


Traffic Accidents

501.1 POLICY HEADER

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

501.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for responding to and investigating traffic accidents.

501.3 POLICY

It is the policy of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department to respond to traffic accidents and render or summon aid to injured victims as needed. The Department will investigate and prepare reports according to the established minimum reporting requirements with the goal of reducing the occurrence of accidents by attempting to identify the cause of the accident and through enforcing applicable laws. Unless restricted by law, traffic accident reports will be made available to the public upon request.

501.4 RESPONSE

Upon arriving at the scene, the responding member should assess the need for additional resources and summon assistance as appropriate. Generally, the member initially dispatched to the scene will be responsible for the investigation and report, if required, unless responsibility is reassigned by a supervisor.

- (a) An on-duty supervisor should be called to the scene when the incident:
 - 1. Is within the jurisdiction of this department and there is:
 - (a) A life-threatening injury.
 - (b) A fatality.
 - (c) A police department vehicle involved.
 - (d) Involvement of an on-duty member of this department.
- (b) An on-duty supervisor should be notified when the incident:

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1. Involves an off-duty member of this department within the jurisdiction of this department.
2. Is within another jurisdiction and there is:
 - (a) A police department vehicle involved.
 - (b) Involvement of an on-duty member of this department.

501.4.1 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arriving at the scene, the responding member should consider and appropriately address:

- (a) Traffic direction and control.
- (b) Proper placement of emergency vehicles, cones, roadway flares or other devices if available to provide protection for members, the public and the scene.
- (c) First aid for any injured parties if it can be done safely.
- (d) The potential for involvement of hazardous materials.
- (e) Preserving short-lived evidence.
- (f) Locating witnesses and recording crash information.
- (g) The need for additional support as necessary (e.g., traffic control, emergency medical services, fire department, hazardous materials response, tow vehicles).
- (h) Clearance and cleanup of the roadway.
- (i) Providing each driver a signed statement that the accident was reported (75 Pa.C.S. § 3746).

501.5 NOTIFICATION

If a traffic accident involves a life-threatening injury or fatality, the responding officer shall notify the Watch Commander. The Watch Commander may assign a traffic investigator or other appropriate personnel to investigate the incident. The Watch Commander will ensure notification is made to the Traffic Lieutenant and the Duty Officer in accordance with the Major Incident Notification Policy.

501.5.1 NOTIFICATION OF FAMILY

In the event of a life-threatening injury or fatality, the Watch Commander responsible for the incident should ensure notification of the victim's immediate family or coordinate such notification with the Medical Examiner, department chaplain or another suitable person. Notification should be made as soon as practicable following positive identification of the victim.

The identity of any person seriously injured or deceased in a traffic accident should not be released until notification is made to the victim's immediate family.

501.6 MINIMUM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

An accident report shall be taken when:

- (a) A fatality, any injury (including complaint of pain) or hit-and-run is involved (75 Pa.C.S. § 3743; 75 Pa.C.S. § 3746).

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- (b) An on-duty member of the Municipality of Mt. Lebanon is involved.
- (c) The accident results in any damage to any Municipality-owned or leased vehicle.
- (d) The accident involves any other public safety agency vehicle.
- (e) There is damage to public property.
- (f) There is damage to any vehicle to the extent that towing is required (75 Pa.C.S. § 3746).
- (g) Directed by a supervisor.

Members should facilitate exchange of information between parties for all other accidents. ([Crash Information Form](#))

501.6.1 PRIVATE PROPERTY

Generally, reports should not be taken when a traffic accident occurs on private property unless it involves an injury or fatality, a hit-and-run violation or other traffic law violation. Members may provide assistance to motorists as a public service, such as exchanging information and arranging for the removal of the vehicles.

501.6.2 MUNICIPALITY VEHICLE INVOLVED

An accident report shall be taken when a Municipality vehicle is involved in a traffic accident.

Whenever there is damage to a Municipality vehicle, a vehicle damage report shall be completed and forwarded to the appropriate Deputy Chief of Police. The traffic investigator or supervisor at the scene should determine what photographs should be taken of the scene and the vehicle damage.

501.6.3 INJURED ANIMALS

Department members should refer to the Animal Control Policy when a traffic accident involves the disposition of an injured animal.

501.7 INVESTIGATION

When a traffic accident meets minimum reporting requirements the investigation should include, at a minimum:

- (a) Identification and interview of all involved parties.
- (b) Identification and interview of any witnesses.
- (c) A determination of whether a violation of law has occurred and the appropriate enforcement action.
- (d) Identification and protection of items of apparent evidentiary value.
- (e) Documentation of the incident as necessary (e.g., statements, measurements, photographs, collection of evidence, reporting) on the appropriate forms.

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501.7.1 INVESTIGATION BY OUTSIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

The Traffic Lieutenant or on-duty Watch Commander may request that the South Hills Area Council of Governments (SHACOG) Crash Team or another outside law enforcement agency investigate and complete a traffic accident investigation when a life-threatening injury or fatal traffic accident occurs within the jurisdiction of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department.

The Traffic Lieutenant or on-duty Watch Commander shall request that the South Hills Area Council of Governments (SHACOG) Crash Team or another outside law enforcement agency investigate and complete a traffic accident investigation when a life-threatening injury or fatal traffic accident occurs within the jurisdiction of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department and involves:

- (a) An on- or off-duty member of the Department.
- (b) An on- or off-duty official or employee of the Municipality of Mt. Lebanon.

Department members shall promptly notify the Watch Commander when any department vehicle is involved in a traffic accident. The accident investigation and report shall be completed by the agency having jurisdiction.

501.8 ENFORCEMENT ACTION

After a thorough investigation in which physical evidence or independent witness statements indicate that a violation of a traffic law contributed to the accident, authorized members should issue a citation or arrest the offending driver, as appropriate.

More serious violations, such as driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, vehicular manslaughter, or other felonies, shall be enforced. If a driver who is subject to enforcement action is admitted to a hospital, a supervisor shall be contacted to determine the best enforcement option.

501.9 REPORTS

Department members shall utilize forms approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) as required for the reporting of traffic accidents. All such reports shall be forwarded to the Watch Commander for approval and filing (75 Pa.C.S. § 3752).

Traffic accident reports will be made available upon request, after appropriate fees are paid, unless the accident report is confidential and not subject to disclosure (75 Pa.C.S. § 3751).

501.9.1 REPORT MODIFICATION

A change or modification of a written report that alters a material fact in the report may be made only by the member who prepared the report, and only prior to its approval and distribution. Once a report has been approved and distributed, corrections shall only be made by way of a written supplemental report. A written supplemental report may be made by any authorized member.

501.9.2 RECORDS DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Records Department include, but are not limited to:

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- (a) Ensuring the monthly and quarterly reports on traffic accident information and statistics are forwarded to the Operations Deputy Chief of Police or other persons as required.
- (b) Ensuring that initial traffic accident reports are forwarded to PennDOT within 15 days (75 Pa.C.S. § 3751).

Attachments

Form 367 - Crash Information Form.pdf



Mt. Lebanon Police Department

Crash Information Form


 NON-REPORTABLE
 REPORTABLE

Officer		Badge #	412-440-2059, extension _____
555 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228			
Incident #		Date	Time
Crash Location			

UNIT #		COMMENT / VIOLATION
Driver's Name		OLN / State
Address		
Phone Number		Date of Birth
Vehicle Registration / State		Year / Make / Model
Owner's Name		Phone Number
Owner's Address		
Insurance Company		Policy Number

UNIT #		COMMENT / VIOLATION
Driver's Name		OLN / State
Address		
Phone Number		Date of Birth
Vehicle Registration / State		Year / Make / Model
Owner's Name		Phone Number
Owner's Address		
Insurance Company		Policy Number

UNIT #		COMMENT / VIOLATION
Driver's Name		OLN / State
Address		
Phone Number		Date of Birth
Vehicle Registration / State		Year / Make / Model
Owner's Name		Phone Number
Owner's Address		
Insurance Company		Policy Number

Notification is hereby given, as required by Section 3746(c) of the PA Vehicle Code, that the above identified crash was reported to the Mt. Lebanon Police Department. Reportable crashes will be investigated and submitted to the PA Department of Transportation as prescribed by law. If a copy is desired, consult with the Mt. Lebanon Police Records Department (412) 343-4143 for details and established fees. It is recommended that YOU obtain at least the preceding information from the other involved persons before leaving the scene of the crash. This information can be obtained from the driver's license, vehicle registration, and PA No-Fault Insurance card, or from a copy of the police crash report.