

La Plata Police Department – General Order

	Title: Body Armor		Order #: 416	
	Effective Date: September 1, 2014	Review Date:		
	Original Issue:			
<input checked="" type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> Amends <input type="radio"/> Rescinds				
Approved by: Chief Carl Schinner				CALEA 5 th Edition
CALEA Standard: 41.3.5 41.3.6				Pages: 2

01 PURPOSE: To provide officers of the Department with proper guidelines regarding the issuance, use and wearing of body armor.

02 POLICY: The Department recognizes that the wearing of a protective vest is important for officer safety. It shall be the policy of the Department to provide a protective vest to all sworn personnel. (CALEA 41.3.5)

03 ISSUING PROCEDURES AND THREAT LEVEL: (CALEA 41.3.5)

- A. The Operations Commander will ensure that officers are issued new body armor that meets or exceeds the standards prescribed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). The armor will consist of front and rear ballistic panels with a washable carrier.
- B. All body armor obtained will be purchased new from an authorized dealer. Serviceable used vests may be issued temporarily, only if an officer would otherwise be without a vest.
- C. All Department issued body armor will meet NIJ specifications prescribed for Threat Level II or above.

04 USE AND WEARING OF BODY ARMOR:

Body armor shall be worn by officers of the Department under the following situations and circumstances: (CALEA 41.3.5)

- A. All uniformed officers in the front line function or any officer participating in departmentally approved uniformed secondary extra duty employment.
- B. As part of any pre-planned high risk operation including, but not limited to: (CALEA 41.3.6)
 - 1. Tactical raid;
 - 2. Warrant service; and/or
 - 3. Other high risk incident.

C. While participating in a stakeout or surveillance when apprehension is a possible objective.

D. While engaged in specialized front line law enforcement activities including, but not limited to bicycle patrol, K9 (future) and traffic enforcement.

E. Officers are discouraged, but the Department will not prohibit them from wearing metal shock/strike plates in body armor due to the risk of serious or fatal injury which could result from the deflection of a projectile off the plate upward into the officer's face/jaw/head/neck area.

05 AVAILABILITY OF BODY ARMOR: Officers not involved in the front line function shall have their body armor immediately available at all times.

06 RELACEMENT AND INSPECTIONS:

- A. Supervisors shall observe subordinates and ensure compliance with the provisions of Section 04 of this procedure.
- B. Officers with improperly fitting or damaged issued body armor will be referred to the Operations Commander for replacement.
- C. Replacement of unserviceable issued body armor, due to change in body size, abuse or accidental damage may be the officer's responsibility. The Department will replace vests that are damaged as a result of normal wear, line-of-duty gunfire or other direct performance of duty.

07 CARE AND MAINTENANCE:

A. Officers shall comply with all care and cleaning instructions included on the label of issued body armor in addition to any instructions provided through training.

- B. Because exposure to ultraviolet light or certain washing materials may permanently destroy ballistic capabilities, officers shall adhere to the following:
1. When storing, do not expose armor to daylight, plant grow lights, florescent lights or any source of ultraviolet lighting.
 2. Hand wash with gentle soap and water to prevent build-up of dirt and body oils, particularly in the seams.
 3. Do not place armor in any washing machine or dryer.
 4. Do not expose armor to bleach, harsh detergents or dry cleaning solvents.
 5. Never fold ballistic panels.

06 RECORDS AND DISPOSAL:

- A. The Operations Commander shall keep records on all Department issued armor which shall include at a minimum:
1. Name of officer.
 2. Manufacturer's name, threat level and NIJ Standard Number.
 3. Date of issue.
- B. Under no circumstances will armor be used for any purpose other than evidence, training or research after the shooting or significant damage of that armor.
- C. Unserviceable body armor shall be disposed of in a government operated landfill or an approved recycling facility under the direction of the Operations Commander or his/her designee.
- D. The Operations Commander will maintain a replacement schedule for all issued vests. This schedule will be driven by budgetary controls. Due to increased usage, front line officers will receive preferential treatment when deciding which vests to replace.