

## CROSS DRESSING: SOCIAL MEDIA FAQs and GENERAL GUIDANCE

ALNAV 057/10 dated 192031Z AUG 10 with SUBJ: Internet-based Capabilities Guidance - Unofficial Internet Posts provides guidance to all Navy personnel regarding unofficial posts on the internet, including those pertaining to DON-related content and discussions. It also provides guidance about the best practices for use of internet-based capabilities in a personal capacity. Specifically, paragraph 3 and 3.C. provide intent and general guidance on appropriate unofficial internet posts.

The following comes from the Navy Command Social Media Handbook that command PAOs should have a copy of:

"When it comes to your position as command leadership, your conduct online should be no different than conduct in the rest of your life and you should hold that same standard to your Sailors and personnel. If evidence of a violation of command policy, UCMJ, or civil law by one of your Sailors comes to your attention from social media then you can act on it just as if it was witnessed in any other public location. This adds an ethical wrinkle to friending or following your subordinates, but the key is for you to maintain the same relationship with them at work as you do online and to be clear about that."

"Communicate expectations about online interactions with your Sailors and personnel. The Navy encourages Sailors to serve as ambassadors to online communities. The Navy asks Sailors to live Navy Core Values online."

Social Media and Cross-Dressing Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Q: Is it authorized for a service member to be actively cross dressing in public?

A: It depends. A member could not depart the ship in cross-dress nor could they attend military functions in cross-dress. But, a member could theoretically walk around town (INCONUS) with no Navy/military affiliation apparent. OCONUS would not be authorized as you are a representative of the United States and U.S. Navy in a foreign country in an official capacity even while on liberty.

2. Q: Is it authorized for service members to utilize social media outlets to post pictures of themselves in drag (cross dress) and utilize tags that reference the US Navy? IE: HashTags for Twitter, ect.

A: No.

3. Q: Is it authorized for service members to post pictures NOT in drag (cross dress) and reference hash tags for homosexuality and the US Navy as one on social media's such as Twitter?

A: This one is harder and I am not sure that you have given us enough information to answer thoroughly. While we support all of our Sailors no matter their sexual orientation, we do expect everyone to conduct themselves professionally on and offline. To answer your question, it really depends upon what the hashtag is and how he or she is contributing to that conversation. Professionally and educating the rest of those in that conversation about the Navy would be something we can support.

4. Q: Is it authorized for service members to utilize social media outlets to post combined pictures (collage apps) while in drag (cross dress) and then a picture of the service member in uniform? Not in drag while in uniform, just two pictures to make one?

A: No. Service members are restricted from cross dressing when their service affiliation is apparent. A social media site where the service member has already affiliated him or herself with the Navy, such photos inherently link the Navy with cross dressing and would be prohibited. While the Navy encourages Sailors to serve as ambassadors to online communities, we also ask Sailors to live Navy Core Values online.

#### Navy Policy Guidance on Cross-Dressing:

There is no specific Navy policy on cross-dressing, nor does Navy think that one is necessary. The following are some points a command must consider. The Navy has full confidence in leadership's ability to apply common sense to Navy regulations and make decisions that are in keeping with good order and discipline.

There is no statutory prohibition on cross-dressing. Limitations on servicemembers who engage in cross-dressing are contained in Department of Defense (DOD) and Navy regulations regarding enlistment, appointment, separation, discipline (UCMJ), and uniforms, and dress and appearance.

Navy Uniform regulations, Section 1101: General Information, para. 1, states that "The purpose of the U.S. Navy Uniform Regulations is to: (1) Provide descriptions of all authorized U.S. navy uniforms and components, and (2) Provide guidance for all Navy activities prescribing uniform wear in order to present a uniform image worldwide. It is issued by direction of the Chief of Naval Operations and carries the force of a General Order. Any procedures or components, regarding uniforms or grooming, not discussed in these regulations are prohibited.

Section 7101, para 1 (Civilian Clothing) states that "Commands are authorized to suspend the wear of civilian clothing for individuals who fail to wear civilian clothing as outlined in this section. Civilian clothes privilege may also be suspended for those whose appearance may bring discredit upon the Navy, or who fail to maintain adequate uniforms or seabag requirements properly. Regional commanders and the senior officers present may suspend the privilege of wearing civilian clothing to meet local conditions."

Section 7101, para 2 (Casual Civilian Attire) states that "Naval personnel shall ensure that their dress and personal appearance are appropriate for the occasion and will not discredit the Navy. Current styles and fashions which are conservative and in good taste are authorized."

Looser standards apply to Sailors INCONUS in a pure civilian setting and/or in the privacy of their own home and is governed more by our 1st Amendment rights. If they are attending a command/military function in civilian attire the more conservative dress rules and military regulations apply.

Clarifying civilian dress policy and Navy Standards of Conduct for a command function prior to the event is advised. Counseling noncompliant members would be

the recommended first step in the case of any violations to conservative civilian attire/good order and discipline. Disciplinary action may be warranted in cases where members flagrantly violate regulations and or continue the behavior after they have been counseled. Recommend consulting the local SJA in such cases.