

<p style="text-align: center;">East Haven Police Department</p> 	Type of Directive: Policies & Procedures		No. 103.4
	Subject/Title: Body Armor	Issue Date: December 20, 2022	
		Effective Date: December 31, 2022	
	Issuing Authority: Honorable Board of Police Commissioners	Review Date: Annually	
References/Attachments: N/A		Rescinds: 103.3	Amends: N/A

I. PURPOSE

A. The purpose of this directive is to set forth the policies and procedures of the East Haven Police Department (EHPD) regarding the established guidelines under which sworn personnel of this Department will possess, wear and care for Department-issued soft body armor/protective vests.

II. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the East Haven Police Department that personnel should take the utmost care for their personal safety.

B. It is the policy of this Department that:

1. The Department shall make soft body armor available to all sworn personnel.
2. Uniformed patrol personnel, for their safety and protection, shall wear soft body armor while on duty unless exempt as stated in this directive.
3. Non-patrol personnel, including the Chief of Police and other command personnel, are not required to wear soft body armor on duty, but must have it available for use at all times.

III. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

- A. Soft, concealable body armor is designed to protect the wearer against projectiles fired by most handguns and shotguns. Its effectiveness depends upon the protection rating as stated by the manufacturer.
- B. Soft body armor is not designed to protect the wearer from medium to high power rifle projectiles.
- C. Soft body armor may protect against improvised weapons, such as broken bottles, but is usually not effective against knives or ice picks unless it is designed, manufactured and rated as such. Sharp, pointed instruments used in a stabbing motion may penetrate body armor and could deliver a fatal injury. Soft body armor may afford a certain degree of protection to the wearer against slashing knife or sharp-edged weapon attacks. Such soft body armor may also afford some protection against any blunt force to the body.
- D. Heavier body armor made of ceramic plates may protect against multiple impacts from rifle fire, but it is generally too heavy and inflexible to be worn during normal patrol duties and is generally used for special operations.
- E. While body armor provides a significant level of protection, it is not a substitute for the observance of officer safety procedures and sound tactics. As a matter of practice, the Department provides to its members an initial issue of protective body armor in the interests of maximizing officer safety and protection.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Authorized Body Armor
 - 1. The body armor will comply with protective and related requirements prescribed under current standards of the National Institute of Justice.
 - 2. Approved body armor, at the officer's option, may be either concealable or external armor. External wear body armor must be stored in a carrier that is approved by the Department. Any external body armor carrier shall have the name plate and badge or the embroidered patch on the left chest and embroidered name and rank on the right chest. Any external body armor carrier with a "molle" system shall also have the word "Police" visible across the back of the carrier in white or gray. Gold may be utilized for any officer at the rank of Detective or higher.
- B. Issuance of Body Armor
 - 1. Upon being employed as a sworn police officer with the Department, and prior to working in the field, all sworn police officers shall be issued soft body armor.
- C. Inspections of Body Armor
 - 1. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn as required by this directive through routine observation and periodic inspections.

D. Care and Maintenance of Body Armor

1. Cleaning, maintenance and inspection of body armor is the responsibility of the officer to whom the body armor was issued.
2. Officers shall routinely inspect personal body armor for signs of damage or wear, and for general cleanliness. Unserviceable body armor shall be reported to the Training Officer.
3. 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.
4. Officers are responsible for the proper storage, maintenance and care of body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
5. Any lost or stolen body armor is to be immediately reported to the officer's immediate supervisor, to be followed with a detailed report as to the circumstances under which the protective body armor went missing.
6. After the issuance of body armor to an officer, and if tailoring of the body armor is required due to weight gain, loss or other similar matters, the cost of said tailoring will be the responsibility of the officer.

E. Replacement Issue

1. The useful life of soft body armor that is worn regularly is approximately five (5) years.
2. The Department has established a rotational plan whereby soft body armor will be replaced relative to the five (5) year serviceability of the body armor.
3. Any body armor that is damaged during the course of an officer's official duties will be replaced by the Department.
4. Any employee requiring replacement of the body armor should make all such requests to the Training Officer in writing, i.e. via email, making sure that his or her supervisory officer and commanding officer are copied on all such requests. The request should contain sufficient information as to the reason for the request and describing the damage.
5. The Training Officer shall be responsible for maintaining a file of the rotational replacement schedule, and a record as to the date, manufacturer, style/model number, and other relevant information for each vest that is issued. The officer shall notify the Training Officer six (6) months prior to the expiration date of the body armor.

F. Personnel Required to Use Body Armor

1. Uniformed patrol personnel, for their safety and protection, shall wear soft body armor while on patrol duty if they have elected for the Department to purchase it.
 - a. Officers involved in booking should wear soft body armor.

- b. Officers involved in pre-planned high-risk situations shall be required to wear their body armor. Officers who do not have body armor shall not participate in such situations. Pre-planned high-risk situations include but are not limited to the following:
 - 1) Executing high-risk arrest warrants and search warrants.
 - c. Officers working traffic duty assignments, as outlined in Policies and Procedures # 448 – Extra-Duty Employment, may wear their body armor. However, if they choose to not wear their body armor, it must be readily available for use.
- G. Personnel Not Required to Use Body Armor
- 1. Plain Clothes Officers are not required to wear their body armor while on regular duty.
 - a. Their body armor must be readily available to the officer in the event that any situation occurs which necessitates the use of it.
 - b. Plain Clothes Officers may use their body armor on the exterior of their clothing.
 - c. It is, however, required for plain clothes officers to wear body armor when involved in all pre-planned high-risk situations.
 - 2. The following officers are not required to wear their body armor while inside the Department. When leaving the Department, the following officers must have their body armor readily available for use.
 - a. Chief of Police.
 - b. Deputy Chief.
 - c. Inspector.
 - d. Captain.
 - e. Shift Commander
 - f. Records Supervisor/Officer.
 - g. Court Liaison Supervisor/Officer.
 - h. School Resource Officer/DARE Officer.
 - i. Administrative and Training Supervisor/Officer.
 - j. Internal Affairs Officer.
 - k. Desk Officer.

1. Sworn Personnel assigned to administrative duties inside the Department.