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SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**



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Air Force Culture

AIR FORCE STANDARDS

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This Air Force Instruction (AFI) implements Air Force Policy Directive 1, *Air Force Culture*. The importance of the Air Force's mission and inherent responsibility to the Nation requires its members to adhere to higher standards than those expected in civilian life. As Airmen, we are proud of our high standards. Through self-discipline, we adhere to them, and we hold our fellow Airmen accountable to follow our standards. This instruction applies to all Air Force uniformed personnel (Active Duty, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard) and provides specific guidance on required standards of conduct, performance, and discipline. Where appropriate, this instruction makes reference to other instructions where more detailed standards may be found.

This instruction is directive in nature and failure to adhere to the standards set out in this instruction can form the basis for adverse action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). An example would be a dereliction of duty offense under Article 92.

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Chapter 1

THE AIR FORCE ENVIRONMENT

1.1. Overview. The Air Force environment, whether at home station or forward deployed, encompasses the actions, values and standards we live by each and every day, whether on or off-duty. From defined missions to force structure, each of us must understand not only where we fit, but why.

1.2. Mission. The mission of the United States Air Force is to *fly, fight, and win...in air, space, and cyberspace*. To achieve that mission, the Air Force has a vision:

1.2.1. The United States Air Force will be a trusted and reliable Joint partner with our sister Services known for integrity in all of our activities, including supporting the Joint mission first and foremost. We will provide compelling air, space, and cyber capabilities for use by the combatant commanders. We will excel as stewards of all Air Force resources in service to the American people, while providing precise and reliable *Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power* for the Nation.

1.3. Core Values. The Air Force Core Values are *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do*. *Integrity* is a character trait. It is the willingness to do what is right even when no one is looking. It is the “moral compass”—the inner voice; the voice of self-control; the basis for the trust that is essential in today’s military. *Service Before Self* tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. *Excellence In All We Do* directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward vector of accomplishment and performance. Our core values define our standards of conduct. Our standards of conduct define how Airmen should behave when interacting with others and when confronting challenges in the environment in which we live and work. (United States Air Force Core Values, 1 January 1997).

1.4. Oath. Upon entering the Air Force, all Airmen voluntarily took an oath. Each time one accepts continued service or reenlists, you reaffirm your belief in and commitment to that oath. You promise to protect and defend our American freedoms, and agree to live by a set of military rules and standards. Your oath is consistent with and encompasses our core values...*Integrity, Service, and Excellence*. Your actions must always be consistent with the oath you took and our core values. (10 U.S.C. § 502; 5 U.S.C. § 3331; AFI 36-2606, *Reenlistment in the United States Air Force*; AFI 36-2501, *Officer Promotions and Selective Continuation*).

1.4.1. Enlistment Oath.

“I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.”

1.4.2. Oath of Office (Commissioning Oath):

“I, _____, having been appointed a (grade in which appointed) in the United States Air Force, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

1.4.3. The Airman’s Creed:

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
I AM A WARRIOR.
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION’S CALL.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,
A TRADITION OF HONOR,
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,
MY NATION’S SWORD AND SHIELD,
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,
I WILL NEVER FALTER,
AND I WILL NOT FAIL.

1.5. A Way of Life. The mission must be accomplished, even at great risk and personal sacrifice. Airmen are always subject to duty, including weekends, holidays, and while on leave. If ordered, you must report for duty at any hour, at any location and remain as long as necessary to get the job done. In order for the mission to succeed, you must always give your best. You must strive to be resilient: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually prepared to meet the challenges inherent to being a member of a fighting force, both in the deployed environment and at home station. You must live by rules and standards that are often more restrictive than those found in civilian life. For example, general orders are often published to provide clear and concise guidance specifically tailored to maintaining good order and discipline in the deployed setting. Our current operations place us in areas where local laws and customs or mission requirements prohibit or restrict certain activities that are generally permissible in our society. Airmen must respect and abide by these restrictions to preserve relations with our host nation and to support military operations with friendly forces. No mission, particularly a combat mission, can succeed without the discipline and resilience produced by strict compliance with these rules. Consequently, members who will not do their best to meet these high standards

detract from the mission and, in compliance with the UCMJ and Air Force instructions, will not be retained in the Air Force.

1.6. Customs and Courtesies. Our customs and courtesies reflect the unique nature of our profession and guide significant aspects of our behavior. They emphasize our strong bond with other military members as well as our mutual respect for one another and our civilian leadership. (AFI 34-1201, *Protocol*; AFPAM 34-1202, *Guide to Protocol*).

1.6.1. Saluting. Saluting is a courtesy exchanged between members of the Armed Forces as both a greeting and a symbol of mutual respect. The basic rules regarding saluting are:

1.6.1.1. You salute the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, all superior commissioned and warrant officers, all Medal of Honor recipients, and superior officers of friendly foreign nations.

1.6.1.2. You do not, typically, salute indoors. However, it is appropriate to salute when formally reporting to a superior officer and during promotion ceremonies and decoration ceremonies.

1.6.1.3. You salute outdoors when in uniform, both on and off base, unless:

1.6.1.3.1. Precluded by duties, safety, injury, carrying objects which cannot be transferred to the left hand, or other legitimate reason. In this case, a respectful oral greeting is appropriate. If the senior member's right arm is incapacitated, you will still salute.

1.6.1.3.2. You are in a designated "no salute" area.

1.6.1.3.3. You are a member of a military formation or work detail, in which case, only the senior member of the formation or detail salutes.

1.6.1.3.4. Saluting due to grade while in PT gear is authorized, but not required.

1.6.1.3.5. Salutes between individuals are not required in public gatherings, such as sporting events, meetings, or when a salute would be inappropriate or impractical.

1.6.1.4. You salute the President, the Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, and senior officers in vehicles when distinguished by vehicle plates and/or flags.

1.6.2. Respect for the Flag. The Flag of the United States is one of the most enduring and sacred symbols of our country. It represents the principles and ideals you have pledged to defend and for which many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Airmen shall treat it with the same respect due to the highest military and public officials. Airmen will never burn (except for reverent disposition of an unserviceable Flag), deface, mutilate, or treat with contempt or any other form of disrespect. (18 U.S.C. § 700; AFI 34-1201).

1.6.2.1. When in uniform, you salute the Flag as it passes in front of you in a procession or parade. Salute six paces before the Flag passes before you, and hold your salute until the Flag has passed six paces beyond your position.

1.6.2.2. National Anthem. You must show respect for the National Anthem and Flag both indoors and outdoors, in uniform and in civilian clothing. (36 U.S.C. § 301).

- 1.6.2.2.1. Indoor Ceremonies. When in uniform, face the Flag (if visible) or music. Stand at attention at the first note and maintain that position until the last note without rendering a salute. If in civilian clothing, stand at attention and place your right hand over your heart.
- 1.6.2.2.2. Outdoor Ceremonies. When in uniform, face the Flag (if visible) or music. Stand at attention and salute at the first note of the National Anthem and hold until completion of the last note. If in civilian clothing you should either stand at attention and place your right hand over your heart or render a salute. Civilian hats will be removed.
- 1.6.2.3. During the playing of the national anthems of friendly nations, render the same customs and courtesies as those given during the playing of the United States National Anthem.
- 1.6.2.4. Reveille and Retreat. Flags on stationary flag staffs are only saluted during reveille, retreat, or special ceremonies. In these cases, when outside and in uniform, consistent with safety and mission requirements, stop what you are doing, face the direction of the Flag (if visible) or the music. Stand at parade rest during the sounding of retreat (which precedes the lowering of the Flag), then come to attention and salute during the playing of the National Anthem or "To the Color." If you are driving a vehicle, stop if consistent with safety and mission requirements. You and your passengers should sit quietly until the music ends.
- 1.6.2.5. Taps. Many installations across the Air Force play "Taps" to signify "lights out" at the end of the day. For these purposes, there are no formal protocol procedures required. However, upon hearing "Taps" at a military ceremony (military funeral/memorial ceremony), proper protocol dictates Airmen in uniform render appropriate honors, indoor and outdoor, until the music is complete.
- 1.6.2.6. Pledge of Allegiance. When in uniform and outdoors, stand at attention, face the Flag, remain silent, and salute. If indoors, stand at attention, face the Flag, and remain silent (where the participants are primarily civilians or in civilian attire, reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance" is optional for those in uniform). When not in uniform, stand at attention, face the Flag, place your right hand over your heart, and recite the "Pledge of Allegiance." Civilian hats will be removed.
- 1.6.3. Respect for Retirees. Retirees are entitled to the same respect and courtesies as active military members. They will be addressed by their retired grade on all official records and official correspondence, except for correspondence and other matters relating to a retiree's civilian employment. (AFI 36-3106, *Retiree Activities Program*).
- 1.6.4. Respect for Authority. Junior personnel shall employ a courteous and respectful bearing and mode of speech toward senior personnel. When addressed by an officer senior to them, junior personnel shall stand (unless seated at mess or unless circumstances make such action impracticable or inappropriate). Junior personnel shall walk or ride to the left of senior personnel whom they are accompanying. Senior personnel enter an aircraft or automobile last and leave first.

1.6.5. Titles of Address. Military personnel are addressed by their grade or title. Pay grade terms (e.g., E-9, O-6) are not to be used to address or identify military personnel. Officers are addressed by their grade (e.g., captain, major, general, etc.) or “sir” or “ma’am.” Physicians and dental officers may be addressed as “doctor.” Chaplains may be addressed as “chaplain” or by their ecclesiastical title. Enlisted personnel are addressed as follows:

TITLE	TERM OF ADDRESS
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force or Chief
Chief Master Sergeant	Chief Master Sergeant or Chief
Senior Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant or Sergeant
Master Sergeant	Master Sergeant or Sergeant
Technical Sergeant	Technical Sergeant or Sergeant
Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant or Sergeant
Senior Airman	Senior Airman or Airman
Airman First Class	Airman First Class or Airman
Airman	Airman
Airman Basic	Airman

1.7. Structure. To perform effectively in the Air Force, you must understand the structure and some of the systems that govern its operation.

1.7.1. Chain of Command. The chain of command provides the command, control and communication necessary to accomplish the mission. Each “link” in the chain is a level of responsibility and authority extending from the President of the United States—as Commander in Chief—through the Secretary of Defense, to Combatant Commanders, and then through each commander at every level, including your command. Different levels within the chain have different responsibilities and authority; however, all levels have some things in common. Each level in the chain is responsible for all lower levels, and accountable to all higher levels. The chain cannot work without loyalty to every level. Loyalty up and down the chain makes a system efficient and effective. Everyone is a part of, and subject to, the chain of command and must use it properly. The key principle is to resolve problems and seek answers at the lowest possible level. If it becomes necessary for you to continue up the chain, you should, if practicable, request assistance at each level before going to the higher level and advise that you are doing so. (There are qualifications to this guidance covered in subparagraphs 1.7.4.5 and 1.7.4.6 below).

1.7.2. First Sergeant. The United States Air Force First Sergeant is an expeditionary leader serving in a time honored special duty position, rich in custom and tradition. The position is critical to the execution of the unit mission. Although the first sergeant does not typically have a specific operational or technical expertise requirement, he or she must thoroughly understand how decisions affect unit performance. The first sergeant primarily supports the mission through interaction, support, and management of Airmen and families. The first sergeant works directly for and derives authority from the unit commander, and serves as the commander’s critical link within the unit for all matters concerning its members. The first sergeant must ensure that the force understands the commander’s policies, goals, and objectives, and must also ensure support agencies, i.e., security forces, civil engineer,

medical facilities, services, etc., are responsive to the needs of unit personnel and their families. (AFI 36-2113, *The First Sergeant*).

1.7.3. Command Chief Master Sergeant (CCM). The CCM advises, carries out, and monitors the commander's and organizational policies, programs, and standards applicable to the assigned enlisted force. CCMs are the commander's key enlisted advocate and advisor on operational effectiveness, readiness, training, professional development, utilization of the force, operations tempo, standards, conduct, and quality of life. The CCM gives advice and initiates recommendations to the commander and staff in matters pertaining to all assigned enlisted personnel. CCMs establish a senior non-commissioned officer (SNCO) support channel made up of other key assigned enlisted leaders such as, but not limited to, other CCMs, career field managers (CFM), functional area managers (FAM), group superintendents, commandants, and first sergeants. This support channel does not supersede the set chain of command, but is utilized to efficiently augment and support the in-place chain of command. As the senior enlisted leader of the command, the CCM is charged with overseeing and being the driving force behind enlisted training and professional development programs. The CCM and the commander jointly coordinate and ensure all assigned Airmen are ready for all in garrison and deployed missions. (AFI 36-2109, *Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and Command Chief Master Sergeant Programs*).

1.7.4. Staff Agencies. Other agencies support and strengthen the chain of command. These include the different staff functions (Chaplain, Staff Judge Advocate, Equal Opportunity, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, Inspector General, etc.). These agencies are sources of professional advice or assistance in particular areas. These agencies are not a substitute for the chain of command, but instead, support the chain and make it more efficient and effective.

1.7.4.1. Chaplain. The Chaplain Corps provides spiritual care and the opportunity for Air Force members and their families to exercise their constitutional right to the free exercise of religion. This is accomplished through religious observances, pastoral care, and confidential counseling, and advising leadership on spiritual, ethical, moral, morale, core values, and religious accommodation issues. (AFI 52-101, *Planning and Organizing*).

1.7.4.2. Staff Judge Advocate (SJA). The SJA provides legal services required by commanders and staff agencies. The SJA advises commanders on a broad spectrum of legal and policy issues (including disciplinary matters), provides personal legal assistance to Airmen and their dependents, and reviews actions for legal sufficiency in a wide variety of areas.

1.7.4.2.1. Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Because military discipline enhances combat capability, because the military environment and duties are unique, and because military personnel serve throughout the world, a special system of laws and courts are required to maintain good order and military discipline. The UCMJ is the system of criminal justice that helps protect your constitutional rights while in the Air Force, and it safeguards the Air Force's state of military discipline and, thus, combat effectiveness by holding UCMJ offenders accountable. It is a federal law enacted by Congress to allow military commanders to carry out authority expressly granted in the U.S. Constitution. The UCMJ contains specific articles that enforce

good order and discipline in the military. The UCMJ and the rules and regulations used to administer it not only contain laws you must obey, but also provide procedures for court-martial and nonjudicial punishment. The fact that you are required to obey military laws does not excuse you from your duty as a citizen to comply with the civil laws of the community where you live or work (*UCMJ; Manual For Courts-Martial, United States (2012 edition)*; AFI 51-201, *Administration of Military Justice*; AFI 51-202, *Nonjudicial Punishment*).

1.7.4.2.2. Personal Legal Assistance. Legal offices provide confidential legal assistance in connection with personal civil legal matters, which in turn support and sustain command effectiveness and readiness. Assistance is provided in a number of areas, such as wills and estate planning, consumer and financial affairs, family law, the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act, veterans' reemployment rights, and taxes. Assistance is subject to the availability of legal staff resources and expertise and gives priority to mobilization and deployment-related issues. (AFI 51-504, *Legal Assistance, Notary, and Preventive Law Programs*).

1.7.4.3. Public Affairs (PA). The purpose of PA operations is to communicate timely, accurate, and useful information about Air Force activities to Department of Defense (DoD), the Air Force, and domestic and international audiences. The PA representative is the commander's principal spokesperson, advisor, and member of the personal staff. PA advises the commander on the implications of command decisions, actions, and operations on foreign and domestic public perceptions and plans, executes, and evaluates PA activities and events to support overall operational success. The PA representative must have the resources to provide information and imagery to the staff, public, media and subordinate units in near real time. PA should be involved in planning, decision making, training, equipping, and executing operations as well as integrating PA activities into all levels of command. (AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Management*)

1.7.4.4. Equal Opportunity (EO). The purpose of the EO program is to enhance unit cohesion, mission readiness, and mission accomplishment by ensuring equal treatment and employment opportunity for all members. The Air Force has a zero-tolerance policy towards unlawful discrimination of any kind, including sexual harassment. This zero-tolerance policy means that once unlawful discrimination is alleged, appropriate action will be taken to investigate/resolve allegations and stop unlawful behavior. Air Force members must not unlawfully discriminate against, harass, intimidate, or threaten another person on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, reprisal, or genetic information. The EO office can assist with these issues by providing subject matter expertise, assessing EO barriers, providing complaint resolution services, and advising commanders. Additionally, although not an EO matter, the Air Force's goal of maintaining a harassment-free environment for its members also includes taking action to prevent harassment based on sexual orientation. Allegations of sexual orientation harassment should be addressed through command channels or the Inspector General. (AFI 36-2706, *Equal Opportunity Program Military and Civilian*).

1.7.4.5. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program. The United States Air Force will not tolerate sexual assault. Sexual assault undermines our mission readiness, directly contradicts our core values, and erodes the trust and confidence upon which our institution is built. All Airmen have the enduring responsibility to foster a

climate of dignity and respect and to promote and ensure a culture that will not tolerate sexual assault or behaviors that support it. (AFI 36-6001, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program*)

1.7.4.6. The Inspector General (IG). The IG acts as an extension of the commander by serving as his/her eyes and ears to be alert to issues affecting the organization. The IG's responsibilities are categorized into two distinct and separate systems: The Air Force Inspection System and the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program.

1.7.4.6.1. The Air Force Inspection System. The purpose of the Air Force Inspection System is to assess unit efficiency, effectiveness, operational readiness, compliance with applicable guidance and nuclear surety (as applicable). It extends to all aspects of the Air Force environment, including all organizations and all levels of command. (AFI 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*).

1.7.4.6.2. The Air Force Complaints System. Under the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program, a member has the right to present a complaint without fear of reprisal. This right is ensured in Public Law and codified in DoD and Air Force guidance directives and instructions. Complaints may be submitted in person, by phone, through electronic means or in writing to supervisors, first sergeants, commanders, members of any level of the IG system, someone higher in the chain of command or members of congress. Use of the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program is always available; Public Law states that no person may restrict a member from making a lawful communication to an IG or member of congress. However, a member should attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level using supervisory channels before addressing them to higher level command or the IG. In addition to having the right to present personal complaints, a member has the responsibility to report fraud, waste, abuse, or gross mismanagement; a violation of law, policy, procedures, instructions, or regulations; an injustice; and any abuse of authority, inappropriate conduct or misconduct through appropriate supervisory channels or the IG. (AFI 90-301, *Inspector General Complaints Resolution*).

1.8. Diversity. Diversity is a military necessity. Air Force capabilities and warfighting skills are enhanced by diversity among its personnel. At its core, such diversity provides our Total Force an aggregation of strengths, perspectives, and capabilities that transcends individual contributions. Air Force personnel who work in a diverse environment learn to maximize individual strengths and to combine individual abilities and perspectives for the good of the mission. Our ability to attract a larger, highly talented, diverse pool of applicants for service with the Air Force, both military and civilian, and develop and retain our current personnel will impact our future Total Force. Diversity is about strengthening our force and ensuring our long-term viability to support our mission to *fly, fight, and win...in air, space, and cyberspace*. (AFPD 36-70, *Diversity*).

1.9. Air Force Instructions. The Secretary of the Air Force approves the promulgation of all Air Force Instructions (AFIs). Unless expressly stated otherwise in a particular instruction, or a waiver has been granted by the appropriate authority, all Airmen must follow AFIs. AFIs do not provide optional guidance, and failure to comply with AFIs can result in disciplinary action.

Chapter 2

CONDUCT

2.1. Overview. The Air Force has a very important national defense mission; and you, as a member of the Air Force, have serious responsibilities for carrying out that mission. You are responsible for following orders, performing specific daily tasks related to your duties, and living up to the high standards of the Air Force. Maintaining good order and discipline is paramount for mission accomplishment. Our core values demand that Airmen treat others with genuine dignity, fairness, and respect at all times. Each Airman is entitled to fair, scrupulous, and unbiased treatment, and each Airman has the obligation to care for, teach, and lead others. We must also maintain loyalty to the Air Force's core values and standards and maintain professionalism and respect for others regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation. This respect for others not only involves personal interaction, but also extends to communications and interactions in social media and cyberspace. You must never degrade the public's trust and confidence in the United States Air Force and in you.

2.2. Professional Relationships. While personal relationships between Air Force members are normally matters of individual choice and judgment, they become matters of official concern when they adversely affect or have the reasonable potential to adversely affect the Air Force by eroding morale, good order, discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, or mission accomplishment. (AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*).

2.2.1. Professional relationships are those interpersonal relationships consistent with the Air Force core values: *Integrity First*, *Service Before Self*, and *Excellence In All We Do*. They occur and can be developed face-to-face, by telephone, or by social media such as e-mail, blogs, and websites. Appropriate professional relationships with all Air Force personnel are vital to the effective operation of the Air Force and to maintain good order and discipline. Professional relationships among your subordinates, co-workers, and superiors must be maintained at all times, regardless of the forum in which they occur. The mere fact that maintaining professional relationships may be more difficult under certain circumstances does not relieve you from the responsibility to maintain Air Force standards.

2.2.2. With respect to relationships between superiors and subordinates, whether they are other military members or civilian employees, there is a balance that recognizes the appropriateness of a relationship. Social interaction that contributes appropriately to unit cohesiveness and effectiveness is encouraged. Relationships are unprofessional, whether pursued and conducted on or off-duty, when they detract from the superior-to-subordinate authority, or reasonably create the appearance of favoritism, misuse of an office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests.

2.2.3. Unprofessional relationships can exist between officers, between enlisted members, between officers and enlisted members, and between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel. There is a long-standing and well-recognized custom in the military service, as well as set forth in the UCMJ and Air Force Instructions, that officers and enlisted personnel shall not fraternize or associate with each other under circumstances that prejudice the good order and discipline of the Armed Forces of the United States.

Officers and enlisted members will not form personal relationships with each other on terms of military equality, whether on or off-duty, and regardless of the forum in which such relationships are formed or carried out (e.g., face-to-face, over the telephone, in correspondence, or in cyberspace). Unprofessional relationships conducted via electronic means (e.g., by telephone, computer social networks, or websites) are no less corrosive to good order and discipline, and abuse by members in these forums shall result in the same degree of accountability. Indeed, the advent and proliferation of such communications networks only heightens the need for vigilance in avoiding unprofessional relationships. This includes avoiding inappropriate electronic friendships that compromise and degrade the officer/enlisted command and supervisory relationships.

2.2.4. Fraternalization is a crime under the UCMJ. Fraternalization is an offense committed by an officer, who develops a personal relationship of inappropriate familiarity with an enlisted member, it can occur between males, between females, and between males and females. Excessive socialization and undue familiarity, real or perceived, degrades leadership and interferes with command authority and mission effectiveness. For example, if an officer consistently and frequently attends enlisted personnel parties or events other than those that are officially sponsored, or an enlisted member refers to an officer, to whom he/she is not related, by his/her first name or nickname, it may create situations that negatively affect unit cohesiveness. With the proliferation of modern computer and telephonic means of communications (e.g., computer social networks, e-mail, twitter, texting), the task of maintaining professionalism requires a heightened awareness to ensure full compliance regardless of the forums used. If this standard is not strictly adhered to, positions of authority may be weakened; peer group relationships may become jeopardized over concerns of equal, impartial treatment by superiors; job performance may erode; and unit morale and *esprit de corps* may suffer.

2.2.5. Relationships in which one member exercises supervisory or command authority over another can become unprofessional. Similarly, differences in grade increase the risk that a relationship will be, or will be perceived to be, unprofessional because senior members in military organizations exercise authority, or have some direct or indirect organizational influence, over the duties and careers of junior members. The danger for abuse of authority, or the perception of such abuse, is always present. The ability of the senior member to influence, directly or indirectly, assignments, promotion recommendations, duties, awards, and other privileges and benefits, places both the senior member and the junior member in vulnerable positions. Once established, unprofessional relationships, such as inappropriate personal relationships and favoritism, do not go unnoticed by other members of a unit and call into question the superior's impartiality toward the subordinate and his or her peers. Failure to maintain relationships between members, and between members and other members' family members, in a strictly professional manner undermines morale, good order, and discipline and corrodes the indispensable respect for the chain of command and unit cohesion.

2.2.6. Unprofessional relationships in Joint Service operations must also be avoided. They can have as adverse an impact on morale, discipline, and respect for authority and unit cohesion as unprofessional relationships occurring between members assigned to the same Service.

2.2.7. Civilian employees and contractor personnel are an integral part of the Air Force. They contribute directly to readiness and mission accomplishment. Consequently, military members of all grades must maintain professional relationships with civilian employees and government contractor personnel they work with, supervise or direct, and must avoid relationships that adversely affect or are perceived to adversely affect morale, discipline, respect for authority, and unit cohesion, or that violate law or regulation.

2.2.8. Airmen do not tolerate bullying, hazing, or any instance where an Airman inflicts any form of physical or psychological abuse that degrades, insults, dehumanizes, or injures another Airman (unless it is part of an approved formal training program). It is the obligation of each Airman in the chain of command to prevent such conduct.

2.3. Military Ethics. As a member of the Air Force, you must practice the highest standards of conduct and integrity, not only in your job, but also in your relationships with other people, in your personal financial dealings, and in your interaction with the civilian community. Your code of ethics must be such that your behavior and motives do not create even the appearance of impropriety. Your commitment to integrity will lead the way for others to follow.

2.3.1. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.101) establish the basic ethical principles that must be followed by every government employee:

2.3.1.1. Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

2.3.1.2. Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

2.3.1.3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

2.3.1.4. An employee shall not solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

2.3.1.5. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

2.3.1.6. Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the government.

2.3.1.7. Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

2.3.1.8. Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

2.3.1.9. Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

2.3.1.10. Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official government duties and responsibilities.

2.3.1.11. Employees shall disclose fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

2.3.1.12. Employees shall satisfy, in good faith, their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as federal, state, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

2.3.1.13. Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

2.3.1.14. Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or ethical standards. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or ethical standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

2.3.2. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.202, *et seq.*) provide guidance on gifts from outside sources:

2.3.2.1. Employees may generally not accept gifts given to them from a prohibited source or given to them because of their official position. A prohibited source is an entity or company that: (i) seeks to do business with DoD; (ii) does business with DoD; or (iii) is regulated by DoD.

2.3.2.2. Items that may be accepted include: (i) modest food and refreshment not offered as part of a meal; (ii) items intended solely for presentation that have little intrinsic value, such as plaques, certificates, and trophies; (iii) discounts and favorable rates offered to all government or all military personnel; (iv) items with a value of \$20 or less (not to exceed \$50 per calendar year from a single source); and (v) gifts based on outside personal or business relationships.

2.3.3. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.302, *et seq.*) provide guidance on gifts between employees:

2.3.3.1. Employees may generally not accept gifts from subordinates or employees that make less pay than themselves.

2.3.3.2. Employees may not solicit a donation or a contribution from other personnel for a gift to a superior, make a donation for a gift to a superior official, or accept a gift from subordinate personnel, except for voluntary gifts or contributions of nominal value (not to exceed \$10), on occasions of special personal significance (such as marriage, birth of a child, etc.), or occasions that terminate the superior-subordinate relationship (such as retirement, permanent change of station or assignment, etc.).

2.3.4. Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), DoD 5500.07-R, provides additional guidance concerning acceptable ethical conduct by DoD personnel:

2.3.4.1. Employees may not engage in any personal commercial solicitation or sale to any military personnel junior in rank or grade at any time—on or off-duty, in or out of uniform. This does not apply to the one-time sale of personal property, such as a home, boat or car, where the junior buyer approaches the senior seller to engage in the transaction and the junior buyer receives fair market value for any purchase made. It also does not apply to off-duty DoD personnel employed—with appropriate supervisor

permission—in retail stores or other situations that do not include solicited sales. (JER 2-205).

2.3.4.2. Employees may not gamble or bet while on government-owned or leased property or while in a duty status, unless specifically authorized. (JER 2-302).

2.3.4.3. Employees may not endorse, or appear to endorse, fundraising for any charitable purpose. However, there are limited exceptions to this prohibition including endorsement or the appearance of endorsement of fundraising for the Combined Federal Campaign, the Air Force Assistance Fund, and other organizations composed primarily of DoD employees or their dependents when fundraising among their own members for the benefit of welfare funds for their own members or their dependents. (JER 3-210).

2.3.4.4. As members of private non-profit and professional organizations, employees must avoid using, or appearing to use, their title, position, or Air Force organization in a way that might suggest Air Force or DoD endorsement of the private organization. Employees may participate in the management of such an organization so long as those duties do not interfere with their official Air Force duties and the position of responsibility was not offered to them because of their official Air Force position. (JER 3-300).

2.3.5. Air Force acquisition personnel have special challenges and responsibilities. The Air Force conducts operations in many countries where bribery and graft are commonplace in dealings with commercial and governmental entities. When we contract with host nation companies for goods and services, Air Force acquisition personnel must safeguard the American concepts of free and open competition, support for small and disadvantaged businesses, and good fiscal stewardship of public funds. Air Force acquisition personnel must perform their duties with integrity beyond reproach.

2.3.6. Air Force personnel must not engage in any conduct that is improper (including conduct which gives the appearance of impropriety), illegal, dishonest, or otherwise brings discredit to the Air Force.

2.4. Duty Performance. Your primary responsibility is to do your part to accomplish the mission; however, accomplishing the mission requires more than just technical proficiency. You must be a team member. You must be responsive and accomplish your duties in a timely and efficient manner. You must be dependable and responsible for your own actions and avoid the need for supervisors and commanders to constantly monitor or follow up on your activities. You must be a good Wingman for your fellow Airmen and other co-workers. Quality and quantity of work are both important since they are the primary measures of efficiency and productivity. Your conduct and performance must be guided by the Air Force core values, and be consistent with the safe and proper fulfillment of instructions, directives, technical orders, and other lawful orders.

2.5. Wingmen. Airmen at all levels of command have a role as wingmen. The Air Force culture is centered on the idea that a wingman will always safeguard his or her lead, and it adheres to the belief that a lead never lets his or her wingman stray into danger. All Airmen are encouraged to be good wingmen. Being a good wingman means taking care of fellow Airmen—and taking action when signs of trouble are observed, especially in situations where Airmen appear as if they are about to make a poor decision, are in despair or show signs of hurting

themselves or others. Commanders also must recognize when their people need help and know where to send them to get it. Supervisors are the first line of defense for the well-being of the people they supervise. Often they are in a position to spot the first signs of trouble and are in the best position to listen and provide, or arrange for, needed assistance.

2.6. Drug Abuse. The illegal use of drugs, or improper use of legal drugs, is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

2.6.1. The knowing use of any intoxicating substance (other than the lawful use of alcohol, tobacco products, or prescription drugs), which is inhaled, injected, consumed, or introduced into the body in any manner to alter mood or function is prohibited and will not be tolerated. These substances include, but are not limited to: designer drugs, such as “spice;” inhalants, propellants, solvents, household chemicals, and other substances used for “huffing”; prescription or over-the-counter medications when used in a manner contrary to their intended medical purpose or in excess of the prescribed dosage; and naturally occurring intoxicating substances, such as salvia divinorum. The possession of any intoxicating substance, with the intent to use the substance in a manner that would alter mood or function without legal authorization, is also prohibited and will not be tolerated. Drug abuse is absolutely incompatible with Air Force core values and standards of behavior, performance, and discipline necessary to accomplish the Air Force mission. Drug abuse can seriously damage your physical and mental health, jeopardize your safety and the safety of others, and adversely affect the success of the Air Force mission and national security. It can result in a less than honorable discharge from military service and criminal prosecution, to include prison, and loss of rank and pay under the UCMJ and local and state criminal laws. (Article 112a, UCMJ; AFI 44-120, *Military Drug Demand Reduction Program*).

2.6.2. Air Force members with substance abuse problems are encouraged to seek assistance from the unit commander, first sergeant, substance abuse counselor, or a military medical professional through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program. The primary objectives of the program are to promote readiness, health, and wellness through the prevention and treatment of substance misuse and abuse; to minimize the negative consequences of substance misuse and abuse to the individual, family, and organization; to provide comprehensive education and treatment to individuals who experience problems attributed to substance misuse or abuse; and to restore function and return identified substance abusers to unrestricted duty status or to assist them in their transition to civilian life, as appropriate. (AFI 44-121, *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program*).

2.7. Alcohol Abuse. Air Force policy is to prevent alcohol abuse and alcoholism among its personnel and their dependents; to assist Air Force personnel in resolving alcohol-related problems; and to ensure humane management and administrative disposition of those who are unable or unwilling to be restored to full, effective functioning. Alcohol abuse, such as driving while intoxicated, can also lead to disciplinary action, including criminal prosecution under the UCMJ and local and state criminal laws. You are responsible for exercising good judgment in the use of alcohol. State and foreign country drinking age laws, including those in a deployed environment, must be obeyed both on and off-duty. Your use of alcohol must not adversely affect your duty performance or your conduct on or off-duty, to include your ability to be recalled, if specifically required, (e.g., when serving in an on-call status) to your duty station during scheduled off-duty time.

2.8. Financial Responsibility. Just like regular physical fitness is important for your health, “fiscal fitness” is equally important to your overall well-being as an Air Force member. You are expected to review your leave and earnings statement on a regular basis to ensure the accuracy of your pay and allowances, file travel vouchers on a timely basis, and use the government travel card for authorized purchases only. You are expected to pay your debts on time. Failure to satisfy just financial obligations is not consistent with the standards of conduct expected of Air Force members. Two of the key tools to individual financial responsibility are the development and maintenance of a personal budget and effective management of one’s debt. Members must be prudent in the use of credit cards and other forms of revolving credit. High-interest, short-term credit agreements, such as vehicle title loans, should be avoided. Additionally, you are expected to provide regular and adequate support for your dependents, including payments required by court order. To assist you with your financial affairs, the Air Force provides financial management information and personal counseling, as well as legal assistance.

2.9. Dependent Care. The Air Force must have people in the right place at the right time, unencumbered and ready to perform the jobs for which they have been trained. Unless specifically deferred or exempted, all members of the Air Force must be available at all times to perform a full range of military duties and assignments, including but not limited to, permanent change of station or assignment, unaccompanied tours, temporary duty including short or no-notice deployments, alerts, recalls, extended hours, or shift work. (AFI 36-2908, *Family Care Plans*).

2.9.1. Each Air Force member must make and maintain dependent care arrangements that will allow the member to be world-wide deployable at all times. Advance planning is the key to dependent care arrangements. Every Air Force member with dependents must take the initiative to use all available military and civilian resources at his or her disposal, including other-than-immediate family members, to ensure dependents receive adequate care, support, and supervision in a manner that is compatible with the member’s military duties.

2.9.2. Dependent care plans must cover all possible situations in both the short and long-term, and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to another individual during the absence of the military sponsor.

2.9.3. Single parents and military couples with dependents face additional challenges. Nevertheless, these parents must be worldwide deployable on short notice. Suitable arrangements must be planned in advance for a nonmilitary member to assume custody of dependent(s) in the event the military member(s) is/are unavailable to provide dependent care due to military obligations.

2.10. Self Reporting Criminal Conviction. If you are above the pay grade of E-6, on active duty, or in an active status in a Reserve Component and are convicted of any violation of a criminal law, you must report, in writing, the conviction to your first-line military supervisor within 15 days of the date of conviction. Depending on the level of your security clearance, there may be additional, more specific reporting requirements (e.g., reporting arrests, in addition to convictions) which must be met. (AFPD 36-29, *Military Standards*).

2.11. Government Neutrality Regarding Religion. Leaders at all levels must balance constitutional protections for an individual's free exercise of religion or other personal beliefs and the constitutional prohibition against governmental establishment of religion. For example, they must avoid the actual or apparent use of their position to promote their personal religious beliefs to their subordinates or to extend preferential treatment for any religion. Commanders or supervisors who engage in such behavior may cause members to doubt their impartiality and objectivity. The potential result is a degradation of the unit's morale, good order, and discipline. Airmen, especially commanders and supervisors, must ensure that in exercising their right of religious free expression, they do not degrade morale, good order, and discipline in the Air Force or degrade the trust and confidence that the public has in the United States Air Force.

2.12. Free Exercise of Religion and Religious Accommodation. Supporting the right of free exercise of religion relates directly to the Air Force core values and the ability to maintain an effective team.

2.12.1. All Airmen are able to choose to practice their particular religion, or subscribe to no religious belief at all. You should confidently practice your own beliefs while respecting others whose viewpoints differ from your own.

2.12.2. Your right to practice your religious beliefs does not excuse you from complying with directives, instructions, and lawful orders; however, you may request religious accommodation. Requests can be denied based on military necessity. Commanders and supervisors at all levels are expected to ensure that requests for religious accommodation are dealt with fairly.

2.13. Political Activities. Generally, as an individual, you enjoy the same rights and have the same responsibilities as other citizens. However, because you are a member of the United States Air Force, the manner in which you exercise your rights is limited in some cases. Under our democratic system, the military, as a group, must remain politically neutral and divorced from partisan politics (AFI 51-902, *Political Activities by Members of the US Air Force*). There are some general rules that you should remember:

2.13.1. You have the right and duty as an American citizen to vote and to voice your opinions concerning political matters; however, you must be careful that your personal opinions and activities are not directly, or by implication, represented as those of the Air Force. Further, Article 88, UCMJ, prohibits commissioned officers from using contemptuous words against the President, the Vice President, Congress, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of a Military Department, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the governor or legislature of any state, territory, commonwealth, or possession in which he or she is on duty or present. Enlisted personnel who make derogatory or disrespectful statements about political leaders may violate Article 134, UCMJ, when their military status is associated with the statements (such as making these comments on a social networking site where the member's employment with the Air Force is also listed).

2.13.2. You may attend partisan political rallies or speeches when not in uniform, not on duty, and when solely acting as a spectator. You may not speak before a partisan political event, ride, or march in a partisan political parade, or engage in partisan political fundraising activities, regardless of whether or not you are in uniform.

2.13.3. You may make a monetary contribution to a political organization, party, or committee favoring a political candidate or slate of candidates.

2.13.4. You may support or endorse a particular political candidate, party, cause, or issue through displaying a bumper sticker on your personally owned vehicles. No larger vehicle signs are permitted. You may not display any type of political sign, banner, poster, or similar device in your office or work area or at your on-base residence, even if that residence is part of a privatized housing development.

2.13.5. You may not attend or participate in any demonstration or other political activity on a military installation, unless that event has been approved by the installation commander. You may not sign or circulate a petition on a military installation, unless the petition has been approved by the installation commander. Political discussions are generally not appropriate in the Federal workplace. You may not attempt to influence the view, position or vote of any subordinate except to generally encourage participation in the voting process.

2.14. Public Statements. The issuance of public statements on official Air Force matters is the responsibility of cognizant unit or installation commanders and their public affairs representatives. Ensuring that official statements are properly worded and approved avoids statements that do not reflect official Air Force policy or that, if taken out of context, could be misleading to the public. Public statements should be fully coordinated with the appropriate public affairs office before release. (AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*).

2.14.1. To ensure that Air Force official information is presented professionally, personnel should: make certain that it is accurate, prompt, and factual; is confined to their particular areas of expertise; avoids the hypothetical and speculative; accurately reflects Air Force policy; is presented simply and honestly; and complies with the spirit and letter of the Secretary of Defense's principles for public information.

2.14.2. The Air Force is committed to making our operations as transparent as possible to the American public. To that end, requests for information should be forwarded to the public affairs office or other appropriate Air Force offices. Those offices include the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) office, legal office (for litigation matters), Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) or Security Forces (SF) (for law enforcement information), etc. Air Force policy provides for clearance by the public affairs officer at the lowest level where competent authority exists to judge the security and policy aspects of the information submitted for review. The FOIA statute, implemented through Air Force instruction, directs maximum disclosure of Air Force records, subject to the exemptions from release contained within the FOIA law. All personnel are responsible for safeguarding classified and for official use only (FOUO) information, personally identifiable information (PII) and the identities of deployed service members and their families. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

2.15. Use of Social Media. Airmen interact with individuals through many forms of communication, including face-to-face, telephone, letter, e-mail, text messages, social networking services, and social media. Social networking services include weblogs, message boards, video sharing, and social networking sites, (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Google Apps) which are web-based services that allow individuals and communities of people to stay in touch. Compliance with the standards discussed in this instruction does not vary, and is not otherwise dependent on the method of communication used. You are personally responsible

for what you say and post on social networking services and any other medium. Regardless of the method of communication used, Air Force standards must be observed at all times, both on and off-duty. (AFI 31-401, *Information Security Program Management*; AFI 33-129, *Web Management and Internet Use*; AFH 33-337, *Tongue and Quill*; AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*; AFI 35-107, *Public Web Communications*; AFI 35-113, *Internal Information*; www.defense.gov/socialmedia/education-and-training.aspx).

2.15.1. Operational security is vital to the accomplishment of the Air Force mission. The use of social media and other forms of communication that allow you to communicate with a large number of people brings with it the increased risk of magnifying operational security lapses. Classified, FOUO, and other official DoD information and documents are prohibited from being posted on social networking services or transmitted via non-DoD e-mail accounts without proper authority.

2.15.2. Your obligation to maintain appropriate communication and conduct with officer and enlisted personnel, peers, superiors, and subordinates (to include civilian superiors and subordinates) is applicable whether you communicate via a social networking service or other forms of communication, such as e-mail, instant messaging, or texting.

2.15.3. You must avoid offensive and/or inappropriate behavior on social networking platforms and through other forms of communication that could bring discredit upon on the Air Force or you as a member of the Air Force, or that would otherwise be harmful to good order and discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, morale, mission accomplishment, or the trust and confidence that the public has in the United States Air Force.

2.15.4. Airmen who provide commentary and opinions on internet blogs that they host or on others' internet blogs, may not place comments on those blog sites, which reasonably can be anticipated, or are intended, to degrade morale, good order, and discipline of any members or units in the U.S. Armed Forces, are Service-discrediting, or would degrade the trust and confidence of the public in the United States Air Force.

2.15.5. When you are expressing personal opinions on social media sites and can be identified as an Airman, you should make clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Air Force. While service members may generally use their rank and service even when acting in their personal capacity, they should not do so in situations where the context may imply official sanction or endorsement of their personal opinions.

2.15.6. You should recognize that social network "friends" and "followers" may potentially constitute relationships that could affect determinations in background investigations and periodic reinvestigations associated with security clearances.

2.15.7. If you violate federal or state laws and regulations and policies through inappropriate personal online activity, or any other form of communication, you are subject to disciplinary action.

Chapter 3

APPEARANCE

3.1. Overview. First impressions are often drawn based upon appearance. That is why your appearance matters as much as your attitude about being a military member. Projecting a good military image reflects not only on you personally, but also on the Air Force. Appearance matters both on- and off-duty and involves more than just the clothes you wear. Projecting a professional image is paramount. (AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*).

3.2. Dress and Personal Appearance. Pride in one's personal appearance and wearing of the uniform correctly enhances the *esprit de corps* and the professional image essential to an effective military force. All Air Force members must maintain a high standard of dress and personal appearance. This standard consists of five elements: neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. The first four elements are absolute, objective criteria needed for the efficiency and well-being of the Air Force. Although the fifth element—military image—is subjective, it is critical because other people, both military and civilian, draw certain conclusions about individual Airmen and the Air Force based on what they see. When in uniform or civilian clothes in an official capacity, members must present a professional image:

3.2.1. Members, while in uniform, will not stand or walk with hands in pockets except to insert or remove an item.

3.2.2. Members, while in uniform or in civilian clothes in an official capacity, will not engage in public displays of affection. However, brief displays of affection may be permitted in situations where physical contact is commonly accepted etiquette such as one's wedding, graduation, promotion, or retirement ceremony, or upon departure for or return from deployment.

3.2.3. Members, while in uniform, will not smoke or use smokeless tobacco products except in designated smoking areas.

3.2.4. Members will not consume food or beverages while walking in uniform. Beverages may be authorized during wear of physical training (PT) uniform and commanders may authorize food and/or beverage consumption during special functions.

3.2.5. Members will not use personal electronic media devices while walking in uniform except in emergencies or when official notifications are necessary. However, ear pieces may be authorized during individual PT when wearing the PT uniform. Military customs and courtesies always take precedence.

3.3. Personal Grooming. While every Air Force member may, within limits, express individuality through his or her appearance, the Air Force has defined what is and is not an acceptable professional military image in terms of personal grooming. Except for minor variations based on gender differences, all Air Force personnel must comply with the same personal grooming standards found in AFI 36-2903. Commanders have the responsibility to determine whether an individual's personal grooming is within standards. Supervisors also have the responsibility to determine compliance and to correct violations regardless of whether the particular situation is addressed in AFI 36-2903.

3.3.1. **Tattoos/Brands/Body Markings.** Members may not have or obtain tattoos, brands, or other markings anywhere on the body that are: obscene; commonly associated with gangs, extremist, and/or supremacist organizations; or that advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination. Members who have or obtain unauthorized content tattoos, brands, or markings are required to initiate removal or alteration. Members must not display excessive tattoos, brands, or other markings while wearing any uniform combination except the PT uniform. AFI 36-2903 defines “excessive” as any tattoo, brand, or marking that exceeds 25 percent of the exposed body part and is visible when wearing the uniform. Members with excessive tattoos, brands, or other markings must initiate removal/alteration to bring the tattoo into compliance. Commanders are authorized to grant a waiver allowing complete coverage of the excessive tattoo. The member must maintain complete coverage using available uniform items (e.g., long-sleeved shirt, pants, dark hosiery, etc.) or initiate removal or alteration.

3.3.2. **Body Piercings.**

3.3.2.1. While in uniform on or off a military installation, with the exception of earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry, or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

3.3.2.2. While in civilian attire on official duty on or off a military installation, with the exception of earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry, or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

3.3.2.3. While in civilian attire off-duty on a military installation, with the exception of wear in areas in and around military family and privatized housing or earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

Note: Women may wear small (not exceeding 6mm in diameter), spherical, conservative white diamond, gold, white pearl, or silver earrings as a set with any uniform combination. If the member has multiple holes in her ear, she is authorized to wear only one set of earrings in the lower earlobes.

3.4. Uniforms. Wearing the Air Force uniform means carrying on a tradition—one that identifies the person as a member of the profession of arms. The Air Force uniform is plain yet distinctive, and presents the appearance of a military professional. While in uniform, Air Force members must adhere to standards of neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. Members will: procure and maintain all mandatory uniform items; follow local supplements and procedures regarding wear of the uniform; and keep their uniforms neat, clean, buttoned, and properly maintained. Members are responsible for knowing the authorized uniform combinations and the correct placement of ribbons, insignia, and other uniform items.

3.4.1. **Authorized Wear of the Uniform:**

3.4.1.1. **Military Duties.** Members wear the appropriate uniform while performing military duties unless authorized to wear civilian clothes. Members assigned to non-Air Force organizations wear the Air Force equivalent uniform to the dress observed in the

assigned organization. If authorized to wear civilian clothes on duty, members must still comply with Air Force appearance and grooming standards unless the member has obtained a proper waiver for operational necessity.

3.4.1.2. Travel. If departing from or arriving at commercial airports in the continental United States, any authorized combination of uniform, except the flight duty uniform, may be worn. If departing from and arriving at a military airfield via United States government aircraft or contracted United States government commercial flights, any authorized combination of the uniform is appropriate. When traveling in an official capacity on commercial air overseas, members should consult the DoD foreign clearance guide for authorized and expected uniform wear. Members who wear civilian clothes during official travel must ensure that their clothing is neat, clean, and appropriate for the mode of travel and destination.

3.4.1.3. Social Functions. Air Force members attending a military event must wear the appropriate uniform or civilian attire as requested by the host or hostess or directed by the commander. If the uniform is worn to civilian social functions, members should wear the service dress uniform, semiformal uniform, mess dress uniform, or formal uniform.

3.4.2. Prohibitions on Wear of Uniform. Air Force members will not wear any uniform combination or any uniform items in the following situations:

3.4.2.1. When attending a meeting of, or sponsored by, an organization, association, movement, or group that: the Attorney General of the United States has named as totalitarian, fascist, communist, or subversive; advocates or approves acts of force or violence to deny others their rights under the United States Constitution; or seeks to change the United States government by unconstitutional means.

3.4.2.2. When participating in or attending public political speeches, interviews, picket lines, marches, or rallies, or in any public demonstration when participation might imply Air Force sanction of the cause or if the purpose may be to advocate, express, or approve opposition to the Armed Forces.

3.4.2.3. When it would discredit the Armed Forces.

3.4.2.4. When furthering political activities, private employment, or commercial interests.

3.4.2.5. When engaged in off-duty, civilian employment.

3.4.2.6. When participating as a defendant in civilian court proceedings if a conviction would bring discredit to the Air Force.

3.4.2.7. Air Force members may not wear distinctive uniform items with civilian clothes. Distinctive uniform items are those items that are unique to the uniform, such as grade insignia, ribbons, cap devices, badges, uniform jackets (not to include the PT jacket), and other United States or Air Force insignia.

3.4.2.8. When eating at off-base restaurants where most diners wear business attire, or at establishments that operate primarily to serve alcohol, Air Force members will not wear the Airman battle uniform (ABU) or flight duty uniform.

3.4.2.9. When using frequent flyer miles to upgrade to business or first class, Air Force members may not wear military uniforms. Even when an upgrade is legitimate, wearing of the uniform may create the public perception of the misuse of government travel resources; therefore, wear of the uniform should be avoided under these circumstances.

3.5. Physical Fitness. Air Force members must be physically fit to support the Air Force mission. An active lifestyle increases productivity, optimizes health, and decreases absenteeism, which helps maintain a higher level of readiness. Also, by maintaining a lean and fit appearance, Air Force members project the proper military image. The fitness assessment provides commanders with a tool to assist them in determining the overall fitness of their military personnel. The Air Force fitness assessment uses a composite fitness score based on aerobic fitness, muscular strength, and body composition. Age and gender-specific fitness assessment score charts are provided in AFI 36-2905, *Fitness Program*. Commanders and supervisors should incorporate fitness into their organizational culture to encourage members to maintain physical fitness and good health in order to meet expeditionary mission requirements. However, each Air Force member is ultimately responsible for keeping himself or herself in good physical condition. (AFI 36-2905, *Fitness Program*).

3.6. Housing. Air Force members and their families may live in private sector housing, government-owned housing on a military installation, or military privatized housing on or off a military installation. In government-owned or privatized housing on a military installation, Airmen will ensure that their homes are maintained in a clean and orderly fashion. Regardless of the type of housing, all Air Force members are responsible for the proper care and use of their home, and for the conduct of their dependents, guests, and pets. However, as specific rules may differ for private sector housing, government quarters, and military privatized housing, members should be familiar with the regulations and restrictions particular to their lease or homeowners agreement.

NORTON A. SCHWARTZ
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

- AFPD 1, *Air Force Culture*, 7 August 2012
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