

# About EthicsPoint

## What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool created by NAVEX to assist organizations in addressing misconduct. GSA uses EthicsPoint as the mechanism for confidential reporting of misconduct at GSA conferences and online events, in GSA's Early Career Leadership Program (ECLP), and within other GSA programs and events.

## Why use a system like EthicsPoint??

GSA values your attendance at its conferences and online events and wants to make your experience productive and inspiring by fostering an open exchange of ideas in a professional setting. Similarly, GSA values your participation in the ECLP and wants to provide a safe, welcoming, and productive professional experience for all who participate in the ECLP.

Our Conferences and Online Events Code of Conduct was established to communicate a transparent set of standards and guidelines for acceptable behavior at all GSA conferences and online events and to provide a positive, safe, and welcoming environment for all attendees, vendors, volunteers, and staff. Similarly, our ECLP Code of Conduct was established to communicate a transparent set of standards and guidelines for acceptable behavior for all ECLP participants and to provide a positive, safe, and welcoming environment for all ECLP participants.

All conference participants, regardless of their role, are expected to follow the Conferences and Online Events Code of Conduct while attending any portion of GSA meetings and conferences, including but not limited to meeting rooms, the exhibit/poster hall, meeting areas in the official conference venue, and social events provided by the meeting or vendors. At the same time, all ECLP participants are expected to follow the ECLP Code of Conduct when participating in ECLP-related events, including but not limited to committee participation, event attendance, career workshops, and other ECLP-related programs and events.

EthicsPoint provides an effective and confidential way to report violations of GSA Codes of Conduct and policies as well as grievances related to GSA programs and events. This system augments our efforts to foster a positive, safe, and welcoming environment for our community.

# Reporting – General

## How should I make a report?

You can make a confidential, anonymous report through the EthicsPoint system either via the Internet, at this website, or via telephone at **1-844-990-0264**.

## Is one method better than the other?

We encourage you to use the reporting method that you prefer. Regardless of the method you choose, your report will be treated the same.

## What types of situations should I report?

The EthicsPoint system is designed for the reporting of any violation of the GSA Conferences and Online Events Code of Conduct, ECLP Code of Conduct, or for other concerns you may have relating to a GSA program, staff, and volunteers.

## If I'm at a GSA conference and I see a violation, shouldn't I just report it to GSA staff or venue security and let them deal with it?

**If you are attending a GSA conference and you feel threatened, witness someone being threatened, or observe behavior that presents an immediate or serious threat to public safety, please contact venue staff/security or call 911 immediately.**

If you observe behavior that you believe violates our Conferences and Online Events Code of Conduct, we ask you to please report it so that GSA is equipped to take the appropriate steps to investigate. It is for this reason that GSA has partnered with EthicsPoint, which allows you to quickly, easily and, if you wish, anonymously file a report

If you are more comfortable speaking with GSA staff while at the conference, we encourage you to do that as a first step.

## Why should I make a report?

We all have the right to attend a professional conference in a positive and welcoming environment, and with that right comes the responsibility of following the guidelines set out in the Conferences and Online Events Code of Conduct and letting the appropriate people know if someone is not following those guidelines.

Similarly, all participants in the ECLP have the right to participate in ECLP events and programming in a positive, safe, and welcoming environment. With that right comes the

responsibility of following the standards of behavior set out by the ECLP Code of Conduct and letting the appropriate people know if someone is not following those standards.

The same principles apply across all GSA Programs and Events, including GSA staff, vendors, and volunteers. By working together, we can maintain a positive, welcoming, and inclusive environment for our community.

## Where do these reports go? Who can access the reports?

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 GSA who are charged with evaluating the report, based on the type of violation and location of the incident. Each of these report recipients have pledged to keep these reports confidential.

If, during the course of an investigation, it is necessary to reveal your identity as the reporter, you will be notified in advance and before further action is taken.

## Reporting Security & Confidentiality

### Can I file a report from home and remain anonymous?

A report filed from home, from a neighbor's computer, or from any Internet portal will remain secure and anonymous. An Internet portal does not identify a user by screen name and the EthicsPoint system strips away IP addresses so that anonymity is maintained. Additionally, EthicsPoint is contractually committed not to pursue a reporter's identity.

### I want to be sure my report is anonymous. I am concerned that the information I provide to EthicsPoint will reveal my identity.

The EthicsPoint system is designed to protect your anonymity. However, if you wish to remain anonymous, you—as a reporting party—need to ensure that the body of the report does not accidentally reveal your identity. For example, including information in your report such as, “at Poster number 22...” or “while I was moderating the Genomics session” could inadvertently reveal your identity.

### Is the toll-free hotline also confidential and anonymous?

Yes. You will be asked to provide the same information that would be provided in an Internet-based report, and an interviewer will enter your responses into the EthicsPoint website. These reports have the same security and confidentiality measures applied to them during delivery as an Internet-based report.

## What if I want to be identified with my report?

There is a section in the report where you may identify yourself, if you wish.

## When must the report be filed?

While there is no specific timeframe in which you must file a report, if a behavior about which you are uncomfortable continues or is ongoing, we ask that you file the report immediately so that action can be taken as soon as possible. Because details can become less clear over time, reports should be filed as soon as possible after an incident occurs.

## What happens after I file a report?

Depending on the violation reported, the report will go directly to the appropriate member(s) of the GSA Ethics Committee or to a GSA staff member for review. A member of the GSA Ethics Committee or a member of the GSA staff will contact you as soon as possible to acknowledge receipt of your report and provide more information on next steps.

## What if I feel there may be a conflict of interest regarding my complaint and a member of the GSA Ethics Committee or GSA Staff?

When making a report, you will be able to indicate any potential conflicts of interest, so that those individuals will not have access to your report.

## Tips & Best Practices

### I am aware of some people who are engaged in behavior that violates one of GSA's Codes of Conduct or Online Event Policy, but it doesn't affect me. Why should I take the time to make a report?

When people don't feel safe and welcome at our conferences and online events or in our ECLP activities and programs, they cannot contribute their knowledge and talents and participate fully in our field. Even a seemingly harmless lapse in judgment can be corrected to help improve the environment for all. As a result, if you know of any incidents of misconduct or violations of GSA's Codes of Conduct, please report them.

## I am not sure if what I have observed or heard is a violation of the Code of Conduct or Online Event Policy. What should I do?

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

## What if my PI or others in my group are involved in a reported violation? Won't they receive the report?

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

## What if I remember something important about the incident after I file the report? What if the GSA Ethics Committee has questions about my report?

When you file a report through the EthicsPoint website or through the EthicsPoint Call Center, you will receive a unique username and will choose a password. You can return to the EthicsPoint system, either by Internet or telephone, and access your original report to add more detail or answer questions posed by a member of the GSA Ethics Committee. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified so that you may answer any follow-up questions.

## Are these follow-ups to reports as secure as the first report?

All EthicsPoint correspondences are held in the same strict confidence as the initial report. If you choose to file an anonymous report, the correspondence will continue under the umbrella of anonymity.

## Can I file a report if I don't have access to a computer?

If you don't have access to a computer or are uncomfortable using a computer to file a report, you can call the EthicsPoint toll-free hotline, which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to file a report. You can reach the hotline by calling **1-844-990-0264**.