

THE RODGERS GROUP www.Rodgersgroupllc.com			
SUBJECT: Body Armor			
EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/11/18	ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: 1.6.2	REVISION DATE	PAGE #
BY THE ORDER OF:			
SUPERSEDES ORDER #:			

PURPOSE: To establish a uniform procedure for the care and use of personal body armor.

POLICY: It is the policy of this organization to maximize officer safety by providing its members with body armor for use in conjunction with prudent safety procedures and to require the wearing of body armor while engaged in field activities.

PROCEDURES:

I. Availability and Use

- A. All sworn officers will have body armor issued to them.
 - 1. This department shall make maximum use of federal, state and private grant opportunities to fund the purchase of body armor.
- B. All sworn officers will receive an initial issue of body armor. The manufacturer of the body armor as well as its type and specifications will be decided by the Chief of Police but will minimally meet the requirements set forth by the [State of New Jersey Body Armor Replacement Program](#). Minimally, the body armor should provide protection from a bullet fired from our department's standard sidearm.
- C. The replacement of body armor at the end of the manufacturer's suggested lifespan will be based on available funding. Absent available financing, officers may purchase their own new replacement body armor with the approval of the Chief of Police.
 - 1. To request the personal purchase of replacement body armor an officer must submit an official written request, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police for approval.

2. The written request must contain the name of the manufacturer, the type of ballistic vest, and all the related specifications.
 3. The proposed body armor must minimally meet the requirements set forth by the [State of New Jersey Body Armor Replacement Program](#).
- D. All personnel involved in pre-planned high-risk situations shall wear body armor.
1. The attending supervisor shall ensure that all participating personnel is appropriately equipped with and wearing body armor on all pre-planned high-risk situations.
- E. All sworn officers shall wear body armor at all times while on patrol in uniform engaged in patrol related activities. This is required to receive funds from the [State of New Jersey Body Armor Replacement Program](#).
- F. Uniformed personnel assigned to administrative duties that generally require them to remain in police headquarters may elect not to wear the body armor.
- G. Detectives and plain-clothed personnel are not required to wear body armor while on-duty.
- H. If not wearing body armor, personnel should have it available for use if the situation presents itself.

II. Administrative Responsibilities Including Care and Maintenance

- A. This department will replace body armor, for all regular full-time officers, which become unserviceable due to age, daily use, or damage from a job-related incident. Body armor that must be replaced due to abuse by the officer shall be paid for by the police officer.
1. Abuse includes, but is not limited to, immersion in water or other liquids, cutting, puncturing or breaching of the ballistic panels, or exposure to corrosive substances not as a result of official action.
 2. If the vest's outer shell, or carrier, becomes unserviceable before the ballistic panels, then the responsibility for replacing the shell is the individual officer's.
- B. Depending on the circumstances, officers may be fitted at this department or sent to the vendor to be fitted with body armor. The decision is based on the number of officers being fitted and the availability of a vendor representative.
- C. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as required by this directive.

- D. There shall be an annual inspection of all body armor for fit, cleanliness, signs of damage, wear, or abuse. The Chief of Police or designee will ordinarily determine when the annual inspection occurs.
- E. The serviceable life of body armor is dependent upon many factors. On the average, a vest should remain usable for about five (5) years. Depending on the conditions and the care given, a vest may last much longer than five years. Officers must be aware of the daily condition of their vest.
- F. Officers are responsible for the proper care and storage of body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and a daily inspection for signs of wear, damage, and general cleanliness.
- G. As dirt and perspiration may erode the ballistic panels, each officer shall be responsible for cleaning their body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- H. Officers are responsible for reporting any damage or deficiency in their body armor, in writing, to their supervisor. The supervisor receiving such notification shall inspect the body armor to determine if the report is accurate. If accurate, the supervisor shall forward the report to the Chief of Police through the chain of command. The Chief of Police will determine if a replacement is needed and if so how the replacement is to be funded.
- I. Officers should wear body armor while engaging in firearms qualification and/or firearms proficiency testing.

III. Retiring of Body Armor

- A. Body armor that has reached its useful lifespan may be retired.
- B. This agency will retire body armor in a responsible manner so as to deny access to it by any criminal element.
- C. The retirement of any body armor must be in accordance with this policy and must be approved by the Chief of Police prior to it being turned over to an authorized new entity or before it is marked for destruction.
 - 1. The Chief of Police approval will be in writing and will be retained in agency records in accordance with the records retention schedule set forth by the State of New Jersey.
- D. Pre-approved entities that may receive body armor are:
 - 1. Any law enforcement agency in the United States or one of their auxiliaries.
 - 2. Any United States Military, reservists, National Guard, or one of their auxiliaries.

3. Any foreign law enforcement agency after obtaining approval from the United States State Department.
- E. If body armor is personally owned by an officer, he/she must dispose of it in a manner so as to deny access to it by any criminal element.