



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

Body Armor	Related Policies:
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
Applicable Oklahoma Statutes:	
CALEA Standard:	
Date Implemented:	Review Date:

I. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide law enforcement Deputies with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor.

II. Policy: It is the policy of this law enforcement agency to maximize Deputy 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 the observance of Deputy safety procedures.

III. Definitions:

A. Field Activities: Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected to place Deputies in situations where they would be required to act in enforcement rather than administrative or support capacities.

IV. Procedure:

A. Issuance of Body Armor

- a. All body armor issued must comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
- b. All Deputies shall be issued agency-approved body armor.
- c. Body armor that is worn or damaged shall be replaced by the agency. Body armor that must be replaced due to misuse or abuse by the Deputy shall be paid for by the Deputy.

B. Use of Body Armor:

- a. Deputies shall wear only agency-approved body armor.
- b. Deputies that are assigned to the uniformed function are required to wear body armor during their shift while engaged in field activities. In addition, all Deputies must wear protective vests during high risk and/or tactical situations. Examples of

“high risk” or “tactical” situations include but are not limited to, search warrant executions, drug raids, initial crime scene response, and serving felony warrants.

- c. Body armor shall be worn by Deputies while engaged in field activities both on duty and during off duty employment unless exempt as follows:
 - i. When an agency-approved physician determines that an Deputy has a medical condition that would preclude wearing body armor;
 - ii. When the Deputy is involved in undercover or plain clothes work that his/her supervisor determines could be compromised by wearing body armor; or
 - iii. When the agency determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate wearing body armor.

C. Inspections of Body Armor:

- a. 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.
- b. Annual inspections of body armor shall be conducted for fit, cleanliness, signs of damage, abuse and wear.

D. Care, Maintenance and Replacement of Body Armor

- a. Deputies shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage and for general cleanliness.
- b. As dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels, each Deputy shall be responsible for cleaning personal body armor in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
- c. Deputies are responsible for the proper storage, maintenance and care of body armor in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions.
- d. Deputies 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.
- e. Body armor will be replaced in accordance with guidelines and protocols established by the National Institute of Justice.

E. Training

- a. The training Deputy shall be responsible for:
 - i. Monitoring technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.
 - ii. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
 - iii. Provide training programs that demonstrate body armor’s stopping power under actual firing conditions and that emphasize its safe and proper use
 - iv. Maintaining statistics on incidents where armor has or has not protected Deputies from harm, including traffic accidents