


## Volunteers

### 337.1 POLICY HEADER

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

### 337.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes the guidelines for Mt. Lebanon Police Department volunteers to supplement and assist department personnel in their duties. Trained volunteers are members who can augment department personnel and help complete various tasks.

#### 337.2.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Volunteer** - An individual who performs a service for the Department without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. This may include community volunteers and interns, among others.

**Volunteer Coordinator** - The Crime Prevention supervisor, or the authorized designee appointed by the Support Services Deputy Chief of Police, who is responsible for the volunteer program.

### 337.3 POLICY

The Mt. Lebanon Police Department shall ensure that volunteers are properly appointed, trained and supervised to carry out specified tasks and duties in order to create an efficient department and improve services to the community.

### 337.4 ELIGIBILITY

Requirements for participation as a volunteer for the Department may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Being at least 18 years of age for all positions.
- (b) Possession of a valid driver's license if the position requires vehicle operation.
- (c) Possession of liability insurance for any personally owned equipment, vehicles or animals utilized during volunteer work.

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- (d) No conviction of a felony, any crime of a sexual nature or against children, any crime related to assault or violence, any crime related to dishonesty, crimes related to computer offenses, or any crime related to impersonating a law enforcement officer.
- (e) Any misdemeanor incarceration of 30 days or more within the past 10 years.
- (f) A conviction or under indictment for a misdemeanor for which more than one year in prison can be imposed as a punishment.
- (g) Any two misdemeanor convictions which occurred in separate incidents within the past 10 years, excluding summary traffic offenses.
- (h) No mental illness or chemical dependency condition that may adversely affect the person's ability to serve in the position.
- (i) Ability to meet physical requirements reasonably appropriate to the assignment.
- (j) A personal background history and character suitable for a person representing the Department, as validated by a background investigation.

The Chief of Police may allow exceptions to these eligibility requirements based on organizational needs and the qualifications of the individual.

### **337.5 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT**

The Mt. Lebanon Police Department shall endeavor to recruit and appoint only those applicants who meet the high ethical, moral and professional standards set forth by this department.

#### **337.5.1 RECRUITMENT**

Volunteers should be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis consistent with department policy on equal opportunity, nondiscriminatory employment. A primary qualification for participation in the application process should be an interest in and an ability to assist the Department in serving the public.

Requests for volunteers should be submitted in writing by to the volunteer coordinator. A complete description of the volunteer's duties and a requested time frame should be included in the request. The volunteer coordinator may withhold assignment of any volunteer until such time as the requester is prepared to make effective use of volunteer resources.

#### **337.5.2 SELECTION**

Volunteer candidates shall successfully complete the following process prior to appointment as a volunteer:

- (a) Submit the appropriate written application.
- (b) Interview with the volunteer coordinator.
- (c) Successfully complete an appropriate-level background investigation.

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#### **337.5.3 APPOINTMENT**

Service as a volunteer with the Department shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee. Notice may only be given by an authorized representative of the Department, who will normally be the volunteer coordinator.

No volunteer should begin any assignment until he/she has been officially accepted for that position and has completed all required screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer should complete all required enrollment paperwork and will receive a copy of the position description.

All volunteers shall receive a copy of the volunteer orientation materials and shall be required to sign a volunteer agreement. Volunteers should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills and abilities and the needs of the Department.

Volunteers serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

#### **337.6 IDENTIFICATION AND UNIFORMS**

As representatives of the Department, volunteers are responsible for presenting a professional image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Uniforms and necessary safety equipment may be provided for each volunteer.

Volunteers will be issued Mt. Lebanon Police Department identification cards, which must be carried at all times while on-duty. The identification cards will be the standard Mt. Lebanon Police Department identification cards, except that their position will be indicated on the cards.

#### **337.7 VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

The volunteer coordinator shall be appointed by and directly responsible to the Support Services Deputy Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

The function of the coordinator is to provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer management within the Department, and to direct and assist efforts to jointly provide more productive volunteer services. Under the general direction of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee, volunteers shall report to the volunteer coordinator and/or Watch Commander.

The volunteer coordinator may appoint a senior volunteer or other designee to assist in the coordination of volunteers and their activities.

The responsibilities of the coordinator or the authorized designee include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Recruiting, selecting and training qualified volunteers.
- (b) Conducting volunteer meetings.
- (c) Maintaining records for each volunteer.
- (d) Tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers.
- (e) Maintaining a record of volunteer schedules and work hours.
- (f) Completing and disseminating, as appropriate, all necessary paperwork and information.

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- (g) Planning periodic recognition events.
- (h) Maintaining a liaison with other community programs that use volunteers and assisting in community-wide efforts to recognize and promote volunteering.
- (i) Maintaining volunteer orientation and training materials and outlining expectations, policies and responsibilities for all volunteers.

An evaluation of the overall use of volunteers should be conducted on an annual basis by the coordinator.

#### **337.8 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteers assist department personnel as needed. Volunteers may be assigned to areas within the Department as needed. Volunteers should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills and abilities and the needs of the Department.

All volunteers will be assigned to duties by the volunteer coordinator or the authorized designee.

##### **337.8.1 COMPLIANCE**

Volunteers shall be required to adhere to all applicable department policies and procedures for their position. A copy of the policies and procedures will be made available to each volunteer upon appointment. The volunteer shall become thoroughly familiar with these policies.

Whenever a rule, regulation or guideline in this Policy Manual refers to regular department personnel, it shall also apply to a volunteer, unless by its nature it is inapplicable.

Volunteers are required by this department to meet department-approved training requirements as applicable to their assignments.

##### **337.8.2 VOLUNTEER MEETINGS**

All volunteers are required to attend scheduled meetings. Any absences must be satisfactorily explained to the volunteer coordinator.

#### **337.9 TASK-SPECIFIC TRAINING**

Task-specific training is intended to provide the required instruction and practice for volunteers to properly and safely perform their assigned duties. A volunteer's training should correspond to his/her assignment as determined by the volunteer coordinator.

Volunteers will be provided with an orientation program to acquaint them with the policies of the Department and law enforcement procedures applicable to their assignments.

Volunteers should receive position-specific training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and skills to complete the required tasks, and should receive ongoing training as deemed appropriate by their supervisors or the volunteer coordinator.

Training should reinforce to volunteers that they shall not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer that they are, officers or other full-time members of the Department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.

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All volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all applicable orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by the Department.

#### **337.9.1 VOLUNTEER TRAINING MATERIALS**

Each new volunteer will be issued volunteer training materials. The materials outline the subject matter and skills necessary to properly function as a volunteer with the Mt. Lebanon Police Department. The volunteer shall become knowledgeable of the subject matter and proficient with the skills as set forth in the training materials.

#### **337.10 SUPERVISION**

Each volunteer must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and should be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

Functional supervision of volunteers is the responsibility of the supervisor in charge of the volunteer's assigned duties. The following are some considerations that supervisors should keep in mind while supervising volunteers:

- (a) Take the time to introduce volunteers to members on all levels.
- (b) Ensure volunteers have work space and necessary office supplies.
- (c) Make sure the work is challenging. Do not hesitate to give volunteers an assignment or task that will utilize these valuable resources.

#### **337.10.1 FITNESS FOR DUTY**

No volunteer shall report for work or be at work when his/her judgment or physical condition has been impaired due to illness or injury, or by the use of alcohol or drugs, whether legal or illegal.

Volunteers shall report to their supervisors any change in status that may affect their ability to fulfill their duties. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Driver's license.
- (b) Medical condition.
- (c) Arrests.
- (d) Criminal investigations.
- (e) All law enforcement contacts.

#### **337.11 INFORMATION ACCESS**

With appropriate security clearance, a volunteer may have access to or be in the vicinity of criminal histories, investigative files or information portals. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, the duties of the position or department policy, all such information shall be considered confidential. Only that information specifically identified and approved by authorized members

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shall be released. Confidential information shall be given only to persons who have a need and a right to know as determined by department policy and supervisory personnel.

Unauthorized disclosure of any confidential information verbally, in writing or by any other means by the volunteer is grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.

Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as correspondents to newspapers or other periodicals, release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the Department, or maintain that they represent the Department in such matters without permission from the proper department personnel.

#### **337.12 EQUIPMENT**

Any property or equipment issued by the Department shall be for official and authorized use only. Any property or equipment issued to a volunteer shall remain the property of the Department and shall be returned at the termination of service.

##### **337.12.1 VEHICLE USE**

Volunteers should not operate a law enforcement vehicle. If operating department vehicles, volunteers shall obey all rules of the road, including seat belt requirements.

Volunteers are not authorized to operate department vehicles while using the vehicle's emergency equipment (e.g., emergency lights siren) unless directed by their supervisor.

#### **337.13 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES/TERMINATION**

If a volunteer has a personnel complaint made against him/her or becomes involved in an internal investigation, the matter shall be investigated in compliance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.

Volunteers are considered at-will and may be removed from service at the discretion of the Chief of Police, with or without cause. Volunteers shall have no property interest in their continued appointments. However, if a volunteer is removed for alleged misconduct, the volunteer will be afforded an opportunity solely to clear his/her name through a liberty interest hearing, which shall be limited to a single appearance before the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

Volunteers may resign from volunteer service with the Department at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice and a reason for their decision.

##### **337.13.1 EXIT INTERVIEWS**

The volunteer coordinator should conduct exit interviews, where possible. These interviews should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position and should solicit the volunteer's suggestions on improving the position. When appropriate, an exit interview should also include a discussion on the possibility of involvement in some other capacity with the Department.