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About the Independent Investigators

The Workplace Conduct Unit's investigators perform timely, independent and objective factual investigations of allegations of inappropriate workplace conduct by legislative Members, legislative employees, or third parties undertaken because of a person's protected class or protected conduct. The results of their investigation will be provided to a panel of independent employment law experts. The panel will issue recommendations to the Senate Rules Committee or the Assembly Rules Committee for its consideration and for potential disciplinary action if warranted. The Workplace Conduct Unit does not represent the interests of any Senator, Assembly Member, or the leadership of the State Senate or State Assembly. No limitations have been placed on the unit's authority in terms of who to investigate, or what sorts of inappropriate conduct allegations to investigate. The unit will make its own determinations in that regard. It should be noted that, when the Workplace Conduct Unit initiates an investigation, the appropriate Rules Committee will be informed of that fact.

In evaluating what facts are relevant to the unit's investigations of inappropriate conduct, the investigators will be guided primarily by the California Legislature's Policy on Appropriate Workplace Conduct: Creating a Culture of Respect, Civility and Diversity, as well as federal and state laws that pertain to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and by policies that govern Members and employees of the State Senate and the State Assembly.

The investigators will conduct investigations promptly, in a manner that is fair and respectful to complainants, witnesses, and respondents. They welcome relevant information from all sources.

What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool created by NAVEX Global to assist management and employees to work together in addressing misconduct in the workplace, all while cultivating a positive work environment.

Reporting – General

May I report using either the Internet or the telephone?

Yes. You have the ability to file a confidential, anonymous report via this website or by calling the hotline at (877) 231-5956.

What type of situations should I report?

The EthicsPoint system is designed for individuals to report instances of inappropriate workplace conduct toward others in the California Legislature, which is defined by the Legislature's new policy to be based upon:

- Sex (including, but not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding)
- Gender
- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
- Race
- Color
- Ancestry
- Religious Creed (including, but not limited to, religious dress and grooming practices)
- National Origin (including, but not limited to, language use restrictions)
- Age (40 and over)
- Physical Disability
- Mental Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Marital Status
- Military and Veteran Status
- Medical Condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics)
- Genetic Information
- Denial of Family and Medical Care Leave
- Any Other Characteristic Protected by State or Federal Law

It is also designed to report retaliation (including whistleblower retaliation) that a person is subject to as a result of complaining about inappropriate workplace conduct, participating in an investigation regarding inappropriate workplace conduct, or engaging in otherwise protected conduct.

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

When you observe behavior that you believe constitutes inappropriate conduct toward others (including, but not limited to, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation), we expect you to report it. Ideally, you should bring any concerns forward to your direct manager. We recognize, however, that there may be circumstances when you are not comfortable reporting the issue in this manner, or where you have already reported such issues to your manager and have not observed a change in behavior. It is for such circumstances that we have partnered with EthicsPoint. We would rather you report anonymously than keep the information to yourself.

Does the Legislature really want me to report?

Yes. In fact, the State Senate and State Assembly need you to report. You may have initial knowledge of conduct that may be cause for concern. Reporting is an important function of ensuring that the Legislature fosters an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation for its employees and the public it serves.

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 specific individuals within the Workplace Conduct Unit, who are charged with evaluating the report. Each of these report recipients has had training in keeping these reports in the utmost confidence.

Reporting Security & Confidentiality

It is my understanding that any report I send from a company computer generates a server log that shows every website 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. In fact, EthicsPoint is contractually committed not to pursue a reporter's identity.

If you feel uncomfortable making a report on your work PC, you have the option of using a PC outside your work environment (such as one located at an Internet café, at a friend's house, etc.) through the EthicsPoint secure website. Many people choose this option, as EthicsPoint's data shows that fewer than 12% of reports are generated during business hours.

You may also use the hotline ((877) 231-5956).

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.

Tips & Best Practices

I am not sure if what I have observed or heard is inappropriate 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 would rather you report a situation that turns out to be harmless than let possible inappropriate behavior go unchecked because you were not sure.

What if I remember something important about the incident after I file the report? Or what if the Workplace Conduct Unit has further questions for me concerning my report?

When you file a report at the EthicsPoint website, you receive a unique user name and are asked to choose a password. You can return to the EthicsPoint system again by Internet and access the original report to add more detail or answer questions posed by a Workplace Conduct Unit 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. You and the Workplace Conduct Unit now have entered into an "anonymous dialogue," where situations are not only identified, but can also be resolved, no matter how complex.

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.

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 computers with access to the Internet. If you don't have access to or are uncomfortable using a computer, you can call the toll-free hotline at (877) 231-5956.