



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH,
AND VICTIM SERVICES**

Protective Body Armor Fund (BARM) FY 2023

Public Safety Article, § 4-107; House Bill 325 (2006)

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Dorothy J. Lennig, Esq.
Executive Director

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

Submitted by:
Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

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September 1, 2023
MSAR #5650

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



August 8, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable William C. "Bill" Ferguson IV
President of the Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Report required by Public Safety Article § 4-107 (MSAR #5650) - Protective Body Armor Fund (BARM) FY 2023 Report

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

As required by § 4-107 of the Public Safety Article, please find an enclosed copy of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services' report titled, *Protective Body Armor Fund (BARM) FY 2023*. This report includes information regarding the distribution of money under this subtitle, as well as the ratio of protective body armor to police officers in each local jurisdiction of the State that applied for money from the Protective Body Armor Fund. Should you have any questions relating to the information provided in this report, please feel free to contact me at 410-697-9338.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dorothy J. Lennig".

Dorothy J. Lennig, Esq.
Executive Director

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

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Introduction

In 1995, legislation established the Protective Body Armor Fund to be administered by the Department of State Police to assist local law enforcement agencies to (i) acquire protective body armor for each police officer of the local law enforcement agency; and (ii) replace protective body armor at least every 10 years, or sooner if testing indicates a need for replacement.¹

Chapter 462 of 2005 authorized the Department of State Police to distribute money from the Protective Body Armor Fund to the Division of Parole and Probation (in the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services) for the acquisition of protective body armor for its agents.² This allocation was permissible only after required and permitted allocations were made to eligible local law enforcement agencies.³

House Bill 325 (2006) transferred the administration of the Protective Body Armor Fund from the Department of State Police to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (Office), effective July 1, 2006.⁴ Pursuant to § 4-107 of the Public Safety Article, the Office shall submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by September 1 of each year as it relates to:

1. The distribution of money under this subtitle; and
2. The ratio of protective body armor to police officers in each local jurisdiction of the State that applied for money from the Protective Body Armor Fund.

Protective Body Armor Fund

The primary purpose of the Protective Body Armor Fund, also known as the [Body Armor for Local Law Enforcement \(BARM\)](#) grant program, is to protect the lives of law enforcement officers with protective body armor or stab resistant vests.⁵ Funds are used to assist law enforcement agencies in the procurement of protective body armor for their officers and replace protective body armor if testing or age indicates a need for replacement. According to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), “protective vests for law enforcement officers include ballistic- and stab-resistant body armor that provides coverage and protection primarily for the torso” (*as described below*).⁶

¹ Maryland General Assembly. (2006). *House Bill 325 (2006), Department of State Police - Protective Body Armor Fund - Transfer to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention*. <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2006rs/bills/hb/hb0325t.pdf>

² Maryland General Assembly. (2005). *Chapter 462 (Senate Bill 135), Public Safety - Protective Body Armor Fund - Additional Use*. <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/legislation/Search/Legislation?target=/2005rs/billfile/sb0135.htm>

³ Maryland General Assembly. (2005). *Senate Bill 135 (2005), Public Safety - Protective Body Armor Fund - Additional Use (Fiscal and Policy Note Revised)*. https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2005rs/fnotes/bil_0005/sb0135.pdf

⁴ Maryland General Assembly. (2006). *House Bill 325 (2006), Department of State Police - Protective Body Armor Fund - Transfer to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention*. <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2006rs/bills/hb/hb0325t.pdf>

⁵ Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. *Body Armor for Local Law Enforcement (BARM)*. <http://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/barm/>

⁶ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. (2019). *National Institute of Journal*

- Ballistic-resistant body armor provides protection against bullet penetrations as well as blunt trauma that is associated with the impact of the bullet. “These vests include soft body armor that protects against handgun bullets, and less flexible tactical armor composed of soft and hard components that protect against rifle bullets.”⁷
- Stab-resistant body armor provides protection against knives and spikes.

NIJ intends to publish the seventh version of its body armor performance standard in 2022,⁸ “which will include improved test methods for female body armor and updated body armor protection levels that incorporate additional rifle threats faced by U.S law enforcement.”⁹ “The new draft version, [NIJ 0101.07 Ballistic Resistance of Body Armor](#), draws from more than ten years of testing conducted under the previous standard (0101.06)” which was developed through an [NIJ Special Technical Committee](#), consisting of criminal justice professionals and testing experts from NIJ and Compliance Testing Program staff.¹⁰

To receive assistance from the Protective Body Armor Fund through the BARM grant program, law enforcement agencies must first expend funds from its own source to acquire or replace protective body armor. The amount agencies spend from their own source must be at least equal to the amount awarded from the Protective Body Armor Fund through the BARM grant program. Such funds may only be used as an addition to, and may not be substituted for, funds appropriated from sources other than the Protective Body Armor Fund through the BARM grant program.

Pursuant to § 4-103(b) of the Public Safety Article, law enforcement agencies must provide the following information in order to apply for funding through the BARM grant program:

1. The number of violent crime incidents committed within the jurisdiction of the local law enforcement agency for the last two years;
2. The current number of sworn officers;
3. The current number of sworn officers not assigned protective body armor;
4. The number and age of protective body armor units currently in use by the local law enforcement agency;
5. The number of protective body armor units requested;
 - i. For officers not currently assigned protective body armor; and
 - ii. For officers assigned protective body armor in need of replacement due to age or wear;

Issue 280: Focus on Law Enforcement (NCJ 252031). <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/252031.pdf>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ PoliceArmor.org. *Coming Soon: Revisions to NIJ Ballistic-Resistance Body Armor Standard*.

<https://www.policearmor.org/Revisions-to-NIJ-Ballistic-Resistant-Body-Armor-Standard-test.html>

⁹ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. (2018). *The Next Revision of the NIJ Performance Standard for Ballistic Resistance of Body Armor, NIJ Standard 0101.07: Changes to Test Methods and Test Threats*.

<https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/next-revision-nij-performance-standard-ballistic-resistance-body-armor-nij-standard>

¹⁰ PoliceArmor.org. *Coming Soon: Revisions to NIJ Ballistic-Resistance Body Armor Standard*.

<https://www.policearmor.org/Revisions-to-NIJ-Ballistic-Resistant-Body-Armor-Standard-test.html>

6. The regulations of the local law enforcement agency that relate to the use of protective body armor;
7. The local law enforcement agency’s budget request for supplies and equipment for the current and last two fiscal years; and
8. Any other information that the Executive Director of the Office considers necessary to make grants for protective body armor.

Distribution of Protective Body Armor Fund Awards

Body armor is critical safety equipment for the personal protection of law enforcement officers. “Although there is no such thing as bulletproof armor, ballistic-resistant body armor can protect against many types of handgun and rifle ammunition.”¹¹ Since it was established in 1987, “the International Association of Chiefs of Police/DuPont Kevlar Survivors’ Club has recognized more than 3,100 officers who have been saved from death or serious injury by wearing body armor.”¹² Given its effective use to protect against injury, law enforcement agencies are eager to procure protective body armor for their officers. Unfortunately, many local law enforcement agencies struggle with the financial burden associated with its economy. This is especially true for small agencies staffed with only a few officers and a chief. These small agencies are often challenged by the 50% cash match which is required by the BARM grant program to purchase protective body armor. Regardless of its financial burden, each agency understands the value and significance of protective body armor for its officers, as well as the consequence and lack of protection for those officers without protective body armor. Because of this, local law enforcement agencies, both big and small, strive to provide the 50% cash match to protect their officers. In 2023, the Office awarded \$48,770 from the BARM grant program to eight local law enforcement agencies within seven jurisdictions, for the combined purchase of 112 body armor vests (*as illustrated below*).

Jurisdiction	Agency	Award Amount	Number of Vests Awarded including Match Funds	Number of Vests Requested
Baltimore City	Baltimore Police Department	\$9,996.00	28	28
Charles	Charles County Sheriff's Office	\$8,750.00	20	22
Howard	Howard County Police Department	\$9,050.00	22	24
Worcester	Ocean City Police Department	\$5,464.00	13	20
Worcester	Berlin Police Department	\$1,600.00	4	6
Queen Anne's	Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office	\$3,600.00	8	22
Wicomico	Wicomico County Sheriff's Office	\$8,960.00	14	15
Prince George's	Seat Pleasant Police Department	\$1,350.00	3	11
Totals		\$48,770.00	112	148

¹¹ Green, M. (2019). Body Armor: Protecting Our Nation's Officers From Ballistic Threats (NCJ 252033). *NIJ Journal* 280. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/252033.pdf>

¹² Ibid.

Ratio of Protective Body Armor to Police Officers

As required by § 4-103 of the Public Safety Article, local law enforcement agencies must provide information pertaining to the number of sworn officers, the number of vests awarded, and the ratio of body armor funded to sworn officers (*as illustrated below*).

Jurisdiction	Agency	Number of Sworn Officers	Number of Vests Awarded including Match Funds	Ratio of Body Armor Funded in SFY 2023 to Sworn Officers
Baltimore City	Baltimore Police Department	2,252	28	1.24%
Charles	Charles County Sheriff's Office	305	20	6.56%
Howard	Howard County Police Department	464	22	4.74%
Worcester	Ocean City Police Department	116	13	11.21%
Worcester	Berlin Police Department	12	4	33.33%
Queen Anne's	Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office	71	8	11.27%
Wicomico	Wicomico County Sheriff's Office	98	14	14.29%
Prince George's	Seat Pleasant Police Department	28	3	10.71%
Totals		3,346	112	3.35%

Conclusion

The Office recognizes the importance of BARM grant funds for officer safety throughout Maryland, and will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies to ensure funds are available for protective body armor or stab resistant vests.