



Approved:
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Subject:

702. Body Armor

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CALEA Standards: 41.3.5

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702.1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

702.2: POLICY

It is the policy of the Albany 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.

702.3: ISSUANCE OF BODY ARMOR

- a. The Administrative Lieutenant shall ensure that body armor is issued to all officers when the officer begins service at the Albany Police Department and that, when issued, the body armor meets or exceeds the standards of the National Institute of Justice.
- b. The Administrative Lieutenant shall establish a body armor replacement schedule and ensure that replacement body armor is issued pursuant to the schedule or whenever the body armor becomes worn or damaged to the point that its effectiveness or functionality has been compromised.

702.3.1: USE OF SOFT BODY ARMOR

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

- a. Officers shall wear body armor anytime they are in a situation where they could reasonably be expected to take enforcement action.
- b. Officers shall only wear agency-approved body armor.
- c. Officers may be excused from wearing body armor when they are functioning primarily in an administrative or support capacity and could not reasonably be expected to take enforcement action.
- d. Body armor shall be worn when an officer is working in uniform or taking part in Department range training.

- e. 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.
- f. All personnel who are issued body armor are required to have it readily available in case of emergencies.

702.3.2: BODY ARMOR INSPECTIONS

Supervisors should ensure that body armor is worn and maintained in accordance with this policy through routine observation and periodic documented inspections.

702.3.3: CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF SOFT BODY ARMOR

- a. Soft body armor should never be stored for any period of time in an area where environmental conditions (e.g., temperature, light, humidity) are not reasonably controlled (e.g., normal ambient room temperature/humidity conditions), such as in automobiles or automobile trunks.
- b. Soft body armor should be cared for and cleaned pursuant to the manufacturer's care instructions, which can normally be found on labels located on the external surface of each ballistic panel, and on the carrier.
- c. Failure to follow manufacturer's recommended instructions may damage the ballistic performance capabilities of the body armor.
- d. Soft body armor should not be exposed to any cleaning agents or methods not specifically recommended by the manufacturer, as noted on the armor panel label.
- e. Soft body armor should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended replacement schedule.

702.3.4: BODY ARMOR EQUIPMENT

Body armor includes an external vest carrier, attachments, inserts, and covers. These items are considered essential for the vest's proper care, use and wearability.

702.4: FIREARMS TRAINING COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Firearms Training Coordinator should:

- a. Monitor technological advances in the body armor industry for any appropriate changes to Department approved body armor.
- b. Assess weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
- c. Provide training that educates officers about the safety benefits of wearing body armor.