duties. Replacement allowances for such employees shall not exceed the maximum annual allowance. Procedures for claiming replacement allowances shall be in accordance with the procedures specified for permanent, full-time employees.
3. In lieu of spending personal funds, all supervisory and field personnel can elect to order frocks from the OFO subject to the same conditions outlined in items one and two.

Footwear: Only the purchase price of new footwear, applicable taxes, and shipping/handling charges or resoling expenses, as appropriate, will be approved for reimbursement in an amount not to exceed \$200.00 per fiscal year. Other related expenses during the life of the footwear such as time and mileage reimbursement for purchase or repair, modifications to the footwear (to include insoles) to accommodate an individual need, repair/maintenance (with exception to resoling) costs, and care/cleaning materials are not eligible for reimbursement. Employees who purchase footwear and receive reimbursement in accordance with the provisions of this program shall limit the use of the footwear to official activities. Footwear

purchased and worn in accordance with the provisions of this program must comply with all applicable Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regulations and individual facility personal equipment sanitation requirements. Footwear must be maintained in a manner that complies with all applicable FSIS and plant sanitation requirements and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations for care and cleaning.

In the event that the footwear requirements of an applicant cannot be met under the provisions of this Instruction, the applicant shall bear all costs associated with providing the required footwear. Examples of applicant specific requirements may include, but not limited to, steel-toed boots, waterproof boots suitable for routine sanitizing, and the prohibitions of certain types of footwear designed primarily for non-industrial environments. As needed, meat graders and their supervisors shall review the footwear requirements of applicants in their area of responsibility to ensure that all MGC Branch personnel are properly equipped and that the service needs of the applicant are met.

Reimbursement Procedures

To claim initial or annual uniform allowances and/or footwear allowances, a Reimbursement Request Form (Exhibit C) must be submitted. Approved claims will be processed through the employee's time and attendance record and included with their salary payment.

Graders and Supervisors shall:

Complete the Reimbursement Request Form and attach the original receipt.

Submit claims to the OFO for the initial year's allowance or replacement allowance at the appropriate time.

NOTE: Employees are not eligible for reimbursement for frocks purchased from other supervisors or graders employed by the MGC Branch.

Employees are encouraged to return any new frocks or frocks in good condition to the OFO upon resignation, transfer to another department, or reassignment to a position that does not require the use of frocks and similar separations.

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Attachment A	Attachment B	Attachment C

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Exhibit A

UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS

General Requirements

Quality. All material listed in these specifications shall be washable and treated to be spot resistant.

Workmanship. All garments shall be made and tailored in a neat, modern manner.

Specific Requirements

MATERIAL:	Sanforized, 10-ounce, herringbone twill cotton or a minimum of 50 percent polyester and the remainder cotton blend.
COLOR:	White.
STYLE:	Single breasted, button or snap closures.
POCKETS:	Each frock shall bear four pockets and two false pockets as follows:
<u>Upper:</u>	Two breast pockets with or without topstitching. Upper pockets to measure 5 to 6 inches wide on top and 5-1/2 to 6-1/2 inches in depth.
<u>Lower:</u>	Two pockets with or without topstitching. Pockets to measure 6-1/4 to 7-1/4 inches wide and 6-1/2 to 7-1/2 inches deep.
<u>False Pockets:</u>	Opening to inner clothing to measure 6 to 8 inches, approximately parallel to lower pockets.
COLLAR AND LAPELS:	Collar to be of the same fabric and color as frock and 2-1/2 to 3-1/2 inches in width.
BELT:	Sewn into back of frock. (Optional)
CONSTRUCTION:	All edges, except hems to be top stitched 5/16 inch.
SLEEVES:	Set-in sleeves with or without cuff. If cuffed, may have button or snap closing.
BACK:	Top piece back with center vent. Vent length to be in proportion to frock length with a slight overlap.

Exhibit B

SUPPLIERS OF ACCEPTABLE FROCKS

The following is a list of suppliers with an inventory of frocks that meet the uniform specification requirements. This is only a partial list and does not preclude meat graders or supervisors from purchasing frocks meeting uniform requirements from other manufacturers or suppliers. In an effort to compile and maintain an accurate and more complete list, supervisors should inform the MGC Branch of suppliers that should be included or deleted from this list.

Bunzl/Koch Supplies, Inc. 528 East 19 th Avenue North Kansas City, MO 64116 (800) 456-5624 www.KochSupplies.com	Superior Uniform Group 11735 NE Sumner Unit C Portland, OR 97220 (800) 275-6433
Bunzl Packers Engineering and Supply 6720 North 16 th Street Omaha, NE 68112 (402) 451-1252 www.KochSupplies.com	Hantover, Inc PO Box 410646 Kansas City, MO 64137 (877) 853-0230 www.Hantover.com
Dickson Industries, Inc. 2425 Dean Avenue Des Moines, IA 50317 (515) 262-8061 www.DicksonIndustries.com	Universal Over-All 1060 West Van Buren Street Chicago, IL 60607 (800) 621-3344 www.UniversalOverall.com

Exhibit C

Reimbursement Request

Employee Name _____ Social Security Number _____
(Please print)

Frocks (NTE \$240 per fiscal year) Amount Claimed \$ _____

Safety Shoes (NTE \$160 per fiscal year) \$ _____

Date Claim Submitted: _____

Attached is my receipt for the above requested reimbursement. Items for which reimbursement is requested were purchased and will be in used in accordance with applicable Meat Grading and Certification Branch Instructions and Notices.

(Employee Signature)

Approved for Payment

(Approving Official Signature)

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)

Your reimbursement claim for:

Frocks \$ _____ Safety Shoes \$ _____

Will be included on your pay period _____ salary check.

(OFO Staff Processor)