

801 Equipment and Uniform Regulations

801.2 EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

801.2.1 DEPARTMENT ISSUED IDENTIFICATION

801.2.2 DUTY BELT AND ACCESSORIES

801.2.3 LOAD BEARING VESTS

801.2.4 ARMOR

(a) Body Armor

1. Issued body armor must be worn at all times by uniformed officers engaged in:
 - (a) Field duty.
 - (b) Secondary Law Enforcement Related Employment (LERE).
 - (c) The pre-planned service of any arrest or search warrant.
2. Officers assigned to office positions are exempt from wearing body armor during normal duty assignments.
3. Officers seeking a medical waiver from wearing body armor while in uniform shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - (a) Officers will request a waiver by submitting a memorandum through the chain-of-command to the Chief detailing the reasons for the waiver. The memorandum must be accompanied by:
 1. Medical documentation clearly showing the condition caused by the wearing of the body armor.
 2. A signed letter from the employee's physician confirming a medical condition and recommending that the employee be allowed to wear the body armor at the employee's discretion.
 3. A liability release with all required information filled in and signed by the requesting employee. Refusal to sign the liability release will be grounds for denying the waiver.
 - (b) If the medical waiver is approved, the Chief or designee will ensure:
 1. A copy of the memorandum, letter, documentation and liability release are forwarded to the person who requested the waiver; and
 2. All originals will be forwarded to APD Health Services for placement in the employee's medical file.
 - (c) A waiver is a privilege granted by the Chief, not an entitlement or a right. As such, it can be revoked by the Chief or designee at any time for any reason.
 - (d) The waiver will be updated annually.
4. Defective and expired body armor will be handled as outlined in General Order 800 (Property and Equipment Accountability).

(b) Patrol Plate Carriers - Due to the increased threat of calls for service in which suspects may be armed with high powered weapons, the Department will issue enhanced ballistic plates and carriers (heavy vests) to authorized employees. The following order will cover the issuance, care and use of the heavy vests.

1. Heavy vest issue/care:
 - (a) The heavy vests will be issued through the Police Equipment section and will become part of the employee's inventory.
 1. The Police Equipment section will develop a plan to replace the heavy vests before they expire. No heavy vest will be worn after the warranty expiration date has passed, except for training purposes as approved.
 2. Employees will contact their supervisor and the Police Equipment section if they believe their heavy vest is defective.

3. The Police Equipment section will issue a loaner heavy vest if one is available.
 4. The Police Equipment section will make arrangements for the vest to be replaced or repaired.
- (b) Employees will follow General Order 800.2 and the manufacturer's care instructions when caring for their heavy vest.
 - (c) Heavy vests must be stored in an air conditioned location in order to minimize heat damage to the armor.
 - (d) All officers will receive training on the proper care, fitting, inspection, use, storage, and maintenance of the armor.
 - (e) Personally owned heavy vests.
 1. Employees may wish to purchase heavy vests or rifle plate inserts at their own expense for use while on duty. If an employee chooses to do so, the following guidelines will apply:
 - (a) The personally owned heavy vest plates will have the same or higher ballistic rating that is approved by the NIJ Level IV standard as the departmentally issued heavy vest.
 - (b) The heavy vest carrier will be black in color and have the word "Police" clearly visible in a light color on the front and back. No other markings or patches will be worn on the heavy vest.
 - (c) The heavy vest carrier will be similar in appearance to the heavy vest carriers issued by the department.
 - ~~(d) Supervisors will inspect the personally owned heavy vest to ensure it is not worn past the warranty expiration date.~~
 - (d) Employees will complete and sign APD form PD0255 (Personal Heavy Vest and/or Rifle Plate Authorization) acknowledging their duty to maintain their personally owned heavy vest and/or rifle plates and their responsibility to replace damaged or unserviceable equipment and forward it to APD Police Equipment for retention. A copy will also be maintained by the employee's supervisor.
 - (e) Supervisors will inspect personally owned heavy vest and/or rifle plates prior to their first use to ensure compliance with this policy and the authorization form. Supervisors will also inspect the heavy vest and/or rifle plates annually. Supervisors will ensure neither item is worn past its expiration date, or if it is damaged or unserviceable.