

U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
ICE Policy System

**OFFICE OF PRIMARY INTEREST: Director of Operations (National Firearms and
Tactical Training Unit)**

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DIRECTIVE TITLE: ICE Body Armor Policy

1. **PURPOSE and SCOPE.** To establish the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) policy for the use of personal protective soft body armor (body armor) and identify related management and employee responsibilities. This directive applies to all components of ICE with armed officers
2. **AUTHORITIES/REFERENCES.**
 - 2.1. **Statutory and Regulatory Authority**

8 USC 1103
 - 2.2. **ICE Policy**

Interim ICE Firearms Policy (July 7, 2004)

Interim ICE Use of Force Policy (July 7, 2004)
 - 2.3 **National Institute of Justice Reference Documents**

Ballistic Resistance of Personal Body Armor (NIJ Standard 0101-03 and 0101-04 and amendments)

Selection and Application Guide to Personal Body Armor (NIJ Guide 100-01 and 100-98, and amendments)
3. **SUPERSEDED/CANCELLED POLICY/SUMMARY OF CHANGES.**

This directive supersedes previous legacy policies, issuances and previously recognized processes for soft body armor for all ICE offices with armed officers.

4. DEFINITIONS.

- 4.1. Body Armor** - A protective garment designed to stop a variety of standard handgun projectiles. The armor is not designed to stop all projectiles, especially those fired from high-caliber rifles. Unless rated as stab resistant, this armor is not designed to prevent injury from sharp or cutting or piercing-type weapons. No body armor is designed as a replacement for common sense, good judgment and proper street survival procedures and tactics.
- 4.2. Technology Standards for Body Armor** – The Law Enforcement and Corrections Standards and Testing Program (LECSTP) is sponsored by the Office of Science and Technology of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Department of Justice (DOJ). The LECSTP is an applied research effort that determines the technological needs of justice systems agencies, sets minimum performance standards for specific devices, tests commercially available equipment against those standards and disseminates the standards and the test results to criminal justice agencies nationally and internationally. The NIJ reference documents for this policy are listed in the Authorities section and are as follows: Ballistic Resistance of Personal Body Armor (NIJ Standard 0101-03 and 0101-04) and Selection and Application Guide to Personal Body Armor (NIJ Guide 100-01 and 100-98), to include amendments.

5. POLICY.

- 5.1.** All ICE employees authorized to carry firearms as a condition of employment shall be issued protective body armor. New employees will be fitted for body armor during their initial training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) or as specified by ICE. Replacement of expired or damaged body armor in the field shall be coordinated with the designated official for that operational component, most often the Senior Firearms Instructor (SFI).
- 5.2.** The ballistic resistance performance standard for protective body armor requires a minimum of threat level type IIA protection, with side panel coverage, and must meet the current NIJ standards.
- 5.3.** All ICE armed officers are strongly encouraged to wear their issued body armor while performing law enforcement duties. When not being worn, body armor should be readily accessible in the vehicle or building where the officer is working. When away from the vehicle or building, the ICE armed officer does not have to carry the body armor, unless instructed by a supervisor.
- 5.4.** All Federal Protective Service (FPS) armed uniformed officers shall wear their issued body armor while in the performance of their law enforcement duties. When in a non-uniform status or not being worn, body armor should be readily accessible in the vehicle or building where the officer is working. When away

from the vehicle or building, the ICE armed officer does not have to carry the body armor, unless instructed by an FPS supervisor.

- 5.5. All Detention and Removal Operations (DRO) armed uniformed officers shall wear their issued body armor while in the performance of their law enforcement duties. When not being worn, body armor should be readily accessible in the vehicle or building where the officer is working. DRO armed officers performing administrative duties or duties inside a detention facility shall not be required to wear their issued body armor.
- 5.6. Due to their covert mission within the aviation environment, Federal Air Marshals shall wear issued body armor according to their internal guidance and procedures as established by the Director, Federal Air Marshal Service.
- 5.7. The wearing of body armor during normal operations is at the discretion of the employee, except during activities as specified in the Procedures Section of this directive and for FPS and DRO armed officers as stated above in sections 5.4 and 5.5.
- 5.8. All employees need to be aware of the health risks associated with the wearing of body armor in high-heat/high humidity conditions and/or during strenuous exertion. When employees are required to wear body armor, they shall be provided opportunities to rehydrate and remove the body armor as necessary.
- 5.9. ICE does not authorize the use of personally owned body armor for armed officers while functioning as ICE employees. Any exception to this requirement first must be approved by the director of the operational component and then by the Director of the National Firearms and Tactical Training Unit (NFTTU).

6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

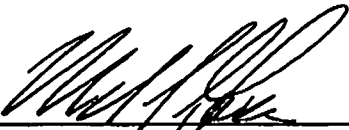
- 6.1. The NFTTU is responsible for the development of all national policy and procedures, and exercises program management responsibility for the body armor program.
- 6.2. The NFTTU shall coordinate all research, testing, evaluation, procurement, distribution and destruction of body armor.
- 6.3. The SFIs are responsible for coordinating requests for body armor, ensuring training requirements are met and conducting inspections of all body armor as required by the NFTTU.
- 6.4. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring armed personnel under their supervision are issued body armor and that it has not exceeded its expiration date.

- 6.5. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all personnel issued body armor comply with the mandatory requirements for wearing body armor specified in the Procedures Section of this policy.
- 6.6. ICE officers are responsible for the proper care and inspection of the issued body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and ballistic panel labeling.
- 6.7. ICE officers are required to attend, participate and complete all mandated body armor training as required by ICE and/or their operational component.
- 7. **PROCEDURES.**
 - 7.1. The NFFTU will develop standard operating procedures to be used for the selection, procurement, issuance, accountability, replacement and disposal of all ICE-owned and issued body armor.
 - 7.2. The NFFTU shall maintain the national inventory system for body armor. Unless otherwise identified by the NFFTU, the Firearms Inventory System (FIS) module in the Automated Management Information System is the national inventory system and will be the official system of record for the accountability, transfer and inventory of all ICE body armor.
 - 7.3. The officer to whom the body armor is issued is responsible for electronically accepting it in the designated automated inventory system. Body armor should not be documented on any other ICE property record document other than for exigent circumstances and only as an interim hand receipt until FIS can be properly updated by the responsible officer(s).
 - 7.4. A 100 percent body armor inventory shall be performed annually by all employees issued body armor in FIS. Responsible officials (supervisory personnel) shall ensure that the employees complete their annual inventory and verification process in FIS within 30 days of notification of the initiation of the inventory process. Employees who fail to complete their inventory and verifications within the specified 30 days may be subject to disciplinary action.
 - 7.5. In the event that body armor is lost or stolen, it must be reported to the NFFTU via facsimile (814-946-9995) and FIS within 48 hours of discovery by the employee to whom it was issued. This FIS reporting requirement does not preclude any other reporting requirement(s) mandated by any other ICE policy or procedure. The stolen body armor information, with serial number, shall also be entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

- 7.6. The wearing of body armor by ICE armed officers is mandatory during the following activities:**
- 7.6.1.** Special Response Team (SRT) deployments when officers are part of an arrest, or operate as an entry or perimeter element;
 - 7.6.2.** Executing arrests in pre-planned situations. ICE officers working in an undercover capacity, or in support of another officer working in an undercover capacity, may be exempted from the requirement of wearing body armor stated in this section, if the wearing of the body armor presents a danger of being exposed as a law enforcement officer. This exemption pertains to officers who will be working in close proximity to violators and who may identify the officer as a law enforcement officer by noticing the body armor. In all cases, the exemption must be approved by a first-line supervisor prior to the operation;
 - 7.6.3.** Execution of high-risk search warrants until the premises are secured and cleared or at the discretion of the first-line supervisor;
 - 7.6.4.** Apprehension phases of air and marine interdiction operations;
 - 7.6.5.** Transportation, storage or destruction of seized narcotics, currency or other high risk or valuable commodity;
 - 7.6.6.** During normal operations for FPS and DRO officers, if armed, and in uniform as stated above in sections 5.4., 5.5. and 5.7.;
 - 7.6.7.** In emergency situations where ICE management determines there is an immediate threat to the safety of employees. In addition to the nature of the emergency situation, ICE management will also determine the duration of the emergency and, accordingly, the length of time that body armor must be worn; and,
 - 7.6.8.** During all DRO fugitive apprehension operations regardless of whether it is a formalized, preplanned operation or not. This does not include simple investigative inquiries when an apprehension is not anticipated by the DRO armed officer.
- 7.7.** SFIs shall ensure that training is provided to each employee who is issued body armor. SFIs shall ensure that all training is documented in the appropriate system as identified by the NFTTU.
- 7.8.** Body armor training covers the following:
- Circumstances/situations when body armor must be worn;
 - Type of body armor that is necessary;

- Procedures to properly don, doff, adjust and wear body armor;
 - Limitations of body armor;
 - Proper care, maintenance and useful life of the body armor; and,
 - Use of firearms while wearing body armor.
- 7.9. Employees shall notify their supervisor(s) of the need to replace worn, damaged or ill-fitting body armor should such a need be identified by the armed officer or SFI.
- 7.10. Body armor that is no longer serviceable will be physically and electronically transferred to the NFTTU for final disposition.
- 7.11. Expired body armor distributed prior to the utilization of the NFTTU automated system for inventory and accountability shall be physically transferred to the NFTTU for final disposition. The NFTTU shall furnish guidance for the manual transfer of body armor that is not documented in FIS.
- 7.12. Additional guidance or instructions regarding the identification, procurement, replacement, transfer, tracking and inventory of body armor may be issued by the NFTTU to address agency transition, reorganization and/or realignment.
8. **NO PRIVATE RIGHT STATEMENT.** This Directive is an internal policy statement of ICE. It is not intended to, and does not create any rights, privileges, or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party against the United States; its departments, agencies, or other entities; its officers or employees; or any other person.

Approved



Michael J. Garcia
Assistant Secretary