



BRAINTREE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy and Procedure

POLICE PROTECTIVE VEST/BODY ARMOR

2018-22

Date of Issue: 05/14/2018

Issuing Authority:

Review Date :

Revised:

Chief Paul Shastany

Certification Standards: **41.3.5; 41.3.6**

Accreditation Standards:

Optional Accreditation Standards:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide sworn members of the Braintree Police Department (BPD) with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Braintree 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.

III. 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.

Officers: All sworn Police Officers of the Braintree Police Department, regardless of rank.

Immediately Available: Means having body armor easily accessible in a cruiser, or your privately owned vehicle (while at a detail) or if assigned inside the police station in your office, locker or at your work station should a high risk or tactical event occur requiring a more strategic advantage for an officer exposed to serious injury or deadly force situation. **[41.3.5]**

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 (DOJ) or its' successor agency.
2. As part of the BPD initial issued equipment procedure all sworn officers shall be issued BPD-approved body armor. **[41.3.5]**
3. Retired sworn officers and other specials will have the specifications for BPD-approved body armor made available to them. The cost of the body armor will be incurred by the sworn retired officer and/or special.

B. Use of Body Armor

1. Officers shall wear only department issued and approved body armor.
2. Officers that are assigned to routine uniformed patrol functions, or detectives assigned to anti-crime patrols shall wear body armor while engaged in field activities. **[41.3.5]** In addition, all officers, including detectives shall be mandated to wear protective body armor during pre-planned, high risk and/or tactical situations. Examples of "high risk" or "tactical" situations include but are not limited to, search warrant executions, barricaded subject or hostage situations, drug raids, initial crime scene response, serving arrest warrants, an active shooter, or any time a supervisor deems it necessary or appropriate. **[41.3.6]**
3. All employees during firearms training, including instructors, shall wear body armor during such training. **[41.3.5]**
4. Student Officers shall wear body armor as specified by the Municipal Police Training Committee or other academy regulations. **[41.3.5]**
5. It is highly recommended that all officers wear body armor while working paid detail assignments. **[41.3.5]**
 - When traffic control and direction is the primary function commonly referred to as a "road/construction job" those officers who choose not to wear body armor during that assignment must have their issued body armor ***immediately available*** at all times.

****NOTE:*** During periods of excessive heat or prolonged exposure to direct sunlight while performing a traffic control function officers could develop heat exhaustion

- Officers assigned to a particular detail who duties fall within the definition of “Field Activities” to include, but not limited to, specific threats such as a strike or labor dispute, bomb threat, terrorist threat, or a detail where residents or employees may be exposed to external threats from disgruntle individuals shall wear body armor.
6. It is highly recommended that plain clothes officers assigned to the Detective Division wear protective body armor when practical. Those officers/detectives who choose not to wear their issued body armor must have their issued body armor ***immediately available***. [41.3.5]
 7. Uniformed or plain clothes officers assigned to either administrative duties or support services must have their body armor immediately available when outside the confines of the police station. All officers inside BPD are required to have their body armor ***immediately available*** for field services. [41.3.5]
 8. While attending court in an off-duty capacity, officers may choose not to wear their body armor while in uniform. Tactical vests are not allowed to be worn while testifying. [41.3.5]
 9. Officers are exempt from wearing body armor while officially assigned to funeral honor guard duties in uniform or while attending a funeral in an off-duty capacity while in uniform. [41.3.5]
 10. Several other Department exemptions are as follows: [41.3.5]
 - When a department approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor.
 - When an officer is working undercover or assigned to plain clothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor.
 - When the Chief of Police or his designee determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.

C. INSPECTIONS BY SUPERVISORS

1. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn as required by this policy through routine observation.
2. Cleaning, maintenance and inspection of body armor are the responsibility of the wearer. Annual inspections of body armor shall be conducted for fit, cleanliness, and signs of damage, abuse and wear. This may be accomplished as part of annual firearms training.

D. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor

1. Officers shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage, wear, and 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. Body armor has a life expectancy of approximately 5 years. Expired body armor will be replaced by the guidelines and protocols established by the National Institute of Justice in the sixth year. Officers shall notify their immediate supervisor of expired or damaged body armor who will then notify the Lieutenant of Training and Professional Standards.

E. TRAINING

Deputies and Department Armors and Firearm Instructors 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. Provide in service training programs that maximize officer safety procedures and emphasize body armor's safe and proper use.
4. The Deputy of Operations, who reviews use of force reports, will maintain statistics on incidents where body armor has or has not protected officers from harm. Including traffic crashes.

