

Germantown Police Department

Policies and Procedures

Number: 11-15
Effective Date: July 1, 2011
Subject: Body Armor
Previous Revisions:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide police officers and reserve officers with guidelines for the proper use of body armor.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Germantown 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.

III. DEFINITIONS

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.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Issuance of Body Armor

1. All officers and reserve officers will be issued agency-approved body armor.
2. All body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
3. Body armor that is worn or damaged will be replaced by the department.

B. Use of Body Armor

1. Officers shall wear only agency-approved body armor.

2. Officers assigned to or engaged in field activities, whether in uniform or other approved attire, are required to wear their issued body armor. Exceptions must meet one of the following:
 - a. When an agency-approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor.
 - b. When the officer is involved in undercover or plain clothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor.
 - c. When the department determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.
3. Body armor shall be worn by officers engaged in pre-planned, high risk situations including drug raids, warrant execution, hostage/barricade situations or whenever the SWAT team responds to a crisis.

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.

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.

V. REVIEW PROCESS

An annual review of this policy will be conducted to determine if it should be revised, cancelled or continued in its present form.

This policy shall remain in effect until revoked or superseded by competent authority.