

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

BODY ARMOR

Purpose: This policy aims to provide members with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor. This order applies to sworn members only.

Policy: It is the policy of the North Little Rock Police Department to maximize officer safety through the use of body armor. While body armor provides significant protection, it is not a substitute for basic safety precautions.

Summary of Changes: A definition of body armor was added to the policy.

Definitions:

Body Armor: A uniquely fitted vest of armor that conforms to the individual wearer to provide the best possible coverage and ballistic protection from firearm-fired projectiles.

Procedure:

1. Issuance of Body Armor

- 1.1 All body armor issued must comply with the minimum protective standards of the National Institute of Justice in effect at the time of purchase or issuance.
- 1.2 All officers will be issued body armor, two armor carrier garments, and a soft trauma plate.
- 1.3 Body armor will be replaced every five years after issuance. The Support Services Division Commander or designee will maintain records of armor issuance. In addition, the Support Services Commander or designee will notify officers when armor needs to be replaced.
 - 1.3.1 Upon receiving notification that their armor is nearing expiration, officers will go to the authorized dealer to be fitted for a replacement. Officers should do this as soon as practical.
- 1.4 Damaged body armor will be replaced regardless of the date of issue. Body armor that must be replaced due to misuse or abuse will be at the officer's expense.
- 1.5 Officers who request replacement armor for reasons other than damage or expiration will submit a request to the Support Services Division Commander and be reviewed for case-by-case approval.

2. Use of Body Armor

- 2.1 Officers will wear body armor during recruit and field training.
- 2.2 All officers will wear body armor while participating in live-fire range activities and firearms training.
- 2.3 Officers assigned to a uniform function and non-uniformed officers are required to wear body armor during field operations while on or off-duty unless exempted as follows: [CALEA 41.3.5]
 - 2.3.1 When an agency-approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude the use of body armor;
 - 2.3.2 When the officer is involved in undercover or plainclothes work that the officer's supervisor determines would be compromised by the use of body armor;
 - 2.3.3 When the officer is assigned to perform an administrative function;
 - 2.3.4 When circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate body armor, such as extreme heat or humidity.
- 2.4 Officers wearing body armor will only wear department-approved body armor.
 - 2.4.1 Officers involved in high-risk arrest situations such as Narcotic Search Warrants and SWAT operations will utilize the maximum ballistic protection available. [CALEA 41.3.6]

3. Care and Inspection of Body Armor

- 3.1 All officers are responsible for adequately storing body armor following the manufacturer's instructions.
- 3.2 Officers will conduct daily inspections of their issued body armor for signs of damage and general cleanliness.
- 3.3 Body armor is subject to inspection at any time by any supervisor.

Patrick Thessing
Chief of Police