

Victim and Witness Assistance

318.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that crime victims and witnesses receive appropriate assistance, that they are provided with information from government and private resources, and that the agency meets all related legal mandates.

318.2 POLICY

The Missoula Police Department is committed to providing guidance and assistance to the victims and witnesses of crime. The members of the Missoula Police Department will show compassion and understanding for victims and witnesses and will make reasonable efforts to provide the support and information identified in this policy.

318.3 CRIME VICTIMS

Officers should provide all victims with the applicable victim information handouts.

Officers should never guarantee a victim's safety from future harm but may make practical safety suggestions to victims who express fear of future harm or retaliation. Officers should never guarantee that a person qualifies as a victim for the purpose of compensation or restitution but may direct him/her to the proper written department material or available victim resources.

318.4 VICTIM INFORMATION

The Administration Division shall ensure that victim information handouts and resource referrals are available and current as per applicable state and federal statutes. (§ 46-24-201, MCA; § 46-15-411, MCA; § 46-24-201, MCA; § 46-6-602, MCA; § 40-15-117, MCA; § 53-9-103, MCA; 34 USC § 10449; 34 USC § 20109).

318.5 WITNESSES

Officers should never guarantee a witness' safety from future harm or that his/her identity will always remain confidential. Officers may make practical safety suggestions to witnesses who express fear of future harm or retaliation.

Officers should investigate allegations of witness intimidation and take enforcement action when lawful and reasonable.