

Georgia Department of Public Safety Policy Manual

SUBJECT BALLISTIC VESTS	POLICY NUMBER 6.04
DISTRIBUTION SWORN EMPLOYEES	REVISED DATE 11/13/2023
	POLICY REVIEWED 11/13/2023

6.04.1 Purpose

To establish policy and procedures for sworn members concerning issuance, use, and care of ballistic vests.

6.04.2 Policy

Any sworn member that is issued a firearm shall be issued a ballistic vest and shall use and maintain it in accordance with this policy.

6.04.3 Procedures

A. Wearing of Ballistic Vests

1. Sworn members are required to wear their ballistic vests while on patrol.
2. Supervisors are strongly encouraged to lead by example and wear their ballistic vests as well. It will be the individual supervisor's decision whether to wear the ballistic vest during the performance of administrative duties.
3. All sworn members, including supervisors, will be required to wear ballistic vests when assigned to pre-planned enforcement activities, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. When assigned to civil disturbance details;
 - b. When on a raid;
 - c. When engaged in a critical incident as set forth in DPS Policy #25.02 – Activation of State of Georgia SWAT Team; and
 - d. When serving a warrant.
4. A sworn member shall wear his/her vest when directed to do so by a supervisor.
5. Ballistic vests shall be worn while in uniform during off-duty police employment.
6. Normally, ballistic vests are to be worn under the uniform shirt. However, in instances of extreme emergency, the vest may be worn over the uniform shirt.

B. Plate Carriers, vests designed to carry rifle rated ballistic plates, issued by DPS are to be utilized in critical incidents.

C. Care of Ballistic Vests

1. Ballistic vests shall be kept in clean and serviceable condition:
 - a. Vests shall not be stored wet;
 - b. If a vest becomes unserviceable, due to damage or wear, it is to be returned to the Supply Unit for repair or replacement.
 - c. A damaged vest is unserviceable and shall not be worn. The sworn member shall forward a memorandum to the appropriate Adjutant/Division Director, through the chain of command, describing the damage and the circumstances under which it occurred. The Supply Unit, upon authorization of the appropriate Adjutant/Division Director, shall make arrangements for issuance of a new vest.
2. Ballistic vests are to be cleaned only in the manner described in the manufacturer's cleaning instructions attached to the vest.
3. The vest or the protective cover shall not be altered in any manner.

D. Training:

The Training Division shall be responsible for:

1. Monitoring technological advances in the ballistic protection industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.
2. Assessing weapons and ammunition currently in use and the suitability of approved body armor to protect against those threats.
3. Providing training programs that emphasize body armor's safe and proper use.
4. Maintaining statistics on incidents where armor has or has not protected officers from harm.