


PORTLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

	Subject:	Civil Rights/Bias Crime Investigations	Policy #:	50C
	Distribution:	All Personnel	Effective Date:	06/29/2014
	Standards:	BOT 6	Revision Date:	10/15/2020
	By Order Of:	Chief of Police	Review:	Biennially

I. **PURPOSE:** This policy outlines the procedures to follow in order to properly investigate and document a hate crime.

II. **POLICY:** The Portland Police Department safeguards the rights of all individuals irrespective of race, color, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. The Department will vigorously investigate threats or acts of violence, property damage, trespass, or other crimes which infringe upon these rights, identify perpetrators, and refer the case for appropriate prosecution. While one or more officers will be formally designated as the Department's Civil Rights Officer, all officers shall be familiar with the Maine Civil Rights Act (5 MRSA Chapter 337-B) and other applicable statutes. Given this is a statutorily mandated policy, officers must abide by this SOP as it applies to all standards of the MCJA Board of Trustees.

III. **DEFINITIONS:**

A. **Bias Motivated Incident:** Any incident motivated in whole or in part by bias-motivated conduct to include biased based upon race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.

B. **Civil Rights Investigator:** A member of the Department, designated by the Chief, who has received special training by the Attorney General's Office in identifying and investigating civil rights violations.

C. **Hate/Bias Crime:** Any crime motivated in whole or in part by bias based upon race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

IV. **PROCEDURES:**

A. **Patrol Officer:** an officer who receives a report of an alleged bias motivated incident or hate crime will:

1. Identify any physically injured parties and take steps to provide necessary medical assistance,
2. Take steps to ensure everyone's safety and keep the incident from escalating,
3. Secure and protect the crime scene,
4. Notify a supervisor, and
5. Document the facts, language used by the suspect and physical evidence in an incident report.

B. **Patrol Supervisor:** a supervisor assigned to review the report of an alleged bias motivated incident or hate crime will:

1. Review all associated reports, ensuring all relevant facts are documented,
2. Ensure an entry is made in the Shift Log,
3. Ensure that a copy of the report is forwarded to CID ASAP.

- C. Civil Rights Investigator: Upon receipt of an alleged bias-motivated/hate crime report, the Civil Rights investigator will:
 - 1. Investigate the incident to make a determination as to motive,
 - 2. Notify the Victim/Witness Advocate,
 - 3. Ensure the District Attorney's Office and the Investigative Division of the Attorney General's Office are notified of the investigation and provided documents as requested.
 - 4. Coordinate the investigation with the prosecutor's office,
 - 5. Consult with state and regional partners to identify any patterns, organized groups or suspects that could be involved in the offense.

- D. Victim/Witness Advocate: the Victim/Witness Advocate will provide ongoing support and assistance to the victim(s) by:
 - 1. Providing periodic updates on the status of the criminal investigation,
 - 2. Periodically checking on the well-being of the victim(s),
 - 3. Providing information on state/local victim support benefits.