LOOKING THE PART:
Professionalism,
Uniform, and
Hygiene Policy

YOUR UNIFORM
The chef's uniform has a long and proud heritage, and at The Culinary Institute of America, you'll be carrying on this great tradition. After all, “professionalism” is one of the college’s core values—and you play a big part in upholding this value by maintaining a professional appearance every day as you carry out your foodservice duties at the CIA.

YOU’VE GOT QUESTIONS; WE’VE GOT ANSWERS
Every entry date, many of the questions we get from incoming students often center around the uniform. What is the “dress code?” What do I need to bring to campus with me? The following information is intended to help answer these questions and give you a general sense of what you’ll need before you get to campus and after you arrive.

HERE’S WHAT WE’LL GIVE YOU
When you arrive on campus, you’ll be issued five pairs of checkered pants, two neckerchiefs, three aprons, and three side towels. Prior to your arrival, you will be directed to pre-order these items through an online ordering system. On your first day, we’ll fit you for your personally embroidered CIA chef’s jacket. Since chef’s jackets are difficult to size properly if you haven’t owned one before, we want to make sure that the ones we embroider with your name fit properly. You’ll be issued temporary, plain chef’s jackets that you will return when your five personal jackets are delivered the following week.

You’re responsible for:
• Kitchen shoes—you will need these during your first week. They must be black, slip-resistant, have an enclosed heel, and be of sturdy, non-athletic construction.
• Laundering and ironing your own uniform—laundry facilities are in your residence hall.
• Alterations to your uniforms—you’ll try on your uniforms on Day One and, if they don’t fit properly, have an opportunity to exchange them. Chef’s jackets with your name embroidered on them cannot be returned. You will also receive the table service uniform appropriate to your degree. When you return from externship, you’ll be issued an additional five chef’s jackets to make sure you look your best.

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW
Keep the following points in mind when you’re in an academic building on days the campus is open:
• You must be clean-shaven, with sideburns not exceeding the middle of the ear for men. Beards are not permitted.
• Mustaches must be neatly trimmed and may not extend below or beyond the corner of the lips.
• Facial jewelry, including jewelry in eyebrows, eyelids, lips, tongue, upper ear, or nose, is not permitted. (This includes clear plugs.)
• Plain white undergarments are required for both men and women.
• Colored or logo T-shirts are not permitted.
• Leather or denim clothing is not permitted.
• Wallet chains, visible key rings, lanyards, and straps are not permitted.
• Hats, other than the chef’s toques, are not to be worn.
In all instances, hair must be a natural color, groomed, and clean. No hair colors such as green, blue, or pink, and no outlandish hairstyles such as Mohawk cuts will be permitted.

THE CHEF’S UNIFORM
Here it is, the uniform that proudly proclaims to the world that you’re a professional chef:

• CIA-issued cleaned and pressed chef’s checkered pants of proper fit, neither pegged nor cuffed. Pants must be hemmed above the natural heel and below the ankle.

• CIA-issued cleaned and pressed white chef’s jacket with embroidered name.

• CIA-approved clean white neckerchief.

• CIA-issued clean white paper chef hat.

• CIA-issued cleaned and pressed white apron.

• Black or white socks only.

• One plain ring and one watch are the only jewelry permitted. A CIA-issued group leader or student government pin, or a veteran’s pin, will be permitted on the right front collar of the uniform.

• White undergarments are required for both men and women—colors or logos are not permitted.

• The breast pocket of the chef’s jacket may only contain one clip-on pen and one clip-on thermometer.

• Fingernails should be short, trimmed, clean, neat, and free of polish.

• For sanitation reasons, gloves, aprons, side towels, and hats are not worn when: going to the restroom, taking out the garbage, entering or leaving academic buildings, or eating meals in student dining rooms.

• All students in culinary, baking, and meat classes must wear black, sturdy work shoes that provide support to stand and work for long hours. They must be non-athletic shoes with a closed back, non-slip soles, and black laces (when applicable).

• Hair must be professionally restrained, with solid white or black hair restraints, barrettes, scrunchies, etc.

• Anything not specified in this section may not be worn with the uniform. Uniforms must be complete and worn as designed.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
And finally, here are a few additional things to remember:

• Outerwear (sweaters, coats, hoodies, and sweatshirts) may not be worn into the kitchens, bakeshops, or dining rooms. Please use the lockers or designated areas to store these items.

• Students with injuries that require casts, crutches, or slings cannot take culinary, baking, or table service courses. If such a situation exists, we will make every effort to place you in an appropriate business management course.

• Students with hand cuts and lacerations must obtain clearance from the appropriate college official or a personal physician to attend kitchen and bakeshop classes.

• Culinary uniforms should not be worn off campus.

• For the fish butchery room, white turtlenecks or white thermal shirts may be worn without a neckerchief. This is the only area that this substitution may be made.

• White cotton headbands may be worn in hot weather. However, no portion of the headband should be visible under the chef’s hat, and the headband must be removed when the chef’s hat is removed.

If you have a physical impairment as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or because of religious beliefs/customs included in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972) and are unable to shave facial hair as described previously, please submit appropriate documentation in writing for a variance to the appropriate college official (the dean of student affairs at the Hyde Park campus, associate director of education at the St. Helena campus, or director of education at the San Antonio campus). Exceptions to this code must be verified by a letter from the campus official and must be carried on your person at all times.

FIND OUT MORE
For information about the CIA’s Professionalism, Uniform, and Hygiene Policy—including details about table service and maître d’ uniforms and penalties for non-compliance—see the CIA Student Handbook at www.ciachef.edu/publications.asp.

PRIDE AND PROFESSIONALISM
The Culinary Institute of America—and the entire foodservice and hospitality industry—takes great pride in these standards of professionalism. By clearly stating and honoring these standards, through example and in this document, we will continue to send a strong message to the food world about our commitment to quality and excellence.

When you arrive on the CIA campus, be sure to read through your Student Handbook, and let that be your guide throughout your time at the college.

As a CIA graduate, you’ll be expected to maintain high standards throughout your career. Our campus policies create the framework for you to lead in this arena, carrying on a tradition long established by our 40,000-strong network of alumni.

And remember, wherever you go—always wear your uniform with pride!

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The policies described in this publication apply to all campuses of The Culinary Institute of America.