



Soft Body Armor Use, Care, and Reporting

I. INTRODUCTION

Soft Body Armor will be issued to each member of the Ridgely Police Department. Each Officer is responsible for its care, and in addition to information in this order, each Officer will comply with the manufacturer's care recommendations. Officers that notice any defective Soft Body Armor panels, carriers, or related items will immediately report to their supervisor.

II. POLICY

A. Personnel required to wear the issued Soft Body Armor (vest) while on duty, attending work related court while in RPD uniform, and traveling to and from RPD are as follows:

1. Those holding the rank of Officer through Sergeant while in uniform.
2. Those holding the rank of Lieutenant through Chief at the scene of a critical incident.
3. Personnel ordered to wear a vest by Supervisory personnel because of the nature of their assignment.

B. Personnel may be exempt from the mandatory wearing of the vest if:

1. A medical reason is furnished by an employee's physician and approved by the Chief.
2. When the Chief determines that the employee is assigned to a function where the vest would interfere with the completion of the assignment.

C. All personnel issued a vest are required to have their vests readily available while on duty.

D. An employee struck by gunfire or some other object in an area protected by the vest will:

1. Be taken to a hospital as soon as possible, regardless of whether the assaulted employee feels any ill effects or whether any external injury is recognizable.
2. Immediately report the incident to a supervisor.

General Order No. 1-8 (Cont.)

3. Complete an Injury Report.

4. Submit a detailed report to the Chief. The report will include the circumstances of the incident, all pertinent details, and close up photographs of the impact area.

5. Assure that the vest is collected and preserved in its current state for any future examination or testing that may be determined by the Chief.

E. Whenever an employee may be incapacitated, a supervisor will ensure that the Injury Report and a detailed report of investigation are submitted. They will also assure the vest is collected as required.

F. The proper care of a vest is essential to its performance and the appearance of the Officer.

1. The effectiveness of the Kevlar material to deter injury is substantially reduced when it becomes wet. The Kevlar panels should only be cleaned when necessary for hygienic purposes and then only in accordance with the following instructions:

a. DO NOT machine wash or scrub with a brush.

b. DO NOT send to a commercial laundry or dry clean.

c. Wipe with a damp cloth and towel dry. If badly soiled, inserts may be soaked in warm water, NO SOAP OR BLEACH. Machine dry in a home dryer, cotton setting (approximately 140 degrees F) for 70-75 minutes. They can also be air-dried by laying the panel on a flat surface. NO NOT DRY IN THE SUNLIGHT.

d. Inserts must be thoroughly dry before wearing.

e. If the Kevlar panels become so soiled they do not respond to the above instructions, notify supervisor immediately in writing.

f. The carrier portion of the vest may be cared for according to instructions on the manufacturer's label.

2. When vests are worn, to protect against chafing and perspiration, a barrier such as a tee shirt or other garment designed for that purpose should be worn under the vest.

3. The vest will not be left lying unprotected inside of an automobile or left exposed to sunlight for extended periods of time since ultraviolet rays have a deteriorating effect on the Kevlar material.

G. The Chief of Police will:

1. Develop and implement a program for scheduled replacement of the Kevlar panel portion of the vest, or the entire vest.

General Order No. 1-8 (Cont.)

2. Ensure that any lot of soft body armor that is identified as subject to failure is replaced immediately.

H. Damaged carriers, such as the velcro or elastic straps, may be repaired by any alteration department.

I. Care instructions shall be followed by the manufacturer's recommendation. Failure to adhere to the manufacturer's recommendation may lead to a voided warranty or armor failure.