



AP 7700 Whistleblower Protection

References:

29 U.S. Code Section 218C (Affordable Care Act)
ORS 659A.199 to 659.236
OAR Chapter 839, Division 10

Individuals are encouraged to report suspected incidents of unlawful activities by Treasure Valley Community College employees in the performance of their duties. Reports will be investigated promptly and appropriate remedies applied. Employees who, in good faith, reported such activities or assist the Treasure Valley Community College in the investigation will be protected from retaliation.

This procedure sets out the processes for responding to and investigating reports of unlawful activities, as defined in BP 7700 Whistleblower Protection, and addressing complaints of retaliation for making such reports.

Filing a Report of Suspected Unlawful Activities

Any person may report allegations of suspected unlawful activities. Knowledge or suspicion of such unlawful activities may originate from academic personnel, staff, or administrators carrying out their assigned duties, internal or external auditors, law enforcement, regulatory agencies, customers, vendors, students, or other third parties.

Anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent possible. However, employees are strongly encouraged not to report anonymously because doing so impedes Treasure Valley Community College's] ability to thoroughly investigate the claim and take appropriate remedial measures. As set forth fully below, retaliation against individuals who report suspected unlawful activities will not be tolerated.

Normally, a report by a Treasure Valley Community College employee of allegations of suspected unlawful activity should be made to the reporting employee's immediate supervisor or other appropriate administrator or supervisor within the operating unit. However, if the report involves or implicates the direct supervisor or others in the operating unit, the report may be made to any another Treasure Valley Community College official whom the reporting employee believes to have either responsibility over the affected area or the authority to review the alleged unlawful activity on behalf of the Treasure Valley Community College. When the alleged unlawful activity involves the President, the report should be made to the president of the Board of Education. When the alleged unlawful activity involves the Board of Education or one of its members, the report should be made to the President who will confer with the president of the Board of Education or legal counsel on how to proceed.



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Allegations of suspected unlawful activities should be made in writing so as to assure a clear understanding of the issues raised but may be made orally. Such reports should be factual and contain as much specific information as possible. The receiving supervisor or administrator should elicit as much information as possible. If the report is made orally, the receiving supervisor or administrator shall reduce it to writing and make every attempt to get the reporter to confirm by his/her signature that it is accurate and complete.

Once the receiving supervisor or administrator has received or prepared a written report of the alleged unlawful activity, he/she must immediately forward it to the President. However, if this process would require submitting the report to an employee implicated in the report, the receiving supervisor or administrator should follow the reporting options outlined above. The high-level administrator or Board of Education member who receives the written report pursuant to this paragraph is responsible for ensuring that a prompt and complete investigation is made by an individual with the competence and objectivity to conduct the investigation, and that the assistance of counsel or an outside investigator is secured if deemed necessary.

In the course of investigating allegations of unlawful conduct, all individuals who are contacted or interviewed shall be advised of the TVCC's no-retaliation policy. Each individual shall be: a) warned that retaliation against the reporter(s) or others participating in the investigation will subject the employee to discipline up to and including termination; and b) advised that if he/she experiences retaliation for cooperating in the investigation, then it must be reported immediately.

In the event that an investigation into alleged unlawful activity determines that the allegations are accurate, prompt and appropriate corrective action shall be taken.

Protection from Retaliation

When a person makes a good-faith report of suspected unlawful activities to an appropriate authority, the report is known as a protected disclosure. Treasure Valley Community College employees and applicants for employment who make a protected disclosure are protected from retaliation. A Treasure Valley Community College employee or applicant whose family member makes a protected disclosure is also protected from retaliation.

Any employee who believes he/she has been (1) subjected to or affected by retaliatory conduct for reporting suspected unlawful activity, or (2) for refusing to engage in activity that would result in a violation of law, should report such conduct to the appropriate supervisory personnel (if such supervisory personnel is not the source of or otherwise involved in the retaliatory conduct). Any supervisory employee who receives such a report, or who otherwise is aware of retaliatory conduct, is required to advise the President. If the allegation is of retaliation, or the



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underlying allegations of unlawful conduct involve the President, the supervisor shall report to the highest level administrator or Board of Education member who is not implicated in the report of unlawful activity and retaliation.

All allegations of retaliation shall be investigated promptly and with discretion, and all information obtained will be handled on a "need to know" basis. At the conclusion of an investigation, as appropriate, remedial or disciplinary action will be taken where the allegations are verified or otherwise substantiated.

Oregon law prohibits a public employer from "prohibiting, discouraging, restraining, dissuading, coercing or otherwise interfering with any employee responding to an official legislative request to discuss the activities of the state or any branch, agency or political subdivision thereof, or from discussing the activities of any person authorized to act on behalf of those entities." To receive protection under this provision of law, a public employee must be responding to an official legislative request, whether orally or in writing. The request must be made by or at the direction of a legislator and must invite discussion with a legislator or legislative committee staff acting under the direction of the legislator.

Whistleblower Contact Information

Employees who have information regarding possible violations of state or federal statutes, rules, or regulations, or violations of fiduciary responsibility by a corporation or limited liability company to its shareholders, investors, or employees should contact the Executive Director of Legal and Operations, 650 College Boulevard, Ontario, OR 97914, located in Performing Arts Center, Room 104 or call 541-881-5838.

Other Remedies and Appropriate Agencies

In addition to the internal complaint process set forth above, any employee who has information concerning allegedly unlawful conduct may contact the appropriate government agency.

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