



# Lincoln Police Department

Standard Operating Procedures

Integrity, Competency, Fairness



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Maine Civil Rights Act Violations / Hate or Bias Crimes</b>	<b>Policy #</b>	<b>O-16</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>February 16, 2026</b>	<b>Review:</b>	<b>2 Years</b>
<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>All Personnel</b>	<b># of pages:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MLEAP:</b>	<b>N/A</b>		
	<b><i>Rescinds All Previous Policies Related To This Current Policy</i></b>	<b>MCJA Mandatory Policy 6</b>	
<b>Issuing Authority:</b>	<b>Chief of Police Lee Miller</b>		

## I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Lincoln Police Department to safeguard the rights of all individuals under state and federal law without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, age, national origin, or ancestry. Any bias-motivated acts, including violence, threats of violence, property damage, threats of property damage, harassment, intimidation, or any other bias-motivated crime or act will be given the utmost priority. **BOT 6-1**

It is the responsibility of each officer to be familiar with the Maine Civil Rights Act and applicable criminal standards. Given this is a statutorily mandated policy, officers must abide by this agency's policy as it applies to all standards of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy Board of Trustees. **BOT 6-2, 6-11**

## II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist employees in identifying incidents motivated by bias that are based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, age, national origin, or ancestry in reporting such incidents, and in defining appropriate steps for assisting victims and apprehending suspects.

## III. DEFINITIONS **BOT-6-3**

- 1. Bias-Motivated Incident:** Any incident motivated in whole or in part by bias-motivated conduct. The bias motivation includes bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, age, national origin, or ancestry.
- 2. Hate/Bias Crime:** Any crime motivated in whole or in part by bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, age, national origin, or ancestry.
- 3. Probable Cause:** A set of facts or circumstances based on reliable information or personal knowledge or observation by an officer, which reasonably shows or would warrant an ordinary prudent reasonable officer in believing that a person has committed, is threatening, or is about to commit some criminal violation of the law.

4. **Reasonable Suspicion:** A suspicion based on facts or circumstances which of themselves do not give rise to the probable cause requisite to justify a lawful arrest, but which give rise to more than a bare suspicion; that is a suspicion that is reasonable as opposed to an imaginary or purely conjectural suspicion.

#### IV. PROCEDURES – BIAS INVESTIGATIONS *BOT 6-5*

1. **Emergency Communication Specialist (ECS) *BOT 6-4***
  - a. Whenever an ECS receives a call for a bias-motivated incident or hate/bias crime, the ECS will advise the responding unit(s).
2. **Responding Officer**
  - a. Respond to the scene of bias crime/incident, take steps to ensure everyone's safety, and keep the incident from escalating and secure and preserve the scene.
  - b. Thoroughly investigate the incident, documenting the facts, language, and physical evidence in an incident report.
3. **Supervisor**
  - a. The supervisor shall confer with the initial responding LEO, ensure that all necessary preliminary actions have been taken, and inform the agency's Civil Rights Officer.
4. **Civil Rights Officer *BOT 6-6, 6-7, 6-8, 6-9***
  - a. The Civil Rights Officer for this agency shall be assigned by the Chief Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO). The CLEO will ensure that the Civil Rights Officer's name and contact information is forwarded to the Office of the Attorney General. The Office of the Attorney General shall be notified of any change in the Civil Rights Officer position. The CLEO will ensure that the Civil Rights Officer is provided sufficient training for the role. Any LEO shall inform any member of the public or law enforcement agency the name of that officer.
  - b. The Civil Rights Officer may assume control of the investigation. This includes:
    1. Assuring that the scene is properly protected, preserved, and processed. If evidence of an inflammatory nature cannot be physically removed (e.g., painted words or signs on a wall), the owner of the property shall be contacted to remove such material as soon as possible and the LEO shall follow up to ensure that this is accomplished in a timely manner.
    2. Conduct or cause to be conducted a comprehensive interview with all victims and witnesses at the scene, including a canvas of the neighborhood for additional sources of information.
    3. Notify other appropriate personnel in the chain of command.
  - c. Investigate bias crime/incident to make a determination as to motive.
  - d. The Civil Rights Officer shall notify the Office of the Attorney General by contacting the Investigation Division at 207-626-8520. *BOT 6-9*
  - e. The Civil Rights Officer shall work closely with the Office of the District Attorney and the Office of the Attorney General to ensure that a legally adequate case is developed for prosecution. *BOT 6-10*
  - f. Assume lead role in providing continuing assistance to the crime victim to include:
    1. Contacting the victim periodically to determine whether the victim is receiving adequate and appropriate assistance.
    2. Providing information to the victim about the status of the criminal investigation.