

**SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE**

BODY ARMOR

Authority:

Tracy Reece, Chief Probation Officer

Purpose:

To establish guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.

Definitions:

Body Armor: Protective body covering designed to provide ballistic protection to the vital organs in the torso.

Field Activities: Assignments, duties, and/or tasks that place, or could be reasonably expected to place, sworn officers in situations where they may act in an enforcement capacity, including but not limited to, security and/or field operations, officer presence at homes, schools, community locations, buildings not operated by or under the control of the Probation Department, etc. and may depend on the responsibilities of the officer's assignment.

Tactical Vest: Ballistic plate and panel carriers designed to carry a variety of ballistic panels and plates (body armor).

Responsibilities:

- I. Sworn Officers/Designated Non-Sworn Staff shall:
 - A. Only wear Probation Department approved body armor.
 - B. Wear body armor when taking part in department range qualification, designated training, engaged in field activities, situations where they could reasonably be expected to take enforcement action, when the job assignment makes wearing body armor advisable, etc. unless:
 1. A Probation Department approved physician determines the officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor and written documentation of such has been provided to the department.
 2. When the Chief Probation Officer and/or their designee determines circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.
 - C. In instances where body armor is not worn, have reasonable access to their body armor.
 - D. Be responsible for the cleaning, proper storage, maintenance, and care of body armor following the manufacturer's instructions. To reduce possible degradation of the ballistic materials, body armor should be stored flat and at room temperature. Avoid storing body armor folded, compressed, or standing on its edge, in the trunk of a vehicle or exposing it to direct sunlight for prolonged periods.
 - E. Routinely inspect body armor ballistic panel covers and hard armor plates for cuts, tears, stitching separation, sealing problems, cracks, excessive wear, etc.
 - F. Report damage, excessive wear, etc. of the ballistic panels and/or hard plates to their supervisor and request a replacement from the Training Unit.
 - G. Be aware of the expiration of their body armor and ensure the timely request of new body armor to the Training Unit.
 - H. Be responsible for body armor replacement expenses caused by staff abuse or misuse.

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- I. Not alter tactical vests and/or body armor without departmental approval. No additional badges, pins, or patches are to be added unless it is needed for a specialized unit/position/assignment and has been previously approved by the chain of command.

II. Training Unit shall:

- A. Issue body armor that meets or exceeds the current National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Certification Standards to all sworn officers and other applicable staff as needed. The Chief Probation Officer and/or their designee may authorize issuing body armor to non-sworn staff whose job assignment makes wearing body armor advisable.
- B. Inspect, maintain, and track the body armor replacement cycle on an annual basis.
- C. Replace body armor that is worn or damaged as needed and/or required. Body armor shall be replaced per the manufacturer's recommended replacement schedule and following guidelines and protocols established by the (NIJ) or when its effectiveness or functionality has been compromised.
- D. Serviceable body armor should not be removed from service until a replacement body armor is available for immediate wear.
- E. Range Master and/or their designee:
 - 1. Monitor technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate modifications, replacement, etc.
 - 2. Assess anticipated weapon and ammunition threats currently identified as being used by the public and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
 - 3. Provide education/training to staff about the safety benefits of wearing body armor including its care and proper use.
 - 4. Maintain statistics on incidents where body armor has or has not protected department officers from harm, etc., including traffic accidents.

Inspections:

Refer to the Policy and Procedure Inspection Matrix.

Foundation:

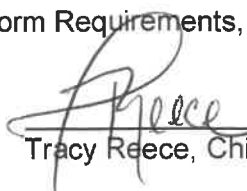
National Institute of Justice (NIJ), <https://nij.ojp.gov>
Selection and Application Guide to Ballistic-Resistant Body Armor, NIJ
Point Blank Enterprises, Inc. www.pointblankenterprises.com
Care and Maintenance Manual, Point Blank Enterprises, Inc.
Hard Armor Products, Point Blank Enterprises, Inc.
Penal Code Section 31315

References:

Procedures:

Arming
Duty Dress Standards, Uniform Requirements, Grooming

Issued by:



Tracy Reece, Chief Probation Officer

9-2-21

Date

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