

	<b>POLICY</b>
	<b>Unit:</b> Agency-Wide
<b>Number:</b>	<b>Title:</b> COPA Equipment and Apparel
<b>Effective Date:</b> 6/24/21	<b>Supersedes:</b> 3.1.8 (8/1/19) & 3.1.7 (8/1/19)

### COPA Equipment and Apparel

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#### PURPOSE

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This policy provides guidance to COPA employees on the process for wearing, maintaining, and inventorying COPA-provided equipment and apparel. Specifically, this policy conveys the process for receiving and returning COPA equipment and logoed apparel, as well as conveys provisions and prohibitions for using COPA equipment and logoed apparel.

Consistent usage of apparel and equipment bearing the COPA logo builds public awareness that COPA is a civilian agency independent from the Chicago Police Department.

COPA maximizes employee safety through issuance of protective equipment, such as ballistic vests, for use while conducting investigative tasks while in the field.

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#### DEFINITIONS

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Term	Meaning
Ballistic Vest	Also referred to as a bullet-resistant vest or a bulletproof vest, it is an item of personal body armor worn on the torso to help absorb the impact and reduce or stop penetration to the body from firearm-fired projectiles and shrapnel from explosions. Refers to the ballistic vest purchased and provided by COPA, which may also reflect the name of the agency (COPA), its logo, or insignia.
COPA Logoed Apparel	Any item of apparel bearing “COPA,” the COPA logo, “Civilian Office of Police Accountability” or any other wording that identifies a member of staff as employed by COPA.

Designated COPA Personnel	<p>Any of the following personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Administrator</li> <li>• Chief of Investigative Operations</li> <li>• Deputy Chief Administrator</li> <li>• Director of Investigations</li> <li>• Supervising Investigator</li> <li>• Major Case Specialist</li> <li>• Investigator</li> <li>• Public Information Officer</li> <li>• Director of Public Affairs</li> <li>• Evidence Specialist</li> <li>• Digital Forensic Analyst</li> <li>• Other titles, as approved by the Chief Administrator</li> </ul>
Major Case Incident	<p>Any of the following incidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All firearm discharges by Department members.</li> <li>• Any death resulting from a motor vehicle accident or collision, if the Department member was engaged in law enforcement activity involving the individual or the individual's vehicle in the process of apprehension or attempt to apprehend.</li> <li>• Death or serious injury while in custody or detained.</li> <li>• Other weapons discharges, equipment usage or incidents resulting in serious injury or death.</li> <li>• Any incident, as determined by the Chief Administrator (or designee), requiring an in-person response by on-call personnel or members of COPA's Public Information Section.</li> </ul>

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## **POLICIES**

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### **I. PROVISION OF A BALLISTIC VEST**

- A. Only Designated Personnel may wear ballistic vests, and only while on duty. Such ballistic vests must have been purchased by COPA and manufactured by a COPA-approved vendor. All ballistic vests purchased by COPA are property of the City of Chicago and must be immediately relinquished at separation from employment.
- B. COPA will ensure that ballistic vests appropriately conform to body shape and dimension upon issuance to Designated Personnel.

### **II. PERMITTED USES OF A BALLISTIC VEST**

- A. Ballistic vests purchased by COPA are issued to Designated Personnel for safety purposes and may only be worn in the performance of official COPA field duties.
- B. When responding to a Major Case Incident, all Designated Personnel are required to respond to the incident scene with a ballistic vest. When worn, Designated Personnel will wear a ballistic vest in compliance with COPA Policy (Personal Decorum and Demeanor).

- C. When responding to a Major Case Incident, the ranking on-scene COPA representative may require that responding Designated Personnel wear a ballistic vest while in the field, at a hospital, police facility, or other location related to COPA's response due to safety considerations.

### **III. PROHIBITED USES OF A BALLISTIC VEST**

- A. COPA employees are prohibited from wearing a ballistic vest purchased by COPA when not performing official COPA duties.

### **IV. RECEIVING, MAINTAINING, AND RETURNING BALLISTIC VESTS**

- A. The Chief Administrator, Chief of Investigative Operations, Deputy Chief Administrators, Directors of Investigations, Supervising Investigators, Major Case Specialists, Evidence Specialists, Public Information Officer, and Director of Public Affairs will be issued a ballistic vest for use during the term of their employment with COPA. Through their supervisor, all other personnel may sign out a ballistic vest purchased by COPA for use while conducting official field duties.
- B. All personnel shall store their COPA-provided ballistic vest in compliance with the manufacturer's directions. COPA personnel who have signed out a ballistic vest for use in the field, will sign in such ballistic vest after returning from the field. Prior to signing in the ballistic vest, COPA personnel will confirm that:
  - 1. the vest is in the same condition as they received it;
  - 2. the vest is clean; and
  - 3. any issues with the vest have been documented.
- C. If personnel issued a ballistic vest for use during the term of their employment is re-assigned or transfers to a section within COPA that does not require Major Case Incident scene response or related field duties necessitating the issuance of a ballistic vest, COPA may request return of the vest in accordance with expectations in IV(B)(1-3) above.

### **V. DAMAGE TO, LOSS OR THEFT OF, A BALLISTIC VEST**

- A. All personnel must take precaution to protect against weather damage, including leaving vests in vehicles or prolonged exposure to outdoor elements, and other reasonable measures, such as storing vests in secure locations, to prevent damage to, or theft or loss of, any ballistic vest issued to them by COPA.
- B. Upon determining that a COPA ballistic vest is missing, a COPA employee must immediately (i) file a police report documenting the loss, (ii) notify their immediate supervisor, (iii) provide a copy of the police report to their supervisor, and (iv) provide a written report of the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the ballistic vest.
- C. Supervisors must provide the information regarding the missing vest, or any report of damage to vest, to the head of the affected COPA section/unit and the First Deputy Chief Administrator (or designee).

- D. The First Deputy Chief Administrator (or designee) must verify the facts surrounding the loss or damage and must submit a written report to the Chief Administrator that includes a determination as to whether the loss or damage was not avoidable, avoidable, and/or caused by the employee's negligence.
- E. The Chief Administrator must then determine whether the loss of or damage to the vest was avoidable. If unavoidable, a replacement ballistic vest will be ordered at no cost to the employee. If the loss or damage is determined to have been reasonably avoidable and/or caused by the employee's negligence, the COPA employee may be required to pay the replacement cost on a pro-rated basis.
- F. Avoidable loss of or damage to a ballistic vest may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

## **VI. PROVISION OF COPA LOGOED APPAREL**

- A. COPA may purchase COPA apparel, to include shirts, lanyards, vests, and hats, for use by COPA personnel.

## **VII. PERMITTED USES OF A COPA LOGOED APPAREL**

- A. COPA apparel is issued to COPA personnel for employment-related purposes and may be worn in the performance of official COPA in-office or field duties, which may include off-duty attendance at community engagement events or other gatherings in which visibility of the COPA logo fosters agency pride, unity, or otherwise reflects the agency and its core values in a constructive manner.
- B. When worn, personnel shall wear COPA apparel in compliance with COPA Policy (Personal Decorum and Demeanor).
- C. When responding to a major case incident, unless otherwise directed by the ranking on-scene COPA representative, Designated Personnel shall wear an item of COPA logoed apparel while responding to a Major Case Incident or have their COPA badge clearly displayed.

## **VIII. RESTRICTIONS ON USES OF A COPA LOGOED APPAREL**

- A. Though purchased and provided to COPA staff for the primary purpose of carrying out official duties, COPA apparel may be worn off-duty if:
  - 1. The employee does not engage in conduct while wearing COPA logoed apparel that would bring discredit to the employee, COPA, or the City.
  - 2. The employee does not embellish, add adornments, or alter the COPA logoed apparel.
  - 3. The employee is not engaged in political activity as defined by the City of Chicago Governmental Ethics Ordinance (Chapter 2-156-010(s) of the Municipal Code of Chicago).
- B. COPA retains the right to demand return of logoed apparel issued to an employee at any time.

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**EXCEPTIONS**

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N/A

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**RELATED INFORMATION**

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<u>Title</u>	<u>Type</u>
Personal Decorum and Demeanor	<a href="#">COPA Policy</a>
COPA Badges and City of Chicago IDs	<a href="#">COPA Policy</a>
COPA and Personal Property	<a href="#">COPA Policy</a>
Vehicle Use	<a href="#">COPA Policy</a>
Ballistic Vest Care and Maintenance	<a href="#">Manufacturer's Manual</a>

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**ADDITIONAL SEARCH OPTIONS**

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