1024 BODY ARMOR

1024.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines for the proper use of body armor.

1024.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Columbia Police Department to maximize officer safety through the use of body armor in combination with prescribed safety procedures. While body armor provides a significant level of protection, it is not a substitute for the observance of officer safety procedures.

1024.3 ISSUANCE OF BODY ARMOR

The Administration Support Bureau Commander shall ensure that body armor is issued to all officers and that, when issued, the body armor meets or exceeds the standards of the National Institute of Justice.

Body armor shall be issued when an officer begins service at the Columbia Police Department and shall be replaced when the body armor becomes worn or damaged to the point that its effectiveness or functionality has been compromised.

1024.3.1 USE OF SOFT BODY ARMOR

Generally, the use of body armor is required subject to the following:

1. Officers shall only wear department-approved body armor.

2. Officers shall wear body armor anytime they are in a situation where they could reasonably be expected to take enforcement action.

3. Officers may be excused from wearing body armor when they are functioning primarily in an administrative or support capacity and do not reasonably expect to take enforcement action.

4. Body armor shall be worn when an officer is working in uniform or taking part in department range training.

5. An officer may be excused from wearing body armor when he/she is involved in undercover or plainclothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor, or when a supervisor determines that other circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.
1024.3.2 INSPECTIONS OF BODY ARMOR

Supervisors should ensure that body armor is worn and maintained in accordance with this policy through routine observation and periodic documented inspections. Inspections of body armor should be conducted as needed by an authorized designee for fit, cleanliness and signs of damage, abuse and wear.