

# Policy Manual

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## 15. Whistle Blowing

It is CARES policy that its directors, officers and employees observe the highest standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties. We must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the “Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch”, (Codified in 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 (1/1/02 Edition), as amended at 67 FR 61762 (Oct 2, 2002) (Code).

It is the responsibility of directors, officers and all employees to be aware of the requirements of the Code, to comply with the requirements and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistle Blowing Policy.

The Code of Ethics cannot anticipate every circumstance you might face so one simple rule stands above all others: Do the right thing - and if in doubt about the right thing to do, stop and ask.

No director, officer or employee who, in good faith, reports a violation of the code shall suffer harassment, retaliation or an adverse employment consequence. A director, officer or employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline including termination of employment.

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Allegations that prove to have been made maliciously or are knowingly false will be viewed as serious misconduct.

Employees are invited and encouraged to share their questions, concerns, suggestions, allegations and complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, an employee's immediate supervisor is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if speaking with an immediate supervisor is not acceptable or a response received from the supervisor is not satisfactory the suspected improper activity should be communicated to the Executive Director. If the concern involves the Executive Director, contact the President of CARES Board of Directors.

The receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation will be acknowledged within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action taken if warranted by the investigation.

The Executive Director is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Code and, at the Executive Director's discretion, advising the Board of Directors. If the allegation concerns the Executive Director, the President is responsible for the investigation, resolution and report to the Board of Directors. *A summary report of activities falling within the purview of this policy will be provided annually to the Board of Directors.*

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. CARES will seek to protect persons who report violations from any retaliation. Any employee who feels that adverse action has been taken in response to a report of improper activity (Whistle Blowing) should notify the Executive Director or President in writing as soon as possible.

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