

2.1.3 Protective Soft Body Armor

I. POLICY

The critical mission of the Johnstown Police Department will often result in its officers being confronted with hazardous situations. These situations will sometimes result in receiving or exchanging gunfire with suspects. A situation of this type is definitely a threat to officer safety/survival. This department recognizes this threat and in response has taken steps to reduce the risk of officer injury as a result of gunfire. It shall be the policy of this department to furnish ballistic vests to all law enforcement officers employed by this department and to require that the vests be worn according to the procedures outlined below.

II. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for all law enforcement officers of this department to follow in wearing departmental issued ballistic vests and the dissemination, replacement or return of this property item.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Mandatory Requirements

1. All law enforcement officers of this department who have been issued a ballistic vest shall wear the vest at all times while on duty or when wearing the department uniform. Examples include:
 - a. Regular duty at the department.
 - b. Extra duty at the department.
 - c. Off duty employment while wearing the police department uniform.
2. Officers assigned to the Detective Bureau should wear the vest while working the 1600 – 2400 hour shift. Officers assigned to the Detective Bureau will have the vest readily available on all shifts, should the need arise for its use.
3. The ballistic vest is the property of the City of Johnstown and all the policies regarding the care and use of city property pertain to the vest.
4. Each officer is responsible for his/her assigned vest, for the care and maintenance of it. Officers will follow the manufacturer's specifications for use, care, cleaning and storage of it.

B. Exception to the Mandatory Requirement

1. Exception to this rule will be reviewed should extenuating circumstances arise, such as the following examples:

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- a. Medical restrictions
 - b. Assignments in certain environmental conditions, such as extreme heat.
 - c. Other factors
2. In each case where an exception might apply to the mandatory requirement rule, the officer requesting the exception authorization will forward the request in the form of a memo, through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.
 3. The Chief of Police will make the final decision.
 4. The response to the request will be in writing and will indicate either an approval or a denial and will also include any restrictions such as a time limit.
 5. An exception may include a time limit in the situation such as a temporary medical condition.
 6. Any exception request concerning a medical condition must be accompanied by documentation from a licensed physician.
 7. The documentation must describe the medical condition and indicate an estimated time that the condition will prohibit the employee from wearing the vest.

C. Dissemination

1. The police department shall furnish ballistic vests to all law enforcement officers employed by this department.
2. The supplier of the vest will be required to measure each employee receiving a vest to ensure proper fit of the product.
3. The Chief of Police or his/her designee will be responsible for the distribution of the ballistic vest that shall be distributed in the same manner as other department issued property items.
4. Any officer will be allowed to purchase his or her own vest if he or she so desires. However, it will be necessary to obtain approval of the vest specifications prior to making the purchase.
5. A request to purchase a vest, along with the vest specifications, shall be submitted by the officer making the request through the chain of command to the Chief of Police, or a designee, for approval or denial.
6. A response to a purchase request will be returned to the submitting officer.

2.1.3 continued

Effective Date:

Date: June 13, 2006

By Order Of:

Craig Foust
Chief Of Police