



Sheridan Police Department
Policies and Procedures
17.3 Replaces 304.5
Chapter 17 – Uniforms & Equipment
Section 3 – Body Armor

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Signature:

All body armor provides a significant level of protection however it is not a substitute for sound, safety practices. The Sheridan Police Department issues personal protection body armor to all sworn officers to supplement officer safety in conjunction with the practice of prescribed safety procedures.

17.3.1 Issuance of Body Armor

- A. Sworn personnel will be issued body armor by the department. The Sheridan Police Department will purchase body armor for each newly hired police officer.
- B. Issued body armor must meet the current minimum protective standards as determined by the chief of police and the specifications for certification by the National Institute of Justice.
- C. Body armor will remain the property of the Sheridan Police Department.
- D. The department will replace body armor in accordance with manufacturer's recommendation.

17.3.2 Use of Body Armor

- A. Officers assigned to the patrol division are required to wear their issued body armor while engaged in field activities, unless exempted as follows:
 - 1. When an agency approved physician determines that an officer has a medical condition that would preclude use of body armor.
 - 2. When the officer is involved in undercover or plainclothes work that his or her sergeant or bureau commander determines would be compromised by use of body armor.
 - 3. With permission of the bureau commander when the officer is assigned to perform an administrative function.
 - 4. When the department or supervisor determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate body armor (i.e. - weather conditions or special assignments).
- B. Sworn personnel assigned to the detective division will not be required to wear body armor for normal daily activities. Members of the detective division will have their body armor readily available when working and are encouraged to wear it even when not mandated by this policy. Officers will be required to wear body armor any time they are engaged in a situation where there is a heightened risk of injury or death. High risk situations include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Participation on the entry team when serving search warrants;
 - 2. Serving high risk arrest warrants;
 - 3. Contact with a person known to have a history of violence or threats of violence;
 - 4. Contact with a person with history of weapon violations; and
 - 5. Contact with known dangerous or violent felons.

- C. Body armor must be worn in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
- D. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as required.

17.3.3 Care and Maintenance of Body Armor

- A. Each officer is responsible for the proper storage of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and daily inspection for signs of damage and general cleanliness.
- B. As dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels, each officer will be responsible for cleaning his or her body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- C. Employees are responsible for reporting any damage to their assigned vest to their supervisor.
- D. The Sheridan Police Department will replace body armor that is worn, damaged or scheduled for replacement per the manufacturer's recommendations. The employee will be responsible for replacement costs if damage is due to misuse or abuse.

17.3.4 External Vest Carriers

- A. The department will provide each officer level IIIA vest panels, an internal vest carrier, authorized accessory pouches and a black Angel Armor R.I.S.E. armor system RUC load bearing vest upon the expiration of their current duty vests. The purpose for the external vest option is to disperse weight from the officers' waist and hips and to accommodate comfort.
- B. The only authorized accessories to be worn on the external vest carriers are a department issued portable radio, department issued Taser, a department issued O.C. canister and two pairs of department issued handcuffs. Accessory carrying pouches will be issued with each vest.
 - 1. Tasers will be worn to accommodate a reactive hand draw only and shall be mounted utilizing an issued Blackhawk retention holster and adapter.
 - 2. Portable radios will be worn on the opposite side of the Taser.
 - 3. O.C. shall be worn next to the radio.
 - 4. Handcuffs shall be worn on the sides or near the small of the back.
- C. Given the freed up space on the duty belt, officers wearing an external vest shall wear a tourniquet on the duty belt in the space vacated by the Taser.
- D. Officers are required to wear their badges and issued nametags on the external carriers. Sew on patches are not authorized on the vest carrier.
- E. Knives, magazines or any other equipment not specified in this policy, are specifically prohibited on the external carriers.
- F. Officer Elective Purchase
 - 1. Officers may have the option to purchase an external vest carrier at their own expense if they do not wish to wait for a new vest.
 - 2. The only authorized items for external vest wear through personal purchase are:
 - a. The black, R.I.S.E. armor system RUC load bearing vest with a vertical mic tab, reinforced badge area, blank nameplate area and a load bearing back.
 - b. Department issued portable radio, department issued Taser, a department issued O.C. canister and two pairs of department issued handcuffs. Accessory carrying pouches will be purchased by the officer.

- c. Officers who purchase the external vest carriers do so at their own expense and will be issued a complete load bearing vest system upon the expiration of their current vests.
- G. Officers wearing an external vest carrier may wear a department issued uniform shirt, a department approved undershirt, or in inclement weather, a department issued or approved jacket.