

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) University of Cincinnati's Anonymous Reporting Hotline

The University of Cincinnati's Anonymous Reporting Hotline is NOT a 911 or Emergency Service. Reports submitted through the Anonymous Reporting Hotline may not receive an immediate response. If you require emergency assistance, please call 911.

1. What is the purpose of an Anonymous Reporting Hotline?

The anonymous reporting hotline is a formalized mechanism for reporting illegal or unethical acts or behavior that may be in violation of UC policy.

2. What type of incidents can be reported through the hotline?

The hotline is to be used for:

- Illegal, unethical acts or acts that are in violation of UC's policies (serious matters) involving UC faculty or staff (e.g., harassment, theft, fraud, discrimination, threat, NCAA violations, etc.);
- Student conduct matters involving **hazing or sexual discrimination/harassment/violence (including partner violence)** in which a student is the subject of the report

The hotline is NOT to be used for:

- 911 or emergency matters;
- General complaints (e.g., the parking garage arm is broken; the dining hall lines are too long, someone is smoking nearby, so and so is a jerk, etc.) – report these matters to the UC office responsible for them or report them to your supervisor;
- Student conduct matters in which the student is the subject of the report (other than hazing or sexual discrimination/harassment/violence). These require reporter identification and should be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards;
- Student academic misconduct shall be reported to the college conduct administrator as well as to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

3. Why is an Anonymous Reporting Hotline necessary?

- It is a key component of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (SOX), which sets standards for corporate governance and control;
- Best practice as determined by NACUBO – the National Association of College and University Business Offices;
- Open lines of communication assist with improving UC and helping to create an ethical environment.

4. Does the Anonymous Reporting Hotline replace existing reporting methods?

- The hotline does not replace or supersede existing reporting methods on campus;
- We would prefer you use existing UC reporting methods (e.g., your supervisor) whenever possible;
- The hotline provides an alternative for individuals who do not feel comfortable with existing reporting methods.

Note: For general complaints of UC employees about other UC employees, including supervisors, UC's human resource policy 17.01 'Complaint Resolution' should be followed. This policy provides a process that should be followed for resolving general complaints and states that 'the employee bears the burden of proof at all stages of the complaint process.'

5. Can I make a truly anonymous report?

- Yes. The university has contracted with Navex/EthicsPoint, Inc., an external vendor, to manage our Anonymous Reporting Hotline.
- No caller IDs are recorded;
- No IP addresses are tracked or recorded;

Caution: if you choose to make a report, the university may conduct an investigation using the information you included in your report. If an investigation is performed, it may involve talking with people who you identified in your report or others who work with the people you identified. During the course of an investigation, it may be possible for people to determine who made the report, even if you excluded identifying information. You, as a reporter, need to make sure that your report doesn't reveal your identity by accident if you wish to remain anonymous. For example, don't use language such as, "From my desk next to John Smith".... Or "During my 15 years working in this department"....

6. How do I report?

To make a report by phone: 1-800-889-1547

To make a report online:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/22314/index.html>

Mobile intake site: ucmobilereportinghotline.ethicspoint.com

QR code:



7. Where does my report go? Who at the university sees my report?

- All reports are made available to the university's Director of Internal Audit and General Counsel;
- Reports are communicated to specific university officials based on the nature of the report.
 - For example, the athletic compliance director will receive reports about NCAA concerns. Employee misconduct reports are received by human resources.

Note: Under the Ohio Public Records Act, the university is subject to disclosing information received through the Anonymous Reporting Hotline. As a result, the university can not provide assurances that all information submitted will be protected. Throughout the course of any investigation, the information submitted will be protected to the fullest extent possible in accordance with Ohio laws. No information received through the Anonymous Reporting Hotline will be disclosed without discussion and consent from Office of General Counsel.

8. Why would I identify myself in a report?

Investigations are sometimes more effective if the investigator knows who the reporter is and is able to converse directly with the reporter to obtain information and clarification throughout the course of an investigation. The Anonymous Reporting Hotline provides a

mechanism that enables investigators to post questions or comments to the reporter, but this approach is not as effective as a live conversation.

9. Will my identity be protected if I choose to disclose my name?

Under the Ohio Public Records Act, the university is subject to disclosing information received through the Anonymous Reporting Hotline. As a result, the university can not provide assurances of identity protection to a reporter who chooses to self-identify. Throughout the course of any investigation, the identity of a reporter will be protected to the fullest extent possible in accordance with Ohio laws. No information received through the Anonymous Reporting Hotline will be disclosed without discussion and consent from Office of General Counsel.

10. How can I follow up on a report I've made?

- When you file a report you will receive a unique report identification key and you will create a password. **You will need to retain these to follow up on a report previously filed.**
- If you made a report via phone, call the toll free number again and tell the interviewer that you are following up on a report. You will be asked for your unique report identification key and password.
- If you made a report online, click on the "Follow Up on Report" button, and enter your report identification key and password. This will take you to the report previously filed and a link to "Post a Follow-Up Note" or "Upload a File."

11. I have documentation to support my concern. What should I do with it?

- You can upload it when you submit your report online or any time after that using the report identification key and password;
- If you make a report by telephone, you should indicate to the operator that you have documentation that would help support the claim. The operator will provide guidance on how to submit the information.

12. If I choose to report anonymously, is there a way for the investigator to obtain additional information or clarification from me that is essential to the investigation?

Use your report identification key and password via the telephone or web link to periodically check for questions or comments posted by the university official investigating the report. If you choose to do so, you can provide responses that will be posted in the Anonymous Reporting Hotline database for review by the investigator. All of this correspondence will take place within the control of the Anonymous Reporting Hotline, ensuring that your anonymity is protected.

13. Can I submit additional information after I submit my initial report?

Yes. Use your report identification key and password to revisit and amend your report.

14. I've submitted my report, what can I expect?

- You should receive an initial response from UC;
- This response may simply be a statement that we've received your report;
- The initial response may contain questions that UC has about your report;
- If UC can investigate your report, based on the information received, UC may begin an investigation;
 - The investigation may involve discussing the report with people you've identified in the report;
 - The investigation may take anywhere from a couple of days to a couple of months;
 - If it is taking longer than a couple of weeks, UC should post a follow up to you alerting you to the status of the investigation;
- At the conclusion of the investigation, UC will post a final response to your report.
 - The final response may be that the university couldn't identify any violations;
 - OR, the final response may be that corrective action is warranted.