



Vermont Businesses
for Social Responsibility

Personal Dress Guidelines

July 17, 2018

Mission and Vision

Our mission at Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility is to foster a business ethic in Vermont that recognizes the opportunity and responsibility of the business community to set a high standard for protecting the natural, human, and economic environments of our citizens. Our vision is a dynamic society in which employees, employers, customers, suppliers, the communities in which they live all prosper as a business succeeds, now and for future generations.

At VBSR we want our members and employees to feel empowered to make positive change through the business relationships that they find within our network.

Introduction

VBSR respects and celebrates diversity, and we understand inclusivity is critical to the success of our mission and the vibrancy of our workplace. Through our workplace policies and practices, we hope to create an environment where individuals can find empowerment and generate influence.

We hope that employees of VBSR feel supported in their individuality while aiming to communicate the brand of VBSR – which is of a forward-thinking, inclusive business association – through their dress, behavior, language and habits while at work.

VBSR employees should dress in clean clothing that is comfortable for them, expresses their gender identity, personal style and culture. VBSR employees should never dress in clothing featuring hate language or insignia, and since VBSR is a non-partisan organization, we ask that employees avoid work clothing identifying their support for a political nominee, party or movement.

We recommend the following guidelines for workplace attire:

Business Casual Light: In the office for a regular workday, at board and committee meetings, at less formal meetings with prospects, members and community leaders.

“Business Casual Light” is seasonal comfortable professional dress that would generally exclude recreational clothing (e.g., clothes or shoes you would wear camping, exercising, gardening, or at the beach). Jeans and shorts may be worn if they are clean, well-fitting, and not ripped or overly embellished. If your outfit would be acceptable for representing VBSR on camera, unexpectedly meeting your dream employer, or interviewing a potential new hire for VBSR – you are probably dressed appropriately for the office. When you arrive to work at VBSR, you should feel that your clothing represents both yourself and our organization well.

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Business Casual: At VBSR networking events, informal press opportunities, or meetings with members or prospects.

“Business Casual” is traditional work attire. You should feel comfortable meeting and engaging with any of our members. Would you be dressed appropriately to visit a member business such as a law office, engineering firm, or financial institution? If you anticipate that the member business you are visiting has a more casual dress code, use your discretion, but remember that in professional situations it is usually better to be over-dressed than under-dressed. Jackets, blazers, vests, tailored tops, sweaters, blouses, knits, button down shirts, khakis, chinos, tailored cotton or linen pants, skirts and tailored dresses and jumpsuits are all appropriate. Shorts, jeans, sandals, casual cotton t-shirts, tank tops, leisure clothing and cocktail attire are probably not appropriate. Ties, lace-up hard-soled shoes and heels or wedges are welcomed but not required.

Business or Boardroom: When visiting the State House or the State offices, attending more formal VBSR events such as the Annual Awards Dinner and Spring Conference, or at press conferences.

Business or boardroom attire is conservative formal business dress. Outfits should be well-tailored and not revealing, fabrics ideally should be traditional suit material such as wool, silk, polyester or linen. Avoid suits or dresses in relaxed fabrics like denim, jersey, or technical blends. Two-piece or three-piece pant or skirt suits, and knee length and sleeved dresses would be appropriate. Shoes should be dress quality and sensible, accessories should be understated but still express personal style. If you like to wear tights or nylons, you may avoid overly expressive colors or patterns. Hats may not be allowed in certain venues where business attire is required. We always respect and defend an individual’s liberty to wear cultural or religious head coverings. Business or boardroom dress is what you might wear to meet with a major funder or on a job interview; these clothes should be more conservative than cocktail dress and dressier than workplace attire.

If you have questions about what is appropriate for a particular event or meeting, please ask your supervisor. If accessibility, travel, or affordability is a barrier to your updating your work wardrobe to match these guidelines, please reach out to a supervisor or colleague who you feel comfortable with so that we can support you with local resources.