

## **Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. Whistleblower Policy**

This policy is intended to encourage Board members, staff (paid and volunteers) and others to report suspected or actual occurrences of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events (behaviors or practices) without retribution. Whenever possible, a written report shall be filed by the complainant with SCEOC as outlined in this policy. This policy is not intended to question financial and business decisions taken by SCEOC management, nor is it generally intended to be used to reconsider any matters, which have already been addressed under discipline or harassment procedures. Other policies and procedures are in place for grievance, discipline, harassment and personnel matters of that nature; however the procedures outlined in this policy are available for those who reasonably believe that some policy, practice or activity of SCEOC is in violation of the law or ethical behavior and who wish to make a good faith disclosure of an incident of unresolved gross misconduct and/or a lapse of ethical behavior. Acting in good faith includes giving SCEOC a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct or respond to the alleged activity.

The term whistleblower derives from the practice of English Bobbies, who would blow their whistles when they noticed the commission of a crime. The whistle would alert both law enforcement officers and the general public of danger.

A whistleblower is a person who alleges misconduct. The misconduct may be classified in many ways; for example, a violation of a law, rule, regulation and/or a direct threat to public interest, such as fraud, health/safety violations, and corruption. Most whistleblowers are *internal whistleblowers*, who report misconduct to a fellow employee or superior within their company.

- A Whistleblower should promptly report the suspected or actual violation to their immediate supervisor by filing a written report detailing the complaint and related incident and violation.
- If the Whistleblower would be uncomfortable or otherwise reluctant to report to their immediate supervisor, the Whistleblower should report the event to the next highest or another level of their chain of command. If the Whistleblower deems their chain of command is not an option, they may report the event directly to the Finance/HR Director or Executive Director.
- The Whistleblower can report the event with his/her identity anonymously.
- Supervisors, Managers, Program Directors, or the Executive Director who receive a report must promptly act to investigate and/or resolve the issue.
- If the Whistleblower is known, after the investigation of the issue by SCEOC, a notification, that takes into account required confidentiality, will be provided at resolution.

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- If the investigation of a report, that is done in good faith and investigated by SCEOC internal personnel, is not done to the Whistleblower's satisfaction, then he/she has the right to report the event to the appropriate legal or investigative agency.
- Crimes against person or property, such as assault, rape, burglary, etc., should immediately be reported to local law enforcement personnel as well as your immediate supervisor.

The Whistleblower shall receive no retaliation or retribution for a report that was provided in good faith – that was not done primarily with malice to damage another or SCEOC. Anyone who retaliates against the Whistleblower will be subject to discipline, which may include termination of Board or employee status.

A Whistleblower who makes a report that is not done in good faith is subject to discipline, which may include termination of the Board or employment relationship, or other legal means to protect the reputation of SCEOC and the members of its Board and staff.

The identity of the Whistleblower, if known, shall remain confidential to those persons directly involved in applying this policy, unless the issue requires investigation by law enforcement, in which case members of SCEOC are subject to subpoena.

My signature below indicates my receipt and understanding of this policy. I also verify that I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions about this policy.

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Signature

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Date