



# RENTING **vs.** PURCHASING

A comprehensive comparison  
for uniform procurement

Uniforms need to provide:

- AGILITY
- DURABILITY
- VISIBILITY
- SAFETY

RENTAL

\$312/employee

X 100 employees

\$31,200/year

\$31,200/year

X 5 years

\$156,600\*

PURCHASE

\$135/employee

X 100 employees

\$13,500/year

\$13,500/year

X 5 years

\$67,500\*

SAVINGS

57% or \$89,100 savings from purchasing uniforms

A professional uniform leads to professional work.

Public agency employees need functional uniforms for the job. They also need to feel confident and comfortable to put their best foot forward and serve and represent your community well.

A uniform should accommodate, not hinder, your employees' work and attitudes. Provide the best quality for the lowest cost by purchasing your uniforms instead of renting them.

The Rental Assumption

Agencies tend to assume renting uniforms will cut costs. This assumption is incorrect.

Cost Comparison

To rent five changes of standard 65/35 poly cotton uniform pants and shirts, you would pay an estimated average cost of \$6 per week per employee, or \$312 per year. *(See examples in the left column.)*

To purchase these same five new pants, five new long sleeve and five new short sleeve shirts would cost about \$135. Purchasing uniforms could save you \$177 per employee per year, or 57%.

Additional Costs

This cost comparison does not include the add-on charges you will likely incur throughout the term of a rental contract. Don't overlook the following common, often hidden additional costs of uniform rental programs:

- Initial charges

Ongoing charges
- Workforce charges

Long-term charges

“ The national average of employees who miss [laundry] is 30% to 33% each week. ”

### Underwash:

Underwash refers to an agency paying fees for weekly rental and cleaning services that are not performed, due to employees not turning in their uniforms to be cleaned.

## INITIAL CHARGES

### Oversize charges

Rental contracts often charge as much as 30% extra for sizes above XL. The National IPA purchasing contract guarantees you will never pay extra for available oversize or non-stock size garments.

## ONGOING CHARGES

### Laundry program

Laundry expenses occur every week and are often subject to multiple percentage price increases each year of a rental contract.

### Underwash

A rental contract usually requires agencies to pay for a weekly cleaning service. The agency is still charged each time an employee misses the weekly cleaning service pick up. This means the agency still has to pay when employees:

- Choose to wash their own uniforms at home for personal hygiene reasons.
- Are sick or on vacation on the contract's uniform pick-up day.
- Simply forget and miss the occasional cleaning service.

The national average of employees who do not turn in garments for cleaning is 30% to 33% each week.

### Ancillary charges

Ancillary charges often account for 20% to 40% of the annual costs for rental uniform programs. These include preparation charges, environmental fees, service and fuel charges, minimum stop charges, emblems and name tag fees, etc.

“ Purchasing uniforms each year...provides a **PROFESSIONAL** appearance and image to the local community.”

ADDITIONAL COSTS

	Rental	Purchase
Oversize charges	X	
Laundry program	X	
Underwash	X	
Ancillary charges	X	
Size changes	X	
New employees	X	
Employee transfers	X	
Garment repairs	X	
Environmental	X	
Damaged garments	X	
Lost garments	X	

WORKFORCE CHARGES

Size changes

Employees will inevitably lose or gain weight during a three to five year rental contract. Each request for a size change results in a fee. Purchasing uniforms equips your employees with new uniforms each year while avoiding penalties for size changes.

New employees

Every new employee hired during the term of a rental contract adds additional prep, setup charges and additional laundry costs.

Garment wear and tear

Over the course of a three year contract, employee uniforms fade and look less professional. Purchasing new uniforms each year is not only a less expensive alternative, but also assures that the new uniform garments received each year will provide a professional appearance and image to the local community. The employees will enjoy receiving a new set of uniforms each year as opposed to having to wear the same set of uniforms for three years. This will be perceived as a new benefit by the employees.

LONG-TERM CHARGES

Garment repairs

Button replacement and garment repairs are billed at full retail price.

Environmental waste water or energy

This is an added charge for waste water or special energy costs passed on to the agency.

Damaged or lost garments

Rental contracts often state their own pick-up count for laundry is proof of lost or damaged garments. They usually notify agencies of a loss of garment add-on charge with an invoice at full retail price.

## Avoid contracts

A rental service contract is difficult and expensive to break. With ServiceWear Apparel, you can skip the contract process and purchase uniforms freely on a no-commitment basis on your timeline.

## Pride in a Uniform

Equally important to cost savings, purchased uniforms create a stronger sense of ownership, which encourages better work performance.

A uniform is more than an aesthetic or functional distinction. A uniform is a symbol of a public service. Invite your employees to take pride in their work by providing them with their own uniform.

Purchase uniforms to save your agency money and equip your employees with high-quality uniforms they can be proud to wear.

## About ServiceWear Apparel

ServiceWear Apparel is the premier supplier partner of high-quality uniforms and work apparel to National IPA. Our partnership allows public agencies like yours to piggyback off of a competitively awarded contract.

Visit [www.servicewearapparel.com](http://www.servicewearapparel.com) to get started.

