

# Rice University EthicsLine

## Frequently Asked Questions

You may report any concern anonymously using the Rice University EthicsLine, which is managed by the third-party vendor EthicsPoint. Reports may be submitted anonymously and confidentially in English, Spanish, and many other languages. Reports will be directed to the appropriate University official for investigation. Reports will not be directed to any individual who is named within the report.

The following are Frequently Asked Questions here to aid you in understanding our anonymous reporting vehicle EthicsLine.

1. What is the EthicsLine?
  - The EthicsLine is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool created by NAVEX to provide an option for students, employees, the community, and others affiliated with Rice University to submit a report concerning alleged fraud, waste, abuse, or other misconduct.
2. Why is the EthicsLine needed?
  - University management believes that employees, students and other persons affiliated with the University have a personal stake in assisting the University in maintaining integrity and ethical behavior. Although direct discussion with University personnel is the preferred mode, in some circumstances, persons may feel the need for a more confidential and sometimes an anonymous means to express good faith concerns. The EthicsLine provides another avenue to report concerns.

### **Filing a Report**

3. How can reports be filed on the EthicsLine?
  - Reports can be filed through the internet ([rice.edu/ethics](http://rice.edu/ethics)) or by telephone (1-866-294-4633). Both will ensure anonymity, if desired, as well as provide a comfortable and convenient means of reporting. It is available via internet or phone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
4. Can a person file a report without access to the internet?
  - Yes, if a person does not have access to the internet or prefers to use a telephone, the individual can call the EthicsLine toll-free at 1-866-294-4633, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
5. Who receives the report?
  - Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server to prevent any possible breach in security and confidentiality. The reports are only made available to those who have been granted access to the EthicsPoint system. The reports are routed to Rice's Internal Audit Department and possible other University personnel designated to address the concern. In all cases, the reports are shared with implicated parties, their peers or subordinates.

6. How will I know my report has been received and is being addressed.?
  - The individual who has filed a report through the website or phone number receives a unique user name and chooses a password. This allows you to log bank into the system to check the status of the concern, answer questions posed, provide additional information and ask questions
7. What happens after a report is filed?
  - The University administrators review the report and begin the process of determining the facts and any appropriate action.
8. What if the reporter would like to add additional information after filing the report?
  - The reporter can use their user name and password to return to the EthicsLine to add information. Also, it is a good idea for the reporter to check into the site to see if there are any follow-up questions from a designated University representative.
9. Can I attach documentation to my report (emails, pictures)?
  - Yes, the report form contains a section to upload files to support your report, if desired.
10. Can I report multiple issues in one report?
  - Yes, please provide as much detail as possible and each concern will be distributed to the most appropriate University administrator to address your concern.
11. Can I disclose limited information and provide additional details anonymously in a verbal manner?
  - Yes, please call the EthicsLine toll-free at 1-866-294-4633 to add more detail.
12. Is there a way for the University Administrator to obtain clarifying/necessary questions to fully understand the concern?
  - Yes, in the EthicsPoint system, you can request to schedule a real-time chat (anonymously if desired) with a University representative.

### **Confidentiality**

13. What if the reporter's supervisor or manager is involved in the problem or concern?
  - The EthicsLine distribution process is designed not to share a report with implicated parties or their subordinates. If a University employee is implicated in a report, that report is available to other designated University representative but not the employee that is implicated.
14. Can a report be filed from an individual's home and still remain anonymous?
  - Yes. A person can file a report from any computer and can access the internet to include home computers. An internet portal does not identify a visitor by screen name and the EthicsPoint system deletes internet addresses so that anonymity is maintained. In addition, EthicsPoint is contractually committed not to pursue a reporter's identity.
15. University telephone logs may show the telephone numbers accessed through University telephones. Is the toll-free EthicsPoint telephone line confidential and anonymous?

- Yes. University telephone logs often show telephone numbers accessed through University telephones. A person who wishes to maintain maximum anonymity should not make the telephone call from a University telephone. The toll-free EthicsLine is operated by EthicsPoint and not the University. EthicsPoint does not share incoming phone logs for reports received through the telephone.

16. I am concerned that the information I provide will ultimately reveal my identity. How can I be assured that that will not happen?

- 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 reveal your identity by accident; for example, “From my office next to Jane Thomas ...” or “In the 30 years I have worked here ...”. In any case, the University will honor and protect the reporter’s request for confidentiality to the extent possible.

### **Report Closure/Status**

17. How will I know if a reported concern has been addressed?

- The report key and password will allow you to go back into the EthicsLine site and check the status of your report. Once a report has been concluded, you will receive notice as such.

18. What if I believe my concern has not been addressed? How can I communicate such?

- If you have received communication that your case is closed, you may open a new case and provide additional information for the university administrator to consider.