

## **WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION**

### PURPOSE/POLICY

JCEO requires all employees, officers, and other representatives of the Agency to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their responsibilities. Employees and others are encouraged and enabled to raise serious concerns internally, without fear of retaliation, so that JCEO can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is against the values of JCEO to retaliate against any board member, officer, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports a violation.

### PROCEDURE

1. A whistleblower is a board member, officer, employee, or volunteer who reports an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest. It is the responsibility of all Agency representatives to report such activities.
2. Examples of illegal or dishonest activities include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Violations of federal, state or local laws or regulations.
  - b. Violations of the Agency's code of ethics.
  - c. Billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered.
  - d. Other fraudulent financial reporting.
3. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures.
4. If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact his/her immediate supervisor or the CEO.
  - a. The employee must exercise sound judgment to act in good faith and avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
  - b. JCEO will make every reasonable effort to conduct all proceedings in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of all parties. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.
  - c. JCEO will not retaliate against a whistleblower. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the Human Resources Director immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.
5. Supervisors and managers are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to Human Resources, who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Employees with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to their supervisor or the CEO.

1. Once a complaint has been accepted for review, an investigation will begin. The investigation may include, but is not limited to, review of written statements from both parties, witness interviews, obtaining witness declarations, review of documentation, and on-site investigation. Any person conducting an investigation will maintain a written record of all witness interviews, evidence gathered, the outcome of the investigation, and any other appropriate documents. Records of such an investigation will not be maintained in personnel files unless they are part of a formal corrective action.
2. Results of the investigation will be shared with the appropriate people. When there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint, written notification of investigative findings will be sent to the complainant and the respondent.
3. If it is concluded that a violation has occurred, a determination will be made as to the appropriate sanctions or corrective action.
4. **Anonymous Complaints:** JCEO will accept and investigate anonymous complaints of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity if reported to the Director of Human Resources or the CEO.
5. This Whistleblower Protection Policy shall be posted on JCEO's website that is accessible to the public.