

E-PME  *Enlisted*
PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Body Markings Policy 3.C.05

Learning Objective(s): **EXPLAIN** the Coast Guard’s policy regarding tattoo, body markings, body piercing and mutilation.

Why You Need to Know This

Upon entering the Coast Guard you were asked by the recruiter if you had any tattoos, brands or body piercings. At the time, you may have wondered why you were asked this question. Although the Coast Guard allows individual expression through body art, it must balance this expression by ensuring the workforce presents a sharp, professional military appearance to the public we serve. Additionally, Coast Guard policy regarding this topic dictates that individual body art must be consistent with the Coast Guard’s core values, of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty. Body art deemed to be incompatible with Coast Guard policy and/or core values can detract from the mission by negatively impacting morale and by undermining public confidence. Understanding these policies can help you avoid making decisions that could jeopardize your Coast Guard career or cost you time and money to correct.

This lesson will provide you with the information you will need to know about the Coast Guard's tattoo, body markings, piercing and mutilation policy.

Topics Covered

This section will cover the following topics:

- Prohibited Tattoos, Brands, Body Mutilations or Modifications
- Guidelines for Body Markings
- Guidelines for Body Piercing (Visible)
- Guidelines for Body Piercing (Concealed)
- Final Authority

At the end of this lesson you will be required to participate in a learning activity. You are encouraged to first review the learning activity and the sign off requirements located in the “**You and Your Supervisor**” section of this lesson. Reviewing this information before you begin the lesson will allow you to take proper notes and focus on key learning points.

**Prohibited
Tattoos, Brands,
Body Mutilation
or Modifications**

Tattoos, brands, intentional scarring or mutilation, or modifications of the head, face (including inside the mouth), hands and neck are **prohibited** unless required for legitimate medical purposes as described below.

Also prohibited are any markings of the body that:

- Are contrary to the published basic core values of the Coast Guard
- Show political endorsement
- Advocate or symbolize any type of discrimination, sexual images, supremacist or extremist groups, gangs, or drug use
- Are prejudicial to good order and discipline
- Are of a nature to bring discredit upon the service
- Include intentional body mutilation or modification (e.g. scarring, excessive ear piercing/stretching, tongue splitting, beneath the skin decorative implants, decorative tooth plating/engraving, etc.)

**Guidelines for
Body Marking**

Any markings on the neck area may not show above the collar of the Light Blue Shirt.

Any tattoos or brands near the collarbone may not be visible when wearing a v-neck t-shirt under the Light Blue Shirt.

Tattoos on the hand in the form of a ring may not to exceed 1/4 inch are authorized on the wearer's fingers (not thumbs) with the limitation of one tattoo per hand. This policy aligns with the **Uniform Regulation Manual 1020.6 (series)** in regards to wearing rings while in uniform.

Permanent eyeliner makeup in the form of cosmetic tattooing is authorized for female members. The tattoo(s) shall not be brightly colored, shall be no more than 1/8 inch wide, and must not extend past the outer corner of the eye. Permanent eyeliner should be conservative, in good taste and blend in with member's complexion. No other permanent makeup shall be authorized.

In regards to excessive tattooing, members are authorized tattoos with no limitation on size or percentage of coverage. In the case of branding no more than one brand, not to exceed 4"x4", may appear anywhere on the body.

**Guidelines
Body Piercing
(Visible)**

No piercing shall be made through the ears, nose, tongue, chin, eyebrow or any body part that would be visible in uniform for members other than authorized earrings for women.

All facial jewelry other than earrings for women shall be prohibited while wearing:

- The uniform
- Civilian clothes on a military installation (onboard ship or base)
- Civilian clothes at a command-sponsored function.

Note: Individuals with preexisting unauthorized piercing shall discontinue the use of those piercing to allow for eventual healing.

**Guidelines
Body Piercing
(Concealed)**

Other body piercings concealed by uniform are strongly discouraged. Under no circumstances shall a concealed piercing and accompanying jewelry be visible or interfere with a member's professional appearance while:

- In uniform
 - Onboard a Coast Guard unit
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**Final Approval
Authority**

If a command has difficulty judging whether a tattoo/brand or body piercing is in accordance with the uniform regulations, they shall contact the **Uniform Regulation Program Management at Commandant (CG-122)**. Final judgment will be made at this level.

Learning Activity



To successfully complete this requirement you will need to recall at least one fact from each of the **five topic areas** covered in this lesson. From these five facts you must develop five questions and answers. Using the bank template found at the end of this section, **create five flash cards**. These flash cards will be useful to you later as you prepare for the E-PME Advancement Qualification Exam (AQE).

Sample Flash Card

Example Question:

What are the limitations for body markings on the neck area?

Answer:

They may not show above the collar of the Light Blue Shirt.

For You and Your Supervisor

In order to meet the sign-off requirement for this lesson **YOU** must:

1. Draft an email message containing your five questions and answers.
2. On the “To” line enter the name of your supervisor (second class petty officer or above).
3. On the “cc” line enter the following address:
D11-PF-TCP-EPME@uscg.mil
4. On the “Subject” line enter the words “BODY MARKING FLASH CARDS.”
5. Before sending, review for spelling errors, proper greeting, and proper closing.
6. Send email.

Before signing off on this requirement your **SUPERVISOR** must:

1. Review questions and answers to ensure the information is correct and can be found in the lesson.
2. Review for spelling errors, proper greeting, and proper closing.
3. Provide the member with corrective feedback and answer any questions they may have related to this topic.
4. Sign-off the check-off sheet on the Record of Enlisted Professional Military Education (E-PME) Performance Requirements.

Note: The E-PME Program Manager will review the questions and answers for use as Official E-PME flash cards.

References

The following references were used in this lesson, they can be found at [CG Directives at CG-612](#):

- Uniform Regulations, COMDTINST M1020.6 (series)
 - Tattoo, Body Markings, Body Piercing, and Mutilation Policy, COMDINST 1000.1 (series)
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Blank Flash Card

Question:

Answer:

Question:

Answer: