


Victim and Witness Assistance

318.1 POLICY HEADER

Original Effective Date:	Revised Date:
September 1, 2021	January 4, 2023
<p>Authorization:</p>  <p>Jason Haberman Chief of Police</p>	

318.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that crime victims and witnesses receive appropriate assistance, that they are provided with information from government and private resources, and that the agency meets all related legal mandates.

318.3 POLICY

The Mt. Lebanon Police Department is committed to providing guidance and assistance to the victims and witnesses of crime. The members of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department will show compassion and understanding for victims and witnesses and will make reasonable efforts to provide the support and information identified in this policy.

318.4 CRIME VICTIM LIAISON

The Chief of Police may appoint a member of the Department to serve as the crime victim liaison. The crime victim liaison will be the point of contact for individuals requiring further assistance or information from the Mt. Lebanon Police Department regarding benefits from crime victim resources. This person shall also be responsible for maintaining compliance with all legal mandates related to crime victims and/or witnesses.

318.4.1 CRIME VICTIM LIAISON DUTIES

The crime victim liaison shall ensure that (18 P.S. § 11.212):

- (a) The Department maintains a supply of the crime victim forms developed by Pennsylvania's Commission on Crime and Delinquency's Office of Victims' Services.
- (b) Records of victim notification are maintained by the Department.
- (c) Victims or, if appropriate, victims' family members receive written information regarding the availability of crime victims' compensation, including an application

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form for compensation as soon as reasonably practicable upon initial contact with the Department.

- (d) Victims or, if appropriate, victims' family members receive the Crime Victims Act written information as soon as reasonably practicable upon initial contact with the Department.
- (e) Department police reports include a place to designate whether the victim or, if appropriate, victim's family members received information on victim's rights and services.
- (f) Victims of a personal injury rights crime (as defined by 18 P.S. § 11.103) are notified of the arrest or detention of a suspect and of the filing of a complaint related to the crime within 24 hours.
- (g) Victims of a personal injury rights crime are notified of the escape of an individual from the custody of the Department as soon as practicable.
- (h) Property belonging to victims that was seized as evidence is returned in a timely manner after determination is made by the prosecutor that the property is no longer needed.
- (i) Victims of sexual violence or intimidation that are protected by an order issued under 42 Pa.C.S. § 62A04 (Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Act) are notified when an arrest has been made. Notice should be within 24 hours after preliminary arraignment unless the person cannot be located.
- (j) Victim information is provided to the appropriate court as required by 18 P.S. § 11.201.

318.5 CRIME VICTIMS

Officers should provide all victims with the applicable [victim information handouts](#) .

Officers should never guarantee a victim's safety from future harm but may make practical safety suggestions to victims who express fear of future harm or retaliation. Officers should never guarantee that a person qualifies as a victim for the purpose of compensation or restitution but may direct him/her to the proper written department material or available victim resources.

318.6 VICTIM INFORMATION

The Support Services Deputy Chief of Police or their authorized designee shall ensure that victim information handouts are available and current. These should include as appropriate:

- (a) Shelters and other community resources for victims including domestic violence and sexual assault victims (18 Pa.C.S. § 2711; 23 Pa.C.S. § 6105).
- (b) An advisement that a sexual assault victim has a right to a medical forensic examination (35 P.S. § 10172.5).
- (c) Assurance that sexual assault victims will not incur out-of-pocket expenses for forensic medical exams or evidence preservation during the criminal statute of limitations, and information about evidence collection, storage, and preservation in sexual assault cases (34 USC § 10449; 34 USC § 20109; 35 P.S. § 10172.5).
- (d) Information regarding victims' right to consult with a sexual assault counselor, if applicable (35 P.S. § 10172.5).

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- (e) An advisement that a person who was arrested may be released on bond or some other form of release and that the victim should not rely upon an arrest as a guarantee of safety.
- (f) Information concerning the availability of protective orders and policies related to the enforcement of protective orders for victims of sexual assault (35 P.S. § 10172.5).
- (g) A clear explanation of relevant court orders and how they can be obtained.
- (h) Information regarding available compensation for qualifying victims of crime (18 P.S. § 11.701 et seq.; 35 P.S. § 10172.5).
- (i) Pennsylvania Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (PA SAVIN) information, including the telephone number and whether this free service is available to allow victims to check on an offender's custody status and to register for automatic notification when a person is released from jail.
- (j) Notice regarding U visa and T visa application processes.
- (k) Resources available for victims of identity theft.
- (l) A place for the officer's name, badge number, and any applicable case or incident number.
- (m) The rights provided to victims of crime as provided in 18 P.S. § 11.201 and 35 P.S. § 10172.5.
- (n) Information regarding the address confidentiality program administered by the Pennsylvania Office of Victim Advocate (23 Pa.C.S. § 6704).

318.7 WITNESSES

Officers should never guarantee a witness' safety from future harm or that his/her identity will always remain confidential. Officers may make practical safety suggestions to witnesses who express fear of future harm or retaliation.

Officers should investigate allegations of witness intimidation and take enforcement action when lawful and reasonable.

318.8 TRAINING

The Field Training Lieutenant shall ensure that all members of this department receive appropriate training related to this policy, including familiarity with the availability of crime victims' compensation (18 P.S. § 11.212).

Attachments

Victims Rights and Services.pdf



RIGHTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS OF CRIME IN PENNSYLVANIA

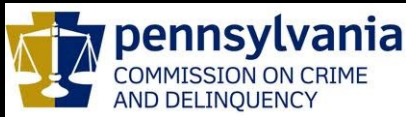
**Mt. Lebanon Police Department
555 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15228**

Officer/Detective

Telephone Number

Incident Number

**WHEN THIS PACKET IS PRESENTED TO A
VICTIM, COMPLETE AND RETAIN THE
LAST PAGE OF THIS PACKET.**



PENNSYLVANIA CRIME VICTIMS

Your Local Service Agencies and How They Can Help You

THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AND CRIME

24-Hour: 412-392-8582

24-Hour and Toll Free: 866-644-CVVC (2882)

Victim and witness information and assistance in the following types of cases: Adult and Child Sexual Assault, Aggravated and Simple Assault, Homicide, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse, Robbery, Burglary and Drunk Driving.

Services include the following: Crisis intervention, individual, family and group counseling, medical and legal advocacy and court accompaniment, information and referrals, Crime Victim Compensation Assistance, County Jail Release Notification and Mediation.

PITTSBURGH ACTION AGAINST RAPE

24-Hour and Toll Free: 866-END-RAPE (363-7273)

Victim and witness information and assistance in cases involving adult and child sexual assault.

Services include the following: Crisis intervention, counseling, medical and legal advocacy and accompaniment to court proceedings.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCIES

WOMEN'S CENTER AND SHELTER OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

24-Hour: 412-687-8005

24-Hour and Toll Free: 877-338-8255

WOMANSPLACE, INC. (Mon Valley)

24-Hour: 412-678-4616

CRISIS CENTER NORTH (North Hills)

24-Hour: 412-364-5556

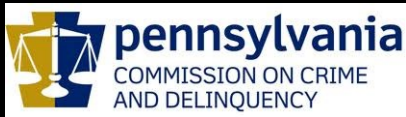
Toll Free: 866-782-0911

ALLE-KISKI HOPE CENTER (Alle-Kiski Valley)

24 Hour and Toll Free: 888-299-4673

Victim and information assistance for intimate partner violence.

Services include the following: Crisis intervention, safe housing, court accompaniment, legal options counseling, assistance with filing Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders, referral information, medical advocacy and supportive counseling services.



PENNSYLVANIA CRIME VICTIMS

Your Local Service Agencies and How They Can Help You

MERCY HOSPITAL OF PITTSBURGH

A CHILD'S PLACE AT MERCY

412-232-7200

A Child's Place provides comprehensive forensic evaluations (medical and psychosocial) for children and adolescents who may be victims of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PITTSBURGH

412-692-8664

The center provides comprehensive forensic evaluations (medical and psychosocial) for children and adolescents who may be victims of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.

MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING

**24-Hour Recorded Messages: 866-828-1660 or
724-256-5600**

MADD provides victim and witness information and assistance for cases involving driving under the influence (DUI). Services include the following: Counseling, monitoring of court cases and referrals for victims and surviving significant others.

FAMILY RESOURCES

412-363-1702

Assistance for child physical and sexual abuse. Services include the following: Counseling, support groups for victims and their family members and adult survivors.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN

SERVICES: OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES (CYF)

24-Hour: 412-473-2000

PA CHILDLINE / Toll Free: 800-932-0313

Provides child abuse and neglect services including the following: Protective services, assessment and investigation of child abuse reports, information and referrals.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN

SERVICES: AREA AGENCY ON AGING

24-Hour: 412-350-4234, 350-6905 or 350-5460

Toll Free: 800-344-4319

Statewide Hotline: 800-490-8505

Provides services for elderly persons (age 60 and over) who are victims of abuse, exploitation, abandonment and neglect.

PA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELIQUENCY: VICTIMS COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

800-233-2339



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

412-350-4401

Ask for the Victim's Rights/Services Liaison



PENNSYLVANIA CRIME VICTIMS

Receipt of Information

*I acknowledge receiving my basic rights as a crime victim
and information on related services available to me.*

NAME

SIGNATURE

_____/_____/_____
DATE

TIME

INCIDENT NUMBER

OFFICER

ADDRESS

SAFE CONTACT NUMBER(S)

*(The completed and signed copy of this form
Shall be retained by Law Enforcement.)*