

NIAGARA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/17/2013	SUBJECT: BODY ARMOR	Number 304.00 (NYSLEAP O-41-1, O-41-3)
RESCINDS: 05/07/2002		Number of pages 3

I. PURPOSE:

- A. The purpose of this policy is to provide Niagara Falls Police Department officers with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.

II. POLICY:

- A. It is the policy of the Niagara Falls 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:

- A. 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 body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
2. All officers shall be issued agency-approved body armor.

B. Use of Body Armor:

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

2. Officers that are assigned to a uniformed function and non-uniformed sworn officers are required to wear body armor while engaged in field activities on-duty unless exempt as follows:
 - 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 plainclothes work that his/her superior determines could be compromised by wearing body armor; or
 - c. When the department determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.

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 regular observation.

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 is 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. The Niagara Falls Police Department will replace personal body armor which has been rendered non-functional due to a specific incident after review by the Firearms Training Unit.

E. Training:

1. The Firearms Training Officer shall be responsible for:
 - a. Monitoring technological changes in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.

- b. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
- c. Providing actual training programs that demonstrate body armor's stopping power under actual firing conditions and that emphasize its safe and proper use.