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About EthicsPoint

What is EthicsPoint?

EthicsPoint is a comprehensive and confidential reporting tool created by NAVEX that enables 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?

An effective reporting system augments our other efforts to foster a culture of integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making. Reporting allows Stony Brook to investigate and address concerns raised by employees which can negatively impact the campus community. 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 is designed for members of the campus community to report any fraud, abuse, noncompliance with SBU policies, other misconduct or other ethical concerns they 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?

Ideally, you should bring any concerns forward to your direct manager, or another member of SBU's 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 prefer that you report anonymously rather than keep the information to yourself.

Why should I report what I know? What is 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. Also, inappropriate conduct that is not addressed can negatively impact SBU's operations, financial performance, reputation, and ability to meet its mission.

Does SBU really want me to report?

Yes. In fact, SBU *needs* you to report. Ethical conduct, compliance and accountability are important pillars of our campus community. Conduct that does not meet these standards hurts our community, including our faculty, staff, and students. If you are aware of misconduct or ethical violations, SBU wants to know about those concerns and determine how best to address them. Also, offering positive input may help identify issues that can help improve SBU.

Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server to prevent any breach in security. EthicsPoint makes these reports available only to specific individuals within the University who are charged with evaluating and investigating the report. Each of these report recipients has had training in keeping these reports in the utmost confidence.

What if I remember something important about the incident after I file the report? Or what if SBU 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 an SBU representative. We strongly suggest that you return to the site in the time specified to answer questions.

Reporting Security & Confidentiality

How does EthicsPoint maintain anonymity?

The EthicsPoint system is designed to protect your anonymity. EthicsPoint does not generate or maintain any internal connection logs with IP addresses, so no information linking your PC to EthicsPoint is available. In fact, EthicsPoint is contractually committed not to pursue a reporter's identity. If you feel uncomfortable making a report on your work PC, you have the option of using a PC outside our work environment through the EthicsPoint secure website. Many people choose this option, as EthicsPoint's data shows that fewer than 12% of reports are generated during business hours. It is important to use a secure Internet connection to ensure complete anonymity.

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 totally maintained.

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 for identifying yourself if you wish. If you choose to identify yourself, your identity will be treated as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

I am concerned that the information I provide EthicsPoint will reveal my identity. What can I do to ensure 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..."

Tips & Best Practices

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

SBU promotes ethical behavior. All unethical or inappropriate conduct, at any level, ultimately hurts SBU and its students, faculty, and staff. You need only consider what happened in recent corporate scandals to see the disastrous effects that a lapse in ethics and accountability 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 SBU policy, or involves unethical conduct, but it just does not look right to me. What should I do?

File a report. 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 ensure that implicated parties are not notified or granted access to reports in which they have been named.

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.