

Questions and Answers for the Santa Clara University Community

Q: What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool to assist management and employees to work together to address fraud, abuse, and misconduct in the workplace, all while cultivating a positive work environment.

Q. May I report using either the Internet or the telephone?

Yes. By giving you choices, EthicsPoint helps ensure that employees can file a report anonymously and in the manner most comfortable or convenient to them.

Q. Why do we need a system like EthicsPoint?

We believe that people in our University community are our most important asset. By creating open channels of communication, we can promote a safe and ethical environment. An effective reporting system can be our most useful tool in reducing losses due to fraud and abuse. The Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees has recommended the implementation of this tool as another mechanism for reporting suspected inappropriate behavior.

Q. Does management really want me to report?

We certainly do. You may have initial knowledge of an activity that may be cause for concern. Your reporting can minimize the potential negative impact on the University and its people. Also, offering positive input may help identify issues that can contribute to a healthy ethical climate and improve organizational performance.

Q. Why should I report what I know? What's in it for me?

We all have the right to work in a positive environment and with that right comes the responsibility of acting in an ethical manner and letting the appropriate people know if someone is not acting appropriately. By working together, we can maintain a healthy and productive environment for the entire University community.

Q. What type of situations should I report?

If you have observed, suspect or have a concern about an activity that may be inappropriate and in possible violation of a University policy, you are encouraged to communicate that concern. Suspected activities can be reported directly to your supervisor or anonymously through the EthicsPoint system.

Q. If I see a violation, shouldn't I just report it to my manager, security, or human resources and let them deal with it?

You certainly can, but there are several good reasons why you should use EthicsPoint as well. First, EthicsPoint ensures that your report gets to the appropriate people. That may or may not happen if you simply report something to your manager, especially when dealing with issues not under his/her control. More importantly, reports can be filed anonymously and all report information is secure and held in the strictest confidence.

Q. It is my understanding that any report I send from a university computer generates a server log that shows every web-site that my PC connects with, and won't this log identify me as a report originator?

EthicsPoint does not generate or maintain any internal connection logs with IP addresses, so no information linking your PC to EthicsPoint is available.

With fewer than 12% of reports generated during business hours, most people prefer to report from the comfort of their home after hours and on the weekend.

Q. Can I file a report from home and still remain anonymous?

A report from home, a neighbor's computer, or any Internet portal will remain secure and anonymous. An Internet portal never identifies a visitor by screen name and the EthicsPoint system strips away Internet addresses so that anonymity is totally maintained. Plus, EthicsPoint is contractually committed not to pursue a reporter's identity.

Q. I am concerned that the information I provide EthicsPoint will ultimately reveal my identity. How can you assure me that will not happen?

The EthicsPoint system is designed to protect your anonymity. However, you as a reporting party need to ensure that the body of the report does not reveal your identity by accident, for example, "From my cube next to Jan Smith..." or "In my 33 years..."

Q: Isn't this system just an example of someone watching over me?

The EthicsPoint system concentrates on being a positive aspect of our overall culture, and allows us to assure a safe, secure, and ethical workplace. You are encouraged to seek guidance on ethical dilemmas, provide positive suggestions, or communicate a concern.

Q. I am aware of some individuals involved with unethical conduct, but it doesn't affect me. Why should I bother reporting it?

The University chooses to promote ethical behavior. All unethical conduct, at any level, ultimately hurts the University and all employees, including you. You only have to consider what happened in recent corporate scandals to see disastrous effects that a seemingly harmless lapse in ethics can have on an otherwise healthy company. So if you know of any incidents of misconduct or ethical violations, consider it your duty to yourself and your coworkers to report it.

Q. I am not sure what I have observed or heard is a violation of company policy, or involves unethical conduct, but it just does not look right to me. What should I do?

File a report. EthicsPoint can help you prepare and file your report so it can be properly understood. We'd rather you report a situation that turns out to be harmless than let possible unethical behavior go unchecked because you weren't sure.

Q. Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server to prevent any possible breach in security. EthicsPoint makes these reports available only to designated individuals within the University who are charged with evaluating the type of violation and location of the incident. Each of these report recipients has had training in keeping these reports in the utmost confidence.

Q. What if my boss or other managers are involved in a violation? Won't they get the report and start a cover-up?

The EthicsPoint system and report distribution are designed so that implicated parties are not notified or granted access to reports they have been named in.

Q. What if I remember something important about the incident after I filed the report? Or what if the University has further questions for me concerning my report?

When you file a report at the EthicsPoint Web site or through the EthicsPoint Call Center, you receive a unique user name and are asked to choose a password. You can return to the EthicsPoint system again either by Internet or telephone and access the original report to answer questions posed by a University representative and add further information that will help resolve open issues. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer questions.

Q. Are these follow-ups on reports as secure as the first one?

All EthicsPoint correspondences are held in the same strict confidence as the initial report, continuing under the umbrella of anonymity.

Q. What if I want to be identified with my report?

There is a section in the report for identifying yourself, if you wish.

Q. Can I still file a report if I don't have access to the Internet?

You can file an EthicsPoint report from any computer that can access the Internet. You can file from home. Many public locations, including the public library, have Internet computers. If you don't have access or are uncomfortable using a computer, you can call your EthicsPoint toll-free hotline 888-552-8060 which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Q. Is the telephone toll-free hot line confidential and anonymous too?

Yes. You will be asked to provide the same information that you would provide in an Internet-based report and an interviewer will type your responses into the EthicsPoint Web site. These reports have the same security and confidentiality measures applied to them during delivery.