




## Norwich Police Department

### Policy & Procedures

<b>Subject:</b>	Body Armor	
<b>Distribution:</b>	All Officers & H.Q.	
<b>Approved / By order of:</b>	Jennifer Frank, Chief of Police	

<b>I. PURPOSE:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to provide law enforcement officers with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.
<b>II. POLICY:</b>	It is the policy of this law enforcement agency 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 other safety procedures.
<b>III. DEFINITIONS:</b>	Field Activities: Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected to place officers in situations where they would be required to act in enforcement rather than administrative or support capacities.
<b>IV. PROCEDURES:</b>	<p>A. <u>Issuance of Body Armor</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.</li><li>2. All officers shall be issued agency-approved body armor.</li><li>3. Body armor that is worn or damaged shall be replaced by the agency. Body armor that must be replaced due to misuse or abuse by the officer shall be paid for by the officer.</li><li>4. Body armor is department property. If an officer leaves and wishes to purchase the body armor, the purchase amount will be prorated based on the number of years the body armor has been in service, up to five years. The option to purchase the body armor is limited to an officer, or other employee who utilizes body armor, who has been hired by another law enforcement agency in a capacity for which body armor is appropriately used.</li></ol> <p>B. <u>Use of Body Armor</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Officers shall wear only agency-approved body armor.</li></ol>

2. Officers that are assigned to a uniformed function and non-uniformed officers are required to wear body armor while engaged in field activities, as defined above, both on duty and during uniformed extra-duty or detail employment except when:
  - a. An agency-approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor.
  - b. The officer is involved in undercover or plain clothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor.
  - c. The department determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.
  - d. The officers are within secured areas of police facilities however, they shall have their vests readily accessible in close proximity.

C. Inspections of Body Armor

1. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as required by this policy through routine observation and periodic documented inspections.
2. Annual inspections of body armor shall be conducted for fit, cleanliness, signs of damage, abuse and wear.

D. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor

1. Officers shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage and for general cleanliness.
2. As dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels, each officer shall be responsible for cleaning personal body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
3. Officers are responsible for the proper storage, maintenance and care of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
4. Officers are responsible for reporting damage or excessive wear to the ballistic panels or cover to their supervisor and the individual responsible for the uniform supply function.
5. Body armor will be replaced in accordance with guidelines and protocols established by the National Institute of Justice.

E. Training

The Chief of Police or their designee shall be responsible for:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Monitoring technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.</li><li>2. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.</li><li>3. Maintaining statistics of incidents where armor has or has not protected officers from harm, including traffic accidents.</li></ol>
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