

# UTAH CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

## Model Policy on Use of Body Armor

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide law enforcement officers with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of this law enforcement agency 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.

### **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.

### **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.
3. 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.

#### **B. Use of Body Armor.**

1. Officers shall wear only agency-approved body armor.
2. Body armor shall be worn by recruit officers while engaged in field activities both on duty and during off duty employment 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 plain clothes work that his/her supervisor 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 routine observation and periodic documented inspections.
2. Annual inspections of body armor shall be conducted for fit, cleanliness, signs of damage, abuse and wear.

#### 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.

#### E. Training

1. The training officer shall be responsible for:

a. Monitoring technological advances 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. Provide training programs that demonstrate body armor's stopping power under actual firing conditions and that emphasize its safe and proper use

d. Maintaining statistics on incidents where armor has or has not protected officers from harm, including traffic accidents.

#### **Disclaimer:**

These policies are provided for guidance and use by members of the Utah Chiefs of Police Association. They have been reviewed by the Utah Chiefs of Police Association Judge Advocate for conformance with Utah State law. These policies should be modified as needed for the individual needs of each police organization and reviewed with the agencies legal department before adoption.