

Hope College Whistleblower Policy

1. General

Hope College (the “College”) requires all employees (including faculty) to observe very high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. The College’s internal controls and operating procedures are intended to detect and prevent or deter violations of law, applicable governmental rules and regulations, and College Policy (collectively “Violations”). However, even the best systems of control cannot provide absolute safeguards against Violations. The College provides various mechanisms to assist and encourage employees to come forward in good faith with reports of Violations or suspected Violations. It is the policy of the College to encourage reporting of suspected Violations on a timely basis.

2. Whistle-Blower Procedure

Although the College encourages employees to report concerns to their immediate supervisor, the college acknowledges there are times when an employee may feel it is necessary to report a Violation outside of the traditional reporting chain of command. The College has adopted a Whistle-Blower Procedure for these instances. The Whistle-Blower Procedure allows allegations to be made outside of the immediate area that the suspected employee is associated with and allows for a degree of confidentiality for the reporting person, if requested.

This Whistle-Blower Procedure governs only the reporting and investigation of suspected Violations. Such Violations may include, but are not limited to, theft or inappropriate use of cash or other College property, falsification of hours worked for payroll purposes, and inappropriate spending of cash through the accounts payable or credit card process. The policy is not intended and may not be used

for personal or employment grievances, general compensation and benefit complaints, opinions on policy, etc...

To make a report under this policy an employee is requested to complete and sign a Whistle-Blower Report which is located in the Human Resources office and on the office webpage. Reporting of the Violation can be made through the Human Resources office as follows:

In Person – Employees may visit the Director of Human Resources during standard operating hours to file a report, or make arrangements for an appointment during non-standard operating hours. The Human Resources office is located in the Anderson/Werkman building and can be contacted at x7811.

Mail – Employees may send to the Director of Human Resources a completed Whistle-Blower Report. The employee should understand that he/she may need to visit the Human Resources office to answer any questions from the review of the statement.

Employees should be aware that the filing of a report may result in an investigation of the suspected Violation and acknowledge that in their report. Since successful investigations are often based upon timely evidence, reports under this policy should be made as soon as possible.

Employees may report suspected Violations anonymously but are encouraged to identify themselves to aid in the investigation.

3. Protection from Retaliation

An employee who in good faith reports a suspected Violation shall not be discriminated against or suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence from other employees or the College as a result. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported or is about to report a suspected Violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who believes that he/she has been

retaliated against after making a good faith report should report this alleged retaliation to the Director of Human Resources.

4. Confidentiality Under the Whistle-Blower Policy

The College will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of the reporter to the extent possible within the limitations of the law, College policy and the legitimate needs of the investigation. In addition, employees submitting a report should be aware that their public testimony might be needed to prove the suspected Violation.

Although an employee's report may possess merit, comments made to others regarding the suspected violator are not privileged. Employees are encouraged to not discuss allegations outside of the reporting and investigation process. This is especially true should the investigation prove that the suspected Violations were lawful or within College policy.

Note that if an employee self-discloses his or her identity directly or indirectly outside of the reporting procedure through his or her own actions, it will be difficult for the College to maintain confidentiality.

5. Investigation Under the Whistle-Blower Policy

The Director of Human Resources will maintain the Whistle-Blower Reports received in her/his office until the outcome of the investigation. The Director of Human Resources will not actively participate in an investigation, but will refer the allegation to the appropriate office (dependent on the specific circumstances, but typically to the CFO, Provost, appropriate Vice President, and/or the Director of the applicable office of the suspected violator). The investigator/investigation team will investigate reported Violations promptly and with reasonable diligence.

Should the allegation be against the CFO, Provost or a Vice President, the President of the college will lead and develop the investigation team if necessary.

Should the allegation be against the President, the CFO along with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will conduct the investigation.

The investigator/investigation team is responsible for documenting results of its investigation and its rationale for the resolution. That document will be attached to the original Whistle-Blower Report and reside in the Human Resources office during the investigation. The investigation is closed when the Director of Human Resources has deemed the investigation is complete and a result reported by the investigator/investigation team. Documents and evidence relating to a closed investigation will remain in the College's files in the Human Resources office.

6. Results When Report Made Under the Whistle-Blower Policy

If the result of the investigation is that the Violation is not satisfactorily established, the investigation will be deemed complete. An employee whose claim is not confirmed by investigation has the opportunity to communicate directly with the Office of Human Resources outside of this policy to further pursue his or her claim.

If the investigation establishes that a Violation has occurred, the CFO, Provost, appropriate Vice President, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of the applicable office of the investigated employee will determine appropriate response to the Violation. Should the violator be one of the above mentioned personnel, the President will replace that person in the decision process. Should the President be the violator, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees will become a part of this decision process.

Whistle-Blower Reports and related documentation will be delivered to the President by the Director of Human Resources and he/she will report all significant Violations to the Board of Trustees. Should the President be the violator, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees will disclose the violation to the Board of Trustees.

7. Sanctions for a False Report

A report made under this policy can have considerable impact on the personal and professional lives of those charged both during the investigation and long-term. An employee shall not intentionally misuse the College's Whistle-Blower Policy and procedures. Intentional misuse includes, but is not limited to, frivolous claims, attempts to treat a personal grievance or personnel dispute as an allegation of wrongdoing, lack of good faith in invoking the policy or any known false, malicious or misleading statements made at any time under the procedures of the policy. The College's Director of Human Resources will report to the Vice President and/or the Director of the applicable office of the employee the identity of any employee who is believed to have intentionally misused the Whistle-Blower Policy. After appropriate review by these individuals the employee is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Whistle-Blower Report:

Personal Information:

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Campus Extension: _____

Are you requesting confidentiality? _____

Incident Information:

Date(s): _____

Name of suspected employee(s):

_____	_____

_____	_____

Witness(es):

_____	_____

_____	_____

Do you have any evidence supporting the allegation? Yes / No

If yes, please describe:

Please describe any physical evidence left with the Director of Human Resources:

Description of the alleged violation (please be as specific as possible and attach additional sheets as necessary):

Certification:

I have read and understand the Hope College Whistle-Blower Procedure located on the College's Human Resources webpage. I represent that the facts outlined above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date

This disclosure statement has been received by the Human Resources office on the date noted below, and I am in custody of any evidence noted above.

Director of Human Resources

Date