



Protective Body Armor Fund (BARM)

PS § 4-107

HB 325 / CH. 311, 2006

MSAR # 5650

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Protective Body Armor Overview

The Protective Body Armor Fund was established by House Bill 325 during the 1995 Legislative Session. In 2005, the Maryland State Police transferred the program to the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention (GOCCP) to administer the state funds, which are available to local law enforcement agencies of any county, incorporated city or town, including Baltimore City. State agencies are not eligible for this funding.

The program requires that a law enforcement agency must first expend funds for acquiring or replacing protective body armor from its own sources. The amount spent must at least be equal to the amount of State aid awarded from the fund. Funds received under this program must be used as an addition to, and may not be substituted for moneys appropriated from sources other than the Protective Body Armor Fund (BARM).

In fiscal year (FY 2014), GOCCP developed an application process and all eligible agencies were informed of the availability of the funds through the GOCCP Internet site at <http://www.goccp.maryland.gov/> where a Notice of Funds Availability was posted. Re-applying grantees were also notified by e-mails. Applications were reviewed and evaluated by GOCCP personnel for conformity to eligibility criteria.

Included in this report is a table showing the distribution of the 2015 BARM funds by receiving agencies; and a breakdown of the vests distributed to each agency along with a chart which reflects the number of vests that could not be purchased due to lack of funding. Also, included is a copy of the Notice of Funding Available (NOFA)/Application Guidance Kit (see Attachment B).

Goal and Intent of the BARM Program

The purpose of the funding is to assist local law enforcement agencies to acquire protective body armor for each police officer or to replace body armor at least every ten years or sooner, if testing indicates a need. The intent is to financially ease the burden for local law enforcement agencies to acquire protective body armor for each police officer. Body armor purchased with these funds must conform to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Standard 0101.03 (or the current edition) and V-50 ballistic testing requirements.

BARM Awards

Many local law enforcement agencies are dealing with the financial burden of a struggling economy. This is especially true with the smaller jurisdictions that are staffed by only a few officers and a chief. These smaller agencies are faced with the challenge of providing the 50% cash match required with the purchase of vests under the BARM program, but they also understand the significant benefits officers receive with body armor along with the consequences for officers who do not have body armor.

In fiscal year 2015, GOCCP changed the eligible of BARM applicants. This change was to encourage sub-recipients to apply every other year, instead of yearly as previously done. By doing this GOCCP was better able to meet the needed vests requests. GOCCP was able to award 93% of the vest requests by doing initiating this request. GOCCP received eight (8) applications, of the eight applications, six (6) were awarded 100% of their request.

In fiscal year 2016, GOCCP was able to provide support for the purchase of 138 body armor vests with the aid from the state legislation, \$49,077.00 was awarded to 17 local law enforcement agencies in 10 counties and Baltimore City.

Monitoring and Managing the BARM Program

The BARM program along with most of the funding that is processed through GOCCP is “Regionalized.” This means that GOCCP has regional monitors in all 23 counties and Baltimore City. The monitors’ responsibility is to ensure grant funds are spent and also to provide technical assistance to the sub-grantees in their region. This empowers GOCCP to give personal one on one attention to sub grantees in every region of Maryland. The program manger oversees the monitors and provides assistance with program protocols to also ensure funds are spent appropriately following the guidelines of the funding source and within the life of the award.

Audits

The GOCCP audit department randomly conducts audits on awarded applications. The purpose of these audits is to insure that the work performed and activity reported under the BARM program is consistent with the program goals, and that documentation submitted supports the reimbursement and is properly retained as stated in the general conditions of the award. The audit department is also notified by the regional monitor or program manager if there is a potential reason to believe a grantee is having problems managing their award. Red flags include: a pattern of late reporting; conflicting data being submitted in their reports; multiple changes in personnel within a short amount of time; and/or inaccurate financial reports. At this time there have been no random audits nor has there been a need to have an audit conducted on BARM awards in the last year.

Request for Additional Funds

As previously mentioned, many local law enforcement agencies are overwhelmed with the financial burden of purchasing vests to ensure the safety of every officer. Further adding to the burden is the fact that the vests that provide the highest level of protection are higher quality and therefore more expensive.

While there is definitely a need for more funding to keep our officers safe while they protect the citizens of Maryland, GOCCP was more able to meet the demands of our local law enforcement agencies by having them submit every other year.

2016 BARM funds

Agencies Funded

<i>County</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Award Amount</i>	<i>Number of Vests</i>
Allegany County	Frostburg City Police Department	\$600.00	2
Baltimore City	Baltimore Police Department	\$15,152.00	32
Baltimore County	Baltimore County Police Department	\$8,468.00	29
Caroline County	Town of Federalsburg	\$1,077.00	3
Caroline County	Caroline County Sheriff's Office	\$400.00	1
Carroll County	Town of Sykesville	\$335.00	1
Carroll County	Carroll County Sheriff's Office	\$661.00	2
Cecil County	Rising Sun Police Department	\$882.00	3
Charles County	Charles County Sheriff's Office	\$4,060.00	14
Dorchester County	Dorchester County Sheriff's Office	\$3,042.00	9
Dorchester County	Cambridge Police Department	\$1,855.00	7
Frederick County	Frederick County Sheriff's Office	\$2,930.00	10
Talbot County	St. Michaels Police Department	\$776.00	2
Washington County	Washington County Sheriff's Office	\$3,825.00	10
Washington County	Hagerstown Police Department	\$3,150.00	7
Wicomico County	Fruitland Police Department	\$1,278.00	3
Worcester County	Town of Snowhill	\$586.00	3
	TOTALS 17 Awards	\$49,077.00	138