



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 18	Subject: Wearing of Body Armor	Effective Date: 05/28/1996
Order of: Maureen S. Rush, Superintendent of Police		Amended Date: 6/24/2021

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide all University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) sworn officers with guidelines for the proper use and care of issued body armor.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the department to maximize officer safety through the use of body armor in conjunction with the practice of prescribed safety procedures. While body armor provides a significant level of protection, it is not a substitute for sound, basic safety procedures.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn police officers.

IV. Definitions

- A. Field Activities: Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected or have the potential to place officers in situations where they would be required to act in enforcement rather than administrative or support capacities.
- B. High-Risk Situations: Any situations in which an officer reasonably anticipates the use of force and/or danger of imminent harm to themselves or others.

V. Procedures

A. Issuance Of Body Armor

1. All sworn UPPD personnel shall be issued body armor.
2. UPPD sworn personnel shall wear only department issued or approved body armor.

- a) Requests for the wearing of non-issued or personal body armor must be made via the chain of command, through the Deputy Chief of Tactical and Emergency Readiness, to the Superintendent of Police.
- b) Personnel shall only wear their assigned and issued body armor, unless specifically exempted and/or authorized by the Superintendent of Police or designee.
- 3. All body armor issued or approved by the department must comply with current minimum protective standards prescribed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ).
 - a) At a minimum, all issued or approved body armor shall provide protection against penetration from bullets fired from department issued or approved handguns.
- 4. The department shall replace issued body armor that is damaged during the performance of an on-duty assignment.
- 5. The officer will replace body armor that is worn or damaged in any other way.
- 6. The officer shall pay for department issued body armor that must be replaced due to misuse or abuse by the officer.
- 7. The department shall replace issued body armor that has exceeded the manufacturer's recommended duty standard.

B. Use Of Body Armor

- 1. All sworn personnel on-duty and performing field activities, shall wear the issued/authorized body armor whether assigned to a uniformed or non-uniformed function.
- 2. Sworn personnel participating in pre-planned, high risk situations are mandated to wear body armor. High-risk situations include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Misdemeanor and felony arrest warrants
 - b) Search Warrants
 - c) Hostage/Barricade Incidents
 - d) Civil Disturbance/Mass Arrest Situations
 - e) Tactical Operations
- 3. Body armor shall only be worn utilizing the issued manufacturer's carriers, or authorized external carriers.

- a) Wearing of the authorized external vest carrier is optional for ALL sworn personnel in accordance with Directive 45, Appearance Standards, Uniforms and Equipment.

- (1) The authorized external ballistic vest carrier shall be identified by manufacturer, style, color and design by the Superintendent of Police or designee.

- 4. Requests for any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Superintendent of Police via the chain of command.

- a) The ability to wear body armor is a condition of employment for all sworn positions. Exemption requests for medical reasons shall follow the protocol listed in UPPD Directive 68, IOD, Limited and Light Duty Assignments.

C. Inspections Of Body Armor

- 1. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained in accordance with this directive and the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) via a periodic and documented inspection of their employee's body armor.
- 2. When deemed necessary by management, periodic random testing of departmental body armor shall be done through a certified laboratory or the NIJ.

D. Care And Maintenance Of Body Armor

- 1. Each officer is responsible for the proper storage of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and a daily inspection for signs of damage and general cleanliness.
- 2. As dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels, each officer shall be responsible for cleaning his/her body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 3. Officers are responsible for reporting any damage or wear of the ballistic panels or cover to the department's designated body armor Quartermaster via his/her chain of command.
- 4. It is the responsibility of each officer to know the manufacture and issue date of his/her body armor. Officers shall advise the Quartermaster of imminent panel expirations and the need for replacement.

E. Training

- 1. The Deputy Chief of Tactical and Emergency Readiness, or designee shall be responsible for maintaining the following information:
 - a) Technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.

- b) A description of weapons and ammunition currently in use, and whether or not issued body armor can withstand their impact.
 - c) Training programs and/or information that informs the officers about body armor, and emphasizes its safe and proper use.
 - d) Statistics on incidents where body armor has or has not protected officers from harm, including traffic accidents.
2. The Deputy Chief of Tactical and Emergency Readiness, or designee will subsequently forward the above information to the Training Coordinator and Body Armor Quartermaster.

F. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

G. Officers Assigned To Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

H. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.