



# Manual of Policy and Procedures

Title	Number	Page
<b>WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY FOR REPORTING FRAUDULENT, ILLEGAL OR IMPROPER ACTIVITIES</b>	211	1 of 2
	Date <b>9/23/2015</b>	

**I. PURPOSE**

The Vermont State Colleges (“VSC”) do not tolerate employees engaging in fraudulent, illegal or improper activities and encourage employees, students and others to report good-faith concerns about fraudulent, illegal or improper activities, without fear of retaliation.

**II. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

**A. Reporting Fraudulent, Illegal or Improper Activities**

Engaging in fraudulent, illegal or improper activities constitutes misconduct and may result in the imposition of discipline up to and including dismissal.

Employees, students and others are encouraged to report good-faith concerns about fraudulent, illegal or improper activities to a supervisor, advisor, or administrator. Recognizing that there may be circumstances where a person is not comfortable reporting concerns directly to another person, the VSC has partnered with EthicsPoint, a third party vendor, so that individuals who wish to remain anonymous can use EthicsPoint’s confidential hotline. The EthicsPoint hotline may also be used by reporters who do not seek anonymity. Nothing herein requires the VSC to continue to use EthicsPoint to operate its whistleblower hotline, or to prevent the VSC from selecting another vendor or choosing to operate the hotline itself.

This policy is not intended to take the place of existing reporting mechanisms and processes established at the VSC, such as those relating to: (a) academic matters, such as grade appeals, curriculum structure, and teaching effectiveness; (b) student disciplinary matters; (c) employment-related disputes, such as those governed by collective bargaining agreements or the personnel handbook, interpersonal conflicts, or complaints about compensation and benefits; (d) crimes on campus, which should be directed to Public Safety or law enforcement; (e) discrimination or harassment, which should be addressed pursuant to VSC Policy 311, *Non-Discrimination, and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*; or (f)

sexual misconduct, which should be addressed pursuant to VSC Policy 311-A, *Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking*. Allegations that fall under the guidelines of established VSC policies will be addressed as set forth in those policies.

All credible information and allegations indicating possible fraudulent, illegal or improper activities will be treated seriously. Failure by a supervisor, advisor, or administrator to report or to respond appropriately to reports may subject that person to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Individuals with responsibility to handle allegations arising under this Policy should strive to handle such reports and the communications surrounding them expeditiously and with an appropriate degree of sensitivity and discretion.

**B. Prohibition on Retaliation**

Retaliation is prohibited against anyone who, in good faith: (1) reports suspected fraudulent, illegal or improper activities; (2) participates in an investigation, directly or indirectly; or (3) provides testimony at a hearing or legal proceeding in connection with a report under this Policy. Individuals shall be free to report suspected fraudulent, illegal or improper activities and to participate in an investigation or proceeding without fear of reprisal, intimidation or retaliation. Sanctions for retaliation may range from a reprimand up to and including dismissal.

**C. Prohibition on Making False or Malicious Allegations**

A report made under this Policy may have considerable impact on the personal and professional lives of those charged, both during the investigation and long term. Any person who intentionally makes a false or malicious allegation against another may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment, expulsion or dismissal, as well as civil or criminal charges. A false or malicious allegation is one made with an awareness of its falsity, or one made without any substantial basis and with a reckless disregard for its truth or falsity. Sanctions for making false or malicious allegations may range from a reprimand up to and including dismissal.

**III. PROCEDURES**

The Chancellor shall establish and periodically update procedures for responding to reports of fraudulent, illegal or improper activities. The implementing procedures shall define relevant terms and may be modified as necessary by the Chancellor to comply with federal and state law and to enable the VSC to respond promptly and effectively to such reports.

Signed by: _____ Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
-----------------------------------------------