

# **OKLAHOMA TEACHERS RETIREMENT FRAUD AND ETHICS REPORTING POLICY**

The OTRS is committed to conducting its activities in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and ethics. The OTRS Fraud and Ethics Reporting Policy is established to facilitate the development of controls that will aid in the detection and prevention of fraud and unethical behavior against or involving the OTRS. The purpose of this policy is to encourage the reporting of suspected or fraudulent or unethical behavior involving the OTRS. It is the intent of the OTRS to promote consistent organizational behavior by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the development of controls and conduct of inquiries.

## **1. SCOPE**

- a. This policy applies to any irregularity, or suspected irregularity, involving clients, beneficiaries of the system, board members, employees, vendors, consultants, contractors and other parties in a business relationship with the OTRS. This policy further applies to any suspected fraudulent, dishonest use, misuse of OTRS resources or property, or otherwise unethical behavior. Reportable conduct may be related to, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Accounting and Auditing Matters
  - Confidentiality and Misappropriation
  - Conflict of Interest
  - Contractor/Vendor Relations
  - Discrimination or Harassment
  - Embezzlement
  - Falsification of Contracts, Reports, or Records
  - Hiring Irregularities
  - Improper Giving or Receiving of Gifts
  - Improper Supplier, Contractor, or Consultant Activity
  - Nepotism/Favoritism Inappropriate Workplace Relationships
  - Offensive or Inappropriate Communication
  - Retaliation
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Theft
  - Threat or Inappropriate Supervisor Directive
  - Time Abuse
  - Violation of Policy
  - Workplace Violence
- b. Examples of reportable conduct include: an improper awarding of a contract to a relative, uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical contact, stealing or misappropriation of agency property or funds, improper directives from a supervisor that violate policy or law, or concerns about an employee who is falsifying work hours.

## **2. REPORTING**

- a. Anyone who works for, is a board member of, does business with, or is otherwise affiliated with OTRS is encouraged to report suspected fraudulent, dishonest, or unethical behavior of any other employee, board member, consultant, vendor or other

party related to the OTRS. Reporting can be made in a variety of ways – informally by consultation with one’s supervisor (for employees with internal concerns), through the filing of a formal internal grievance pursuant to Merit Rule 455:10-19-1 through 455:10-19-64 (by employees), or by anyone by making a report with the OTRS’ contracted outside reporting firm, EthicsPoint. Reports made to EthicsPoint can be made either via telephone at 1-855-726-6411 or through the internet accessible at the OTRS website. Reports made to EthicsPoint give the reporting party the option of remaining anonymous.

- b. All parties should be advised that any of the reporting mechanisms above do not take the place of filing a complaint with the state or federal government regarding certain state and federal law violations, such as an EEOC complaint. Strict timelines typically apply to these types of complaints, and filing a report via EthicsPoint or any other reporting mechanism provided by the OTRS do not take the place of filing a complaint with one of these entities, nor extend the timeline for the filing of such a complaint.

### **3. INQUIRIES AND INVESTIGATIONS**

- a. All reports made through the OTRS’ open door policy, as well as the formal grievance policy, will be handled pursuant to the specific procedures applicable to those policies. Reports made via EthicsPoint will immediately be forwarded to the following OTRS personnel: Executive Director, Legal Counsel, Human Resources Director, and Chairman of the Audit Committee. If any of the personnel listed above are implicated in the report, they will not receive a copy of the report, and initially will not be notified of the report. Reports, whether anonymous or not, will be shared only with those who have a need to know of the report so that the OTRS can conduct an effective investigation and determine an appropriate course of action.
- b. In keeping with OTRS’ commitment to the highest standards of integrity and ethics, the OTRS will investigate suspected fraudulent or unethical activity. Inquiries and investigations will typically be handled by Legal Counsel, and others as is appropriate. The OTRS may decline to conduct an investigation in circumstances that clearly indicate no investigation is warranted. Legal Counsel will make report of all findings and recommendations to both the Executive Director and Chairman of the Audit Committee within 60 days of the filing of the report.

### **4. NO RETALIATION**

- a. The OTRS will not tolerate retaliation against any person who make a report in good faith under this policy or against any individuals (e.g., witnesses) who participate in an investigation of a report under this policy. Complaints of retaliation can be made to the Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Audit Committee, Executive Director, or Legal Counsel. Any complaint of retaliation will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective measures taken if the allegations of retaliation are substantiated. Complaints can also be made to directly to the Merit Protection Commission under the Whistleblower Protection Act pursuant to merit rule 455:10-3-6(b)(1). This policy will not prevent, limit, or delay the OTRS from taking action, including disciplinary or other employment action, against any individual, when the OTRS concludes that action is appropriate.