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# Whistle-blower Protection Policy

Whistleblower: For the purposes of PSEA Policy a whistleblower is a type of complainant, not the survivor, who is a humanitarian aid worker making a report of SEA. Organizational whistleblowing policies encourage staff to report concerns or suspicions of misconduct by colleagues by offering protection from retaliation for reporting, and clarify the rules and procedures for reporting and addressing such GPA Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse cases. The principles of confidentiality apply to whistleblowers as they would do any complainant, and internal agency policies shall protect whistleblowers on SEA from retaliation, so long as the report is made in good faith and in compliance with internal agency policies.

Whistle-blower policies are critical tools for protecting individuals who report activities believed to be illegal, dishonest, unethical, or otherwise improper.

I. The organization will not retaliate against a whistle-blower. 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 whistle-blower who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the PSEA Focal point, Program Coordinator or Executive Director immediately. The right of a whistle-blower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

II. Whistle-blower protections are provided in two important areas: confidentiality and retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistle-blower 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.

III. Individuals protected include;

a. the employee, or a person acting on behalf of the employee, who reports to a public body or is about to report to a public body a matter of public concern; or

b. the employee who participates in a court action, an investigation, a hearing, or an inquiry held by a public body on a matter of public concern.

IV. The organization may not discharge, threaten, or otherwise discriminate against an employee regarding the employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges of employment.

V. The organization may not disqualify an employee or other person who brings a matter of public concern, or participates in a proceeding connected with a matter of public concern, before a public body or court, because of the report or participation, from eligibility to bid on contracts with the organization; or receive another right, privilege, or benefit.

VI. The provisions of this policy do not;

a. require the organization to compensate an employee for participation in a court action or in an investigation, hearing, or inquiry by a public body;

b. prohibit the organization from compensating an employee for participation in a court action or in an investigation, hearing, or inquiry by a public body;

c. authorize the disclosure of information that is legally required to be kept confidential; or

d. diminish or impair the rights of an employee under a collective bargaining agreement.

VII. Limitation to protections

a. A person is not entitled to the protections under this policy unless he or she reasonably believes that the information reported is, or is about to become, a matter of public concern; and reports the information in good faith.

b. A person is entitled to the protections under this policy only if the matter of public concern is not the result of conduct by the individual seeking protection, unless it is the result of conduct by the person that was required by his or her employer.

c. Before an employee initiates a report to a public body on a matter of public concern under this policy, the employee shall submit a written report concerning the matter to the GPA's PSEA focal point or Coordinator.