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About EthicsPoint

What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential third-party reporting tool created by NAVEX Global and designed to assist us in working together to report, address, correct, and prevent fraud, abuse, and other misconduct in the SMU campus community, all while cultivating a positive campus environment.

Why do we need a system like EthicsPoint?

SMU is committed to promoting a culture of ethical conduct and adherence to law and policy, and provides several channels for students, faculty, staff, vendors, and other members of the University community to report or discuss concerns. While we recommend that you report your concerns directly to your department or college, we understand that in certain situations you may wish to remain anonymous. The EthicsPoint tool enables you to communicate issues and concerns associated with unethical or illegal activities while maintaining your anonymity and confidentiality.

Reporting – General

How do I file a report?

EthicsPoint is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You have the ability to file a confidential, anonymous report by telephone or via the internet.

If you call the hotline number (844-995-4895), a specially trained EthicsPoint phone representative will walk you through the reporting process by identifying the broader compliance categories and specific issues within each category that you may report. Similarly, the online reporting system interface provides a series of questions to assist you in accurately identifying the category and issue you want to report.

Whether you file your report via phone or online, you will be asked to describe the suspected compliance problem with as much detail as possible, including when and where the incident occurred and who was involved.

Once you complete your report, you will receive a unique report key and create your own password. This information enables you to return to the EthicsPoint system – either by internet or by phone – to access your report.

What happens after I file my report?

SMU assures that the reports submitted via EthicsPoint will be handled promptly and discretely. No retaliatory action will be taken against anyone for reporting or inquiring in good faith about potential breaches of SMU policies or seeking guidance on how to handle suspected breaches. Reports submitted through the EthicsPoint secure server will be routed to a small triage group that evaluates the information and engages a University investigation team based on the type of violation, the location of the incident, and the individuals involved. Assigned individuals who review and investigate these reports are committed to conducting confidential, thorough, and responsive investigations.

How do I follow up with more information or hear about the outcome of a report?

By using your report key and password, you can access your report in EthicsPoint throughout the investigation process – from initial review through resolution and closure. It is important that you check the system regularly for updates. The University investigation team may reach out to you through EthicsPoint to ask questions or request further information to aid their investigation. Unless you choose to identify yourself, all interactions with EthicsPoint are anonymous. Please note that the results of our investigations are confidential in order to protect reporters and other individuals providing information to the investigation. However, if upon closure of a report you continue to observe inappropriate behavior, we encourage you to submit an additional report.

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 you to report any violation of our stated Code of Ethics, or other concerns 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 our Code of Ethics, we expect you to report it. Ideally, you should bring any concerns forward to your direct manager or other members 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 EthicsPoint. We would rather you report anonymously than keep the information to yourself.

Why should I report what I know?

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. The University relies on the support and participation of the campus community at all levels to maintain a healthy and productive learning, living, and working environment. If you have knowledge of activity that may be cause for concern, it is important that you report it. Early reporting of unethical behavior may minimize its potential negative

impact to the University. In addition, offering positive input may help identify issues that can improve culture and performance.

Does management really want me to report?

We certainly do. In fact, we *need* you to report. You know what is going on in our University - 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 University and our people. In addition, offering positive input may help identify issues that can improve the culture and performance.

Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server to prevent breaches in security. EthicsPoint makes these reports available only to specific individuals within the university 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.

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

Are there situations that should not be reported through EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is not a 911 or emergency service. Do not use EthicsPoint to report events presenting an immediate threat to life or property or other emergency. Reports submitted through EthicsPoint may not receive an immediate response. If you require emergency assistance, please call 911 or contact the SMU Police Department at 214-768-3333.

Reporting Security & Confidentiality

Am I required to identify myself?

No. You do not have to reveal your identity to use EthicsPoint. However, our ability to investigate and address concerns might be limited for certain types of reports if you do not want your identity known.

It is my understanding that any report I send from a university computer generates a server log that shows every website that my PC connects with. Will this log identify me as the report originator?

EthicsPoint 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 EthicsPoint data shows that fewer than 12% of reports are generated during business hours.

Can I file a report from home and 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 maintained. In addition, SMU never has access to the EthicsPoint server or logs and is not systematically tracking user connections to EthicsPoint. If you remain concerned, you can always use a non-SMU device in order to file a report.

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. EthicsPoint and the University are committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of individuals who submit a report.

What protection do I have when I report?

SMU strictly prohibits retaliation against any member of its community for reporting or inquiring in good faith about suspected wrongful or unlawful activity or participating in an investigation or proceeding relating to such activity. The University considers such actions to be protected activities in which all members of its community may freely engage without worry of negative consequences as a direct result. EthicsPoint Reports will be handled as promptly and discretely, as possible, with facts made available only to those who need to know to investigate and resolve the matter. EthicsPoint and the University are committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of individuals who submit a report.

Are there confidentiality protections' regarding the person a report is about?

The investigator maintains confidentiality throughout the investigative process to the extent that they can do so while completing the review. All reports are shared with the minimum number of individuals necessary to complete the investigation, and all individuals are apprised of the confidential nature of these reports. All reports are treated as allegations only. No actions will be taken before conclusion of an investigation unless temporary measures are necessary to address immediate institutional concerns as to personal safety or the protection of property.

Tips & Best Practices

I am aware of some individuals acting unethically, but it does not affect me. Why should I bother reporting it?

The University is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct as an integral part of its mission, the promotion of learning. If you know of any incidents of misconduct or ethical violations, it is your duty as a member of the SMU community to report it. The University relies on each community member's ethical behavior, honesty, integrity, and good judgment.

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

Speak with your supervisor or file a report. EthicsPoint 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 because you are not sure.

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

Conflict screening is built into the report review and investigation process. Initially EthicsPoint ensures that any individual identified in a report will not receive system notification or have access to the report. The University performs additional conflicts screening to ensure that it will not include any individual who has a conflict or is cited in the report.

What if I remember something important about the incident after I file the report, or if the University 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, either by Internet or by telephone and access the original report to add more detail or answer questions posed by a EthicsPoint representative. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer questions. You and EthicsPoint 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 do not 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 do not 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 at 844-995-4895.