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## About EthicsPoint and Merit's Ethics Hotline

### What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is the comprehensive and confidential reporting tool that Merit has selected to enable management and employees to work together to address fraud, abuse, and other misconduct in the workplace while cultivating a positive work environment.

### Why do we need a system like EthicsPoint?

- Merit's employees are our most important asset. By creating open channels of communication, we promote a positive work environment and maximize productivity.
- An effective reporting system augments Merit's 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 to report any violation of Merit's Code of Conduct, policies, or other concern you may have.

## **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 Merit's Code of Conduct or 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. This is particularly important for minor concerns that may be addressed quickly and effectively by your local management, such as scheduling concerns, minor disagreements with coworkers, or the like. However, we recognize, that there may be circumstances when you are not comfortable reporting the issue in this manner. It is for such circumstances that we have made the EthicsPoint tool available to employees. 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?**

Employees and managers have an obligation to timely report violations of Merit's Code of Conduct or policies. Furthermore, 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 are in the best position to know information that management may not know. You may have initial knowledge of an activity that may be cause for concern. Your reporting can minimize the potential negative impact on the company and Merit employees. Also, offering positive input may help identify issues that can improve corporate culture and performance.

## **Where do these reports go? Who can access them?**

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server. Those reports are available only to specific individuals within Merit 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 and sharing the reports only within Merit on a need-to-know basis.

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

No. EthicsPoint is a positive aspect of Merit's 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 serious concerns. Effective communication is critical in today's workplace 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 positive 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 computer or mobile device connects with. Won't this log identify me as the report originator?**

The EthicsPoint system does not generate or maintain any internal connection logs with IP addresses, so no information linking your computer or mobile device to EthicsPoint is available.

If you feel uncomfortable making a report on your work computer, you have the option of using a computer or mobile device outside our work environment (such as one located at an Internet café or at a friend's house) through the EthicsPoint secure website.

**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...".

**Please keep in mind that it can be difficult to investigate anonymous reports – the more information you feel comfortable providing, the better the chance that Merit can investigate and resolve the concern.**

**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. Merit encourages you to do so whenever you feel comfortable, because it will ensure we are in the best position to investigate your concern. Merit has a strict no-retaliation policy and you will not be retaliated against for making good-faith reports to Merit.

**What about my privacy rights?**

Your privacy will be maintained in accordance with applicable data protection laws. For information how Merit processes your personal data please refer to Merit's [Data Protection Notice](#). NAVEX also has a [Privacy Statement](#).

## Tips & Best Practices

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

First, you have an obligation to report that information to Merit. But more importantly, all unethical conduct, at any level, ultimately hurts Merit and its employees, including you. 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 company policy, or involves unethical conduct, but it just does not look right to me. What should I do?**

File a report. The EthicsPoint system will 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 company 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 company representative. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer company questions. You and Merit now have entered into an "anonymous dialogue," where situations are not only identified, but can also be resolved through your cooperation.

**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 or your mobile device. 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.