

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

MARINE CORPS OFFICER PROGRAM POLICY CONCERNING TATTOOS, BRANDING, AND ORNAMENTATION

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Statement of Understanding (SOU) is to ensure you understand the Marine Corps policy concerning Tattoos, Branding, and Ornamentation contained in the Military Personnel Procurement Manual, Officer Procurement (MCO P1100.73) and the Marine Corps Uniform Regulations (MCO P1020.34).
2. Policy. All tattoos require administrative review and submission by digital photographs (unless located in a private area, where a drawing will suffice) to Marine Corps Recruiting Command. Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruiting Command (CG, MCRC) has the final approval authority prior to contracting. Marine Corps policies strictly PROHIBIT any Tattoos, Brandings, Mutilations, or Ornamentations on the Head or Neck area. Also, Sleeve Tattoos on a person's arm or leg are PROHIBITED. Any Tattoos, Brandings, Mutilations, or Ornamentation on other parts of the body, that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, gang or extremist group related, or bring discredit to the Marine Corps are also PROHIBITED. The following descriptions and definitions define some, but not all tattoo that will disqualify an applicant for commissioning:
 - a. Prejudicial to Good Order and Discipline. Tattoos, Brands, or Ornamentation that are sexist (express nudity), excessive (sleeve tattoos), racist, eccentric, offensive in nature, or express an association with conduct or substances prohibited by the Marine Corps drug policy.
 - b. Gang or Extremist Group. Any Tattoos, Brands, or Ornamentation that feature vulgar or anti-American content, discredits the Marine Corps, or associates with an extremist group, gang membership or gang activity.
 - c. Prohibited or Questionable Size. Any Tattoo, which is larger than the wearer's hand, with fingers extended and joined and thumb along the index finger, or exceeds one-quarter (1/4) of the respective body part(s).
 - d. Prohibited or Questionable Location. Head and Neck tattoos are prohibited without exception. Head and Neck are defined as: any portion above the collarbone in the front area, including the "V" of the short sleeved khaki shirt and above the seventh cervical vertebrae (last vertebrae) area in the back, or otherwise visible due to the open collar of the short sleeve khaki shirt, without skivvies' shirt. Questionable locations include, but are not limited to mouth, permanent eyeliner or eyebrows, hands, wrists, feet, and the inside of the mouth.
 - e. Ornamentation. Defined as any Body Piercing and Mutilations: Tongue Splitting, Ornamental Body Piercing(s), Holes in Ear Lobes (large enough for light to pass through), or Ornamental Implantations (such as silicon implants on face, horns on the forehead, etc). Note: Holes in ear lobes must be healed and closed prior to contracting and shipping to training.
 - f. Excessive Number. More than four (4) visible and non-visible Body Markings (tattoos, brands, piercings, etc.) will be considered excessive. For this purpose, a small cluster of tattoos that collectively can be covered by the hand will be considered one (1) tattoo.
3. Certification. I certify that I completely understand the Marine Corps Policy on the Tattoos, Brands, and Ornamentations. I understand that I will be screened for Tattoos, Brands, and Body Ornamentations, and must complete the Marine Corps Tattoo Screening Form and that it is strongly recommended that I get no further

tattoos, brands, or Body Ornamentations. I further understand I will be screened prior to shipping and at other times during the officer program for any Tattoos, Brands, and Body Ornamentations received while in the application, selection, and shipping process for an Officer Program. Tattoos, brands, or ornamentations received while in the application process or after selection could be disqualifying or prohibit assignment to highly visible or high profile assignments as a commissioned officer. Disqualifying or prohibited tattoos may adversely affect my incentive program or promotion opportunities as a Marine.

(Applicant's Printed Name)

(Applicant's Signature)

(Date)

4. Officer Verification. I certify that I have completely explained the Marine Corps policy on Tattoos, Brands, and Body Ornamentation.

PLETTS, J. D. CAPT/OSO

(Officer's Printed Name)

(Officer's Signature)

(Date)

5. Officer Re-Verification. I certify I have re-verified and recorded any changes to the Tattoo Screening Form at the time of shipping to Officer Candidate School training.

(Officer's Printed Name)

(Officer's Signature)

(Date)