


# Hate Crimes

## 319.1 POLICY HEADER

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

## 319.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide members of this department with guidelines for identifying and investigating incidents and crimes that may be motivated by hatred or other bias.

### 319.2.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Hate crime** - A crime motivated by prejudice based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability of the victim.

## 319.3 POLICY

The Mt. Lebanon Police Department recognizes and places a high priority on the rights of all individuals guaranteed under the state and federal constitution and incorporated in state and federal law.

## 319.4 PREVENTION AND PREPARATION

While it is recognized that not all crime can be prevented, this department is committed to taking a proactive approach to preventing and preparing for likely hate crimes by:

- (a) Making an affirmative effort to establish contact with persons and groups within the community who are likely targets of hate crimes, and forming networks that address prevention and response.
- (b) Providing victim assistance and community follow-up or identifying available resources to do so.
- (c) Educating community and civic groups about hate crime laws.

# Mt. Lebanon Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Hate Crimes*

---

#### **319.5 INVESTIGATIONS**

Whenever any member of this department receives a report of a suspected hate crime or other activity that reasonably appears to involve a potential hate crime, the following should occur:

- (a) Assigned officers should promptly contact the victim, witness or reporting party to investigate the matter further, as circumstances may dictate.
- (b) The Watch Commander should be notified of the circumstances as soon as practicable.
- (c) Once the in-progress aspect of any such situation has been stabilized (e.g., treatment of victims or arrest of suspects at the scene), the assigned officers should take reasonable steps to preserve evidence that establishes a possible hate crime.
- (d) Based upon available information, officers should take appropriate action to mitigate further injury or damage to potential victims or the community.
- (e) Depending on the situation, the Watch Commander may request assistance from investigators or other resources.
- (f) The assigned officers should interview available witnesses, victims and others to determine what circumstances, if any, indicate that the situation may involve a hate crime.
- (g) The assigned officers should make reasonable efforts to assist the victim by providing available information on local assistance programs and organizations as required by the Victim and Witness Assistance Policy.
- (h) The assigned officers should include all available evidence indicating the likelihood of a hate crime in the relevant reports. All related reports should be clearly marked "Hate Crime."
- (i) The assigned officers and supervisor should take reasonable steps to ensure that any such situation does not escalate further and should provide information to the victim regarding legal aid (Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order) through the courts or the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (i.e., Legal Services).

##### **319.5.1 INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES**

If a hate crime case is assigned to the Investigative Services Unit, the assigned investigator will be responsible for:

- (a) Coordinating further investigation with the District Attorney and other appropriate law enforcement agencies.
- (b) Maintaining contact with the victim and other involved individuals, as needed.
- (c) Maintaining statistical data and tracking of suspected hate crimes, as indicated or required by state law.

#### **319.6 NOTIFICATIONS**

When a hate crime is reported, the following persons shall be notified as soon as practicable:

- Chief of Police

# Mt. Lebanon Police Department

## Policy Manual

### *Hate Crimes*

---

- Deputy Chiefs of Police
- Public Information Officer
- Municipal Manager

#### **319.7 TRAINING**

All members of this department should receive training on hate crime recognition and investigation.