



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

470 – BALLISTIC SHIELD

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-59
ISSUED: December 16, 2025

EFFECTIVE: December 16, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Steven Johnson
DATE: November 3, 2025

ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-40 (June 2, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): NONE

470.00 PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to familiarize department members with the deployment of the ballistic shield and identify the specific incidents of when the ballistic shield can be used.

470.05 POLICY

The Milwaukee Police Department recognizes that with ongoing and reoccurring tactical events, such as but not limited to, active shooter, armed/barricaded subjects and high-risk felony suspect apprehension incidents, that the need exists for the availability of ballistic rifle rated shields to be available to patrol officers for rapid, exigent, and/or hasty entry situations to provide protection and subsequent access in order to perform lifesaving actions.

470.10 DEFINITION

BALLISTIC SHIELD

A Kevlar LEVEL III rifle rated shield that is light weight, strong, provides edge to edge protection with a 4"X6" viewport, horizontal handle, and forearm pad. It is National Institute of Justice (NIJ) 0108.01 Compliant and defeats [REDACTED] and all lesser rifle and pistol threats. It is not intended to stop [REDACTED]

470.15 USE OF BALLISTIC SHIELD

The ballistic shield is not a tactic, but a piece of equipment that may be used to support and enhance trained patrol tactics. Prior to deploying the ballistic shield, supervisors and members should consider that when time, distance, and cover are available and an immediate, rapid deployment and/or action is not necessary, a request for more highly trained department resources should be made (e.g., Tactical Enforcement Unit).

470.20 PROCEDURES

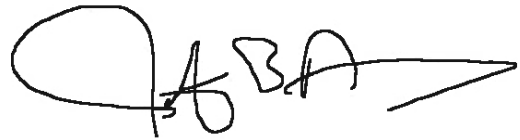
- A. Officers shall only operate the ballistic shield after successfully completing an approved training course by the Training Division and demonstrating proficiency on the ballistic shields functions and capabilities.

- B. Officers deploying the ballistic shield shall wear body armor.
- C. At the discretion of the shift commander, officers at the beginning of each shift will be issued a ballistic shield so that they are more readily available for rapid street deployment.
- D. At the start of each shift, members equipped with a ballistic shield shall notify the dispatcher that they are equipped with a ballistic shield. A notation identifying the member as being equipped with a ballistic shield shall also be made on the daily line-up.
- E. The ballistic shields will be kept in a constant state of readiness and good repair.
 - 1. The ballistic shields shall be inspected monthly for operational use. The maintenance of the ballistic shield will be the responsibility of the assigned police district. The district shall ensure the shield has a front and rear cover on the viewport, a hook and loop "Police" patch affixed to the front, a tightly affixed and properly functioning handle, a functional and properly affixed Surefire Ballistic Shield Light, and a viewport that is clean and unobstructed.
 - 2. The assigned district's designee will report in writing any maintenance problems to their district commander by submitting a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E). This report will then be forwarded on to the Training Division range master, who will be ultimately responsible for the subsequent assignment of future shields, shield lights, repair, and/or replacement of the district's current assigned inventory.
 - 3. When transporting the ballistic shield, ensure the front and rear covers are on. When the shield is placed in the vehicle storage compartment, avoid placing heavy or potentially damaging items on it or near it. When setting the shield on the ground, unless under dynamic circumstances, do not slam it onto a hard surface as this can cause unnecessary damage.
- F. The Ballistic Shield can be used for the following:
 - 1. In response to violence at a school in which a weapon is involved and/or active shooter incident.
 - 2. Establishing a perimeter on potentially armed subjects.
 - 3. Clearing a vehicle following a high-risk contact.
 - 4. Approaching and securing of suicidal subjects who are armed with a weapon.
 - 5. Setting up a containment team for a barricaded subject.
 - 6. Immediate action to rescue an officer or person, should circumstances require.
 - 7. Approaching a high-risk suspect for arrest.

8. Moving across an open area to obtain proper cover or to approach a location with potentially armed subjects.

470.25 MODIFICATIONS TO BALLISTIC SHIELD

- A. Ballistic Shields issued to districts have the Surefire Ballistic Shield Light installed. No modifications may be done to the Surefire Ballistic Shield Light. If any damage occurs with the equipment, a work location supervisor shall ensure it is conveyed to the Firearms Section. A work location supervisor shall ensure a *Department Memorandum* (PM-9E) is submitted through the chain of command explaining the circumstances that caused the light to malfunction.
- B. Members may request permission to add manufacturer-specific accessories to a ballistic shield by submitting a *Department Memorandum* through the chain of command.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk