

## Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

### Reader Question: Make Sure Dress Code Is More 'Business' Than 'Casual'

**Question:** We do not want to make employees wear uniforms, but we want a dress code that will ensure professional attire. Previously, the optometrist trusted the employees to choose tasteful attire on their own, but we've seen too many mini-skirts and flip-flops lately. What can we do?

Hawaii Subscriber

**Answer:** You are right to consider a dress code for your medical office. A lack of consistent clothing among staff in any business can hurt credibility, and a sloppily dressed medical staff can signify lack of professionalism and hurt your credibility and image.

Now, no one is recommending a dark business suit for each staffer, but office personnel should dress professionally. When formulating your office dress code, be sure to choose a code that:

- allows staff to be comfortable enough to perform all job duties, and
- shows that employees care enough about their jobs (and by extension, their patients) to look professional.

When done correctly, good old business casual can work just fine for front-office employees. The key is setting the right parameters for staff to follow so business casual doesn't go horribly wrong.

If business casual is the choice for you, make sure to observe these basic guidelines:

- No denim
- No sweat outfits
- No sneakers
- No T-shirts
- No skirts above the knee
- No hats.

Remember to have your business casual policy in writing so your employees will have a reference point. Just saying the office has a business casual dress code will leave staff with too much leeway in choosing their outfits, which could lead to another onslaught of flip-flops and mini-skirts.