**SAMPLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Body Armor**

NOTE: This document is for internal use only. It does not establish a legal duty or standard of care for civil liability or enlarge an employee’s civil or criminal liability in any way. A violation of this policy may only form the basis for internal discipline by this agency and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide law enforcement officers with guidelines addressing the issuance, use, inspections, and care of body armor.

1. **POLICY**

It is the policy of this agency to maximize officer safety using body armor in combination with prescribed safety procedures. The department will provide each officer with body armor to utilize as a part of officer safety and their overall protection. While body armor provides a significant level of protection, it is not a substitute for the observance of officer safety procedures.

1. **DEFINITIONS**
2. Body Armor: An item of personal protective equipment intended to protect the wearer from threats that may include ballistic threats, stabbing, fragmentation, or blunt impact. Body armor generally consists of two armor panel or plates, a front and a back, placed in a carrier.
3. 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.
4. **PROCEDURE**
5. Issuance of Body Armor
6. All sworn officers shall be issued agency-approved body armor.
   * 1. Officers may purchase and wear personal body armor, as long as it meets or exceed the approved specifications for department issued body armor.
7. All body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
8. 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.
9. Use of Body Armor
10. Officers shall wear only agency-approved body armor and shall wear both panels in an agency-approved carrier.
11. Officers are required to wear body armor on-duty and during law enforcement-related off-duty employment except under the following conditions:
    1. When not engaged in field activities as defined herein.
    2. When an agency-approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor.
    3. When the officer is involved in an undercover or plain clothes assignment that the supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor.
    4. When the on-duty supervisor determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor, including, but not limited to:
       1. Temperature of 90 degrees or higher.
       2. Prolonged physical activity; i.e., stationary traffic control or direction for extended periods.
12. Officers assigned to the Investigation, Administrative, or/Support Divisions that elect not to wear their body armor full-time, or officers in a light or limited duty assignment, or officers operating under one of the exemptions listed herein shall have their body armor immediately available at all times during their tour of duty.
13. All officers shall wear body armor during high-risk and/or tactical situations.
    1. Examples of “high-risk” or “tactical” situations include, but are not limited to, search warrant executions, drug raids, crime-in-progress response, and serving felony warrants.
14. Inspections of Body Armor
15. Officers shall perform a fit assessment upon receipt of body armor and shall report any issues to their supervisor.
16. Officers shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage and for general cleanliness. Any damage or excessive wear to the panels or the carrier shall be reported to their supervisor.
17. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as required by this policy through routine observation and periodic inspections.
18. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor
19. Officers are responsible for the proper storage, cleaning, maintenance, and care of body armor in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions.
20. Under normal conditions, body armor will be replaced every five years or in accordance with the National Institute of Justice, unless circumstances dictate that it be replaced sooner.

APPROVED: CHIEF OF POLICE DATE

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS ORDER

SIGNATURE OF OFFICER DATE

***DISCLAIMER***

***NOTE****: These documents are being provided to you by the AMIC/MWCF Loss Control Division and are not intended to be legal advice. They do not identify all the issues surrounding a particular topic. Laws and “Best Practices” change and policies must be continually reviewed and updated as needed. Public agencies are encouraged to review their procedures with an expert or an attorney who is knowledgeable about the topic. Reliance on this information is at the sole risk of the user.*