

# Compliance & Privacy

## EthicsPoint Frequently Asked Questions

### **What happens when I file an EthicsPoint report?**

Whether you call the EthicsPoint Hotline number or file a report through the web portal, all reports are first reviewed by a dispatcher at EthicsPoint. The dispatcher will restrict access to any EthicsPoint user that may be named in the report. Once the case has been reviewed by EthicsPoint, a notification is sent to a designated Compliance and Privacy department reviewer. Depending on the topic, the case may be assigned to an appropriate St. Charles Health System department (Human Resources, Medical Staff leadership, etc.) for investigation. A follow-up comment is posted to the case in EthicsPoint once it has been reviewed and assigned for investigation.

### **How will I be notified that my EthicsPoint case has been reviewed/resolved?**

After you file a report through EthicsPoint, you will be assigned an access code or "key code" to view your case online. You may do so by selecting the "Follow-up on a Report" link on the St. Charles EthicsPoint page. This allows you to access the case without entering your email address or other identifying information about yourself. You will need this code to log back into the report to view its status and answer any additional questions that the investigator may have. We recommend checking back periodically in case a question or comment has been posted for you to review. In many cases, additional information is needed to assist in the investigation. If a question is posted to you in your EthicsPoint case, you will be able to respond online and provide additional information. Once the investigation is complete, a closure response will be posted in the EthicsPoint case. Please note, the outcome of each case will not be shared with the caller. The outcomes and any actions (policy changes, disciplinary actions, etc.) taken are considered confidential.

### **What if the concern I raised continues, or I am retaliated against for reporting?**

If the issues you raised in the report continue after the closure of the EthicsPoint case, we encourage you to file another report to notify the team that the issue is ongoing. This is also true if you feel that you are being retaliated against for making a good faith report, although we would encourage you to contact the Compliance Officer or a member of the Human Resources Business Partners directly with your concerns. St. Charles has a strict non-retaliation policy for good faith reports, and we enforce this policy.

## **What types of issues/concerns should I report through EthicsPoint?**

EthicsPoint should be used for reporting any potentially improper, illegal, or unethical behavior or activity. We encourage caregivers to first try to solve issues through their supervisor/manager. However, if you are not comfortable doing so, or you have previously reported the issue to a supervisor/manager and the problem continues, you are encouraged to report through EthicsPoint.

**We encourage you to review the 2022 St. Charles Assistance and Responsibility Matrix found in the Useful links on CaregiverNet.**

## **If I choose to report a concern through EthicsPoint anonymously, will I remain anonymous throughout the investigation?**

All reports filed through EthicsPoint go through the EthicsPoint dispatch prior to being received at St. Charles, so St. Charles cannot track an IP address and does not have the ability to see your contact information unless you have chosen to provide such detail. During the course of an investigation, the implicated parties will be interviewed and given basic detail regarding the concerns raised in the report. All persons engaged in or interviewed as part of an EthicsPoint investigation are reminded of the St. Charles non-retaliation policy, and that the information provided or learned during the interview is to remain confidential to the extent possible by law.

## **What does it mean to file a “good faith” report?**

Reporting in “good faith” means to file a report with honesty and without a deliberate intention to bring disciplinary action upon another caregiver. Reports that are knowingly false, made with malicious intent, or with reckless disregard of the facts will not be considered good faith reports, are prohibited by this policy, and may subject the reporter to disciplinary action.

## **What is the difference between EthicsPoint and the Safety Alert System (SAS)?**

The Safety Alert System, SAS is an application used for the reporting of quality, safety, and privacy concerns. EthicsPoint is used to report potential improper, illegal, or unethical behavior. Some examples include billing and coding issues, conflict of interest, retaliation, violations of policy, and physician payment or referral concerns. EthicsPoint allows the reporter to remain anonymous, if she/he chooses, while still having the opportunity to answer questions or add additional information during the investigation of the EthicsPoint case.