



## **Bulletproof Vest Partnership PROGRAM FACT SHEET**

### **History**

The Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP), created by the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-181) and reauthorized by the BVP Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-517), is a unique U.S. Department of Justice initiative designed to provide a critical resource to state and local law enforcement.

Since 1999, over 11,500 jurisdictions have participated in the BVP Program, with \$118 million in federal funds committed to support the purchase of an estimated 450,000 vests. The Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) administers the BVP Program.

### **Eligibility**

Eligible jurisdictions include general purpose units of local government such as cities, counties, parishes, and municipalities; federally recognized Indian Tribes; the 50 states; the District of Columbia; American Samoa; Guam; the Northern Mariana Islands; Puerto Rico; and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Eligible law enforcement officers for BVP Program purposes include police officers; sheriff deputies; correctional officers; parole and probation agents; prosecutors; and judicial officials.

### **Funding**

BVP funds up to 50 percent of the cost of each vest purchased or replaced by law enforcement applicants. Only vest models that comply with the requirements of the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) may be purchased with BVP Program funds.

The BVP Act of 1998 requires that at least half of all appropriated funds support applications from jurisdictions with populations under 100,000 people. When the BVP Program was reauthorized for an additional three years (FY 2002 – 2004), a new allocation principle required funding the full 50 percent of requested vest needs for applications from jurisdictions under 100,000, with any remaining funds available for applications from jurisdictions over 100,000 people.

### **Vest Selection**

In November 2003, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced a Body Armor Safety Initiative in response to the failure of a bullet-resistant vest worn by a police officer in Pennsylvania. NIJ was directed to initiate an examination of Zylon<sup>®</sup>-based bullet-resistant vests (both new and used) and to review the existing program by which bullet-resistant vests are tested to determine if the program needs modification.

Having completed its latest phase of ballistic and mechanical properties testing, NIJ has determined that used Zylon<sup>®</sup> - containing vests may not provide the intended level of ballistic resistance. In response to this determination, NIJ has issued a body armor standard advisory notice concerning Zylon<sup>®</sup>, and has issued new interim requirements for its body armor compliance testing program that will become effective on September 26, 2005. Until the effective date of the interim requirements, jurisdictions that participate in the

BVP program will be ineligible to receive payment for new orders placed for any body armor vest that contains Zylon®.

A list of vest models that comply with the NIJ interim requirements will be maintained at:  
<http://www.justnet.org>.

### **Additional Funds for FY 2005**

Pursuant to the FY 2005 Department of Justice Appropriations Act, \$23.6 million was made available for the purchase of vests through the annual BVP Program application process. Further to the Body Armor Safety Initiative, to better meet the vest replacement needs of America's law enforcement agencies this year, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales will make an additional \$10 million available immediately. This additional funding will be available through a special BVP solicitation that will open on August 24, 2005 and close on September 22, 2005.

### **How to Apply**

The entire BVP application and payment process occurs online at <https://vests.ojp.gov>.

### **Related Links**

[FY 2005 BVP Payments](#)

### **Contact**

Linda Hammond-Deckard, Program Manager  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
Office of Justice Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
810 Seventh Street NW  
Washington, DC 20531  
1-877-758-3787  
[Linda.Hammond-Deckard@usdoj.gov](mailto:Linda.Hammond-Deckard@usdoj.gov)