NIJ | National Institute of Justice

COMPLIANCE TESTING PROGRAM

BULLETIN

A program of the National Institute of Justice

August 5, 2026

NIJ CTP BULLETIN 2026:01

NIJ CTP Regulatory Matters

The NIJ Compliance Testing Program (CTP) is providing this bulletin on regulatory matters involving body armor that may impact participants in the NIJ CTP.

Participants in the NIJ CTP that have armor models certified at the NIJ RF3 protection level listed on the "07" Compliant Products List (CPL) or have armor models certified at the NIJ Level IV protection level listed on the "06" CPL are reminded that participation may require compliance with regulatory requirements prior to completion of periodic Follow-up Inspection and Testing (FIT). In particular, participants who produce armor models at this protection level at manufacturing locations outside the United States are advised to contact all NIJ-approved laboratories in advance of Initial Type Testing (ITT) to ensure that FIT can be conducted in compliance with any applicable U.S. regulations covering body armor and associated test data and defense services. These regulatory processes may involve significant lead time to complete.

The U.S. Munitions List (USML) includes "body armor providing a protection level equal to or greater than NIJ RF3" [22 CFR §121.1 at Category X—Personal Protective Equipment, (a)(1)]. In the context of the NIJ CTP, this includes body armor designed to protect against NIJ RF3 threats as described in NIJ Standard 0123.00 as well as body armor designed to protect against NIJ Level IV threats as described in NIJ Standard 0101.06. The following is included in the USML [22 CFR §121.1 at Category X—Personal Protective Equipment, (e)]: "Technical data (see § 120.33 of this subchapter) and defense services (see § 120.32 of this subchapter) directly related to the defense articles described in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this category."

Voluntary participation in the NIJ CTP does not grant compliance with any U.S. regulations, such as the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) or the Export Administration Regulations (EAR). ITAR falls under the U.S. Department of State and EAR falls under the U.S. Department of Commerce, and application of those regulations and determinations of compliance rests solely with those agencies, respectively. NIJ does not have the authority to adjudicate ITAR or EAR matters.

If an NIJ-approved laboratory is unable to conduct a FIT test due to regulatory issues, the NIJ CTP may have to place the model into Inactive status on the CPL or publish an Advisory Notice for the armor until the FIT can be completed. Participants may at their discretion provide the NIJ CTP with information regarding their regulatory compliance in coordination with NIJ-approved laboratories to ensure FIT can be appropriately scheduled. Please note that participants should not ask the NIJ CTP whether they are in

compliance with U.S. government regulations. Related information that a participant provides to the NIJ CTP should be for information purposes only to clearly state the regulatory compliance status of their armor model by an appropriate U.S. government authority.

All participants are advised to monitor regulatory issues impacting their armor at any protection level, and that those regulatory issues have to be adjudicated by the appropriate responsible government entities.