



SOFT BODY ARMOR

Directive 6 - 104

Date of Issue: July 2013 Amends/Cancel: Chapter VI Sec 2

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to establish policy and procedures in regards to the care and use of soft body armor.

II. POLICY

1. It is the policy of the Department of General Services Maryland Capitol Police (DGS-MCP) that the following police employees are required to wear their issued vest while on duty.
 - a. Those holding the classification of police officer through Police Officer Supervisor (Sergeant) while working in uniform.
 - b. Personnel ordered to wear a vest by supervisory or command personnel because of the nature of their assignment.
2. Personnel working in a non-uniformed assignment are required to have their vests readily available while on duty.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Soft Body Armor

1. Soft body armor (protective vest) is issued to all DGS-MCP police personnel to provide a measure of protection against assault.
2. It is designed to reduce the probability of a fatal wound and decrease the extent of an injury; however, it is not a guarantee against injury or death.
3. Personnel not required to wear a vest are encouraged to do so for the measure of protection it provides.
4. Under no circumstances will an employee make or attempt to make any alterations to the vest. If it becomes unserviceable, it will be returned to the Quartermaster Division for replacement.

B. Use and Reporting

1. Personnel required to wear the issued vest or a vest approved by the Chief of Police while on duty are:
 - a. Those holding the rank of Police Officer through Police Officer Supervisor (Sergeant) while working in uniform.
 - b. Personnel ordered to wear a vest by supervisory or command personnel because of the nature of their assignment.
2. Personnel may be exempt from the mandatory wearing of vests if:
 - a. A medical reason is furnished by an employee's physician and approved by the Chief of Police, or
 - b. An employee's commander, with the approval of the Chief of Police determines that the employee is assigned to a function where the vest would interfere with the completion of the assignment.
3. All Police Employees are required to have their vests readily available while on duty.
4. 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 brush.
 - b. **Do not** send to commercial laundry or dry clean.
 - c. **Do** wipe with damp cloth and towel dry. If badly soiled, inserts may be soaked in warm water, no soap or bleach. Air dry only. Do not dry in direct 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, replacement panels should be obtained.
 - f. The "carrier" portion of the vest may be cared for according to instructions on the manufacturer's label.
5. When vests are worn, it is recommended that a tee-shirt be worn as a barrier to protect against chafing and perspiration.

6. The body armor should 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.
7. The Chief of Police in conjunction with the Quartermaster Division will:
 - a. develop a formal program of scheduled, standardized testing and evaluation of issued soft body armor.
 - b. develop and implement a program for scheduled replacement of the Kevlar panel portion of the vests.
 - c. ensure that any lot of soft body armor that is identified as subject to failure will be replaced immediately.