

Gautier Police Department
Law Enforcement
Policies and Procedures

SUBJECT: Body Armor	POLICY NUMBER:
ISSUE DATE:	REVISIONS DATE:
AUTHORITY TITLE:	AUTHORITY SIGNATURE:

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Gautier 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 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.

DISCUSSION:

The Gautier Police Department shall make ballistic vests available to all sworn officers. The wearing of the vests is regulated by the officer's assignment.

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 Gautier Police Department approved body armor.
3. Body armor that is worn or damaged shall be replaced by the City of Gautier. Body armor that must be replaced due to misuse or abuse will be paid for by the officer.

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B. Use of Body Armor

1. Officers shall wear Gautier Police Department approved body armor while on duty.
2. Body armor shall be worn by officers during both classroom and field training.
3. Officers that are assigned to a uniformed function and non-uniformed sworn officers are required to wear body armor while engaged in field activities Both on duty and during off duty employment unless exempt as follows:
 - a. When an Gautier Police Department 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 Gautier Police 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, sign of damage, abuse and wear.

D. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor

1. Officer shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage and for general cleanliness.

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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 the 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

The training officer will be responsible for:

1. Monitoring technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.
2. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
3. Providing training program that demonstrate body armor's stopping power under actual firing conditions and that emphasize its safe and proper use.
4. Maintaining statistics on incidents where armor has or has not protected officers from harm, including traffic accidents.

F. Command and Administrative Personnel:

Command and Administrative personnel are those officers who work from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and perform administrative duties as designated by the Chief of Police. All officers classified as "Command" or "Administrative Personnel" will be required to wear a ballistic vest under the Chief of Police discretion.

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