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About EthicsPoint

What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool created by NAVEX Global that enables management, employees, and, the public to work together to address fraud, safety concerns, abuse, and other misconduct within Clatsop County government in an effort to cultivate a positive environment to both work and conduct business.

Why do we need a system like EthicsPoint?

- Our employees are our most important asset. By creating open channels of communication, we promote a positive, safe and equitable work environment and maximize productivity.
- Serving our citizens with integrity is our number one priority. By creating open channels of communication, we promote increased engagement from the public to ensure we are providing services in an efficient and ethical manner.
- An effective reporting system augments our other efforts to foster a culture of integrity and ethical decision-making.

Reporting – General

May I report using either the Internet or the telephone?

Yes. EthicsPoint enables you to file a confidential, anonymous report via either the telephone or the Internet.

What types of situations should I report?

The EthicsPoint system allows employees and citizens to report any violation of our stated Improper Governmental Conduct Policy, or other concerns including those surrounding safety that you may have.

As an employee if I see a violation, shouldn't I just report it to my manager or human resources and let them deal with it?

When you observe some behavior that you believe violates the Improper Governmental Conduct Policy or any County Personnel or Safety Policy we expect you to report it. Ideally, you should bring any concerns forward to your direct manager or another member of the County Management team. We recognize, however, that there may be circumstances when you are not comfortable reporting the issue in this manner. It is for such circumstances that we have partnered with NAVEX Global. We would rather you report anonymously than keep the information to yourself.

As a citizen or contractor if I see a violation, shouldn't I just report it to the County Manager or my County Commissioner and let them deal with it?

As a citizen or contractor, we want to provide you with a mechanism to report any violation(s) in a confidential and user-friendly format. It is for such circumstances that we have partnered with NAVEX Global. We would rather you report anonymously than keep the information to yourself.

Why should I report what I know? What's in it for me?

We all have the right to work and live in a positive environment and with that right comes the responsibility of acting in an ethical and safe manner and letting the appropriate people know if someone is not acting appropriately. By working together, we can maintain a healthy and productive environment. In addition, our citizens and contractors have a right to expect ethical and safe conduct from County staff and by reporting inappropriate behaviors we can ensure that we are creating a positive environment for our community as a whole.

Does management really want me to report?

We certainly do. In fact, we *need* you to report. As an employee, you know what is going on within the organization - both good and bad. You may have initial knowledge of an activity that may be cause for concern. Your reporting can minimize the potential negative impact on the County as well as yourself and your co-workers. Also, offering positive input may help identify issues that can improve the culture and performance of our organization.

As a citizen or contractor reporting we want to know of any behavior that may negatively impact the services the county provides.

Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server. NAVEX Global makes these reports available only to specific individuals within the County who are charged with evaluating the report, based on the type of violation and location of the incident. Each of these report recipients has had training in keeping these reports in the utmost confidence.

Isn't this system just an example of someone watching over me?

No. EthicsPoint is a positive aspect of our overall philosophy that allows us to ensure a safe, secure and ethical place to work and live. You are encouraged to seek guidance on ethical dilemmas, provide positive suggestions, or communicate a concern. Effective communication is critical in today's workplace and community, and this is a great tool to enhance that communication.

We have carefully chosen the best reporting tool to meet our compliance obligations while maintaining a confidential and secure reporting environment.

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. Won't this log identify me as the report originator?

NAVEX Global does not generate or maintain any internal connection logs with IP addresses, so no information linking your PC to EthicsPoint is available.

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

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.

I am concerned that the information I provide EthicsPoint will ultimately reveal my identity. How can you assure me that will not happen?

The EthicsPoint system protects 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 reveal your identity by accident. For example, "From my cube next to Jan Smith..." or "In my 33 years..." or "My home located on ABC Street..."

Is the telephone toll-free hot line confidential and anonymous too?

Yes. You will be asked to provide the same information that you would provide in an Internet-based report and an interviewer will type your responses into the EthicsPoint Web site. These reports have the same security and confidentiality measures applied to them during delivery.

What if I want to be identified with my report?

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

Tips & Best Practices

I am aware of some individuals acting unethically, but it doesn't affect me. Why should I bother reporting it?

Our organization promotes ethical behavior. All unethical or unsafe conduct, at any level, ultimately hurts the County and both our employees and our citizens, including you. You only have to consider what happened has happened in past government scandals to see the disastrous effects that a lapse in ethics can have on an otherwise healthy organization. If you know of any incidents of misconduct or ethical violations, consider it your duty to yourself, your coworkers, and your community to report it.

I am not sure if what I have observed or heard is a violation of County policy, or involves unethical conduct, but it just does not look right to me. What should I do?

File a report. NAVEX Global can help you prepare and file your report so it can be properly understood. We'd rather you report a situation that turns out to be harmless than let possible unethical behavior go unchecked.

What if my boss or other managers are involved in a violation? Won't they get the report and start a cover-up?

The EthicsPoint system and report distribution ensure 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? Or what if the County has further questions for me concerning my report?

When you file a report at the EthicsPoint Web site or through the EthicsPoint Call Center, you receive a unique, randomized number called a "Report Key" and are asked to choose a password. You can return to the EthicsPoint system again either by Internet or telephone and access the original report to add more detail or answer questions posed by a County representative. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer County questions. You and the County have now 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.

What if I lose my Report Key or forget the Password I created?

To ensure that security and confidentiality is maintained, if you lose your report key or password, you will need to file a new report. Mention in the new report that it is related to a report or question you previously submitted.

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 Internet computers. If you don't have access to or are uncomfortable using a computer, you can call the EthicsPoint toll-free hotline, which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.