

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

The intent of the Town of Ridgefield is to adhere to all laws and regulations that apply to the Town, and the underlying purpose of this policy is to support the Town's goal of legal compliance.

This whistleblowing policy is intended to cover protections for employees who raise concerns regarding the Town, such as:

- Incorrect financial reporting;
- Unethical practices;
- Unlawful activity;
- Activities that are not in line with Town policy; or
- Activities that otherwise amount to serious improper conduct.

The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

Safeguards

Whistleblower protections are provided in two important areas -- confidentiality and against retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. 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. Retaliation of any kind for reporting concerns under this policy will not be tolerated. The Town of Ridgefield will not retaliate against an employee who in good faith has made a protest or raised a complaint against some practice of the Town or of another individual or entity with whom the Town has a business relationship, on the basis of a reasonable belief that the practice is in violation of law, or clear mandate of public policy. 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. Employee who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the Director of Human Resources immediately. The right of protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

An employee who intentionally files a false complaint will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Procedures

Reporting: The whistleblowing procedure is intended to be used for serious and sensitive issues. Such concerns, including those relating to financial reporting, unethical or illegal conduct may be reported directly to:

The First Selectman or Director of Human Resources;

Any public body, defined as any public agency of the state or federal governments;

Employees may report to an anonymous tip line at the Ridgefield Police Department at 203-431-2345.

Employment-related concerns should continue to be reported through your normal channels such as your supervisor, the Director of Human Resources or the First Selectman.

Timing Reports should be made at the earliest opportunity once an employee has determined that a reportable situation has arisen.

The action taken by the Town in response to a report of concern will vary depending on the nature of the circumstances, but the Town will endeavor to act as promptly as reasonably possible to resolve the matter.

Initial Inquiries Initial review and inquiries will be made to determine whether an in depth investigation is appropriate, and the form that it should take. Some concerns may be resolved without the need for detailed investigation.

Further Information: Investigating the concern will depend on the nature of the issue and the clarity of information provided. Further information may be sought from or provided to the person reporting the concern.

Employees with any questions regarding this policy should contact the Director of Human Resources.