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About EthicsPoint

What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is an independent, third-party ethics reporting system within the Diocese of St. Augustine. EthicsPoint provides a confidential platform that allows any employee, parishioner, clergy, religious, volunteer, vendor, and other parties to anonymously submit concerns about suspected financial misconduct, unethical behavior, or misuse of resources.

What if I want to be identified with my report?

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

Why do we need a system like EthicsPoint?

By creating open channels of communication, it helps to alert us to financial misconduct and behavior so we can react appropriately, to promote a positive work environment, and 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 individuals to report matters such as:

- Accounting and Auditing
- Conflict of Interest
- Disclosure of Confidential Information
- Sexual Harassment or other forms of harassment
- Falsification of Contracts, Reports or Records
- Safety
- Fraud and Theft
- Misuse of the Organization's Resources
- Violation of Policy

- Other matters

When you make a report, the site will describe all the different types of situations that are reportable.

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 some behavior that you believe violates our policies, we expect you to report it. Ideally, you should bring any concerns forward to your direct manager or other member of our 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. 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 in a positive environment and with that right comes the responsibility of acting in an ethical manner and letting the appropriate people know if someone is not acting appropriately. By working together, we can maintain a healthy and productive environment.

Does management really want me to report?

We certainly do. In fact, we *need* you to report. You know what is going on at your work location - 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 organization (parish, school, diocesan entity) and our people. Also, offering positive input may help identify issues that can improve the organization's culture and performance.

Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server. NAVEX makes these reports available only to specific individuals within diocesan leadership 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 workplace. 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 this is a great tool to enhance that communication.

Reporting Security & Confidentiality

It is my understanding that any report I send from a diocesan entity 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 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 your work environment through the EthicsPoint secure website. Many people choose this option, as NAVEX'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..."

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 diocese promotes ethical behavior. All unethical conduct, at any level, ultimately hurts the church and all employees, including you. You only have to consider what happened in recent corporate 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 and your coworkers to report it.

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

File a report. NAVEX 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 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 ensures 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 diocese 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 representative. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer questions. You and the diocese 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.

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.

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