

## *New River Community Action, Inc. Personnel Policies*

### Whistleblower Protection

NRCA requires all employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their responsibilities. Employees are encouraged and enabled to raise serious concerns internally, without fear of retaliation, so that NRCA can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is against the values of NRCA to retaliate against any employee who in good faith reports a violation.

1. A whistleblower is one who reports an activity that he/she considers to be illegal or dishonest. It is the responsibility of all NRCA representatives to report such activities.
2. Examples of illegal or dishonest activities include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Violations of federal, state or local laws or regulations.
  - b. Violations of NRCA's code of ethics.
  - c. Billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered.
  - d. Other fraudulent financial reporting.
3. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures.
4. If an employee has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the employee is to contact his/her immediate supervisor, Chief Finance Officer, ~~or~~ the Chief Executive Officer, or the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.
  - a. The employee must exercise sound judgment to act in good faith and avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
  - b. NRCA will make every reasonable effort to conduct all proceedings in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of all parties. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.
  - c. NRCA will not retaliate against a whistleblower. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the Human Resources Manager immediately. The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.
5. Supervisors and managers are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Employees with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to their supervisor, the Chief Finance Officer, ~~or~~ the Chief Executive Officer, or the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.
6. Once a complaint has been accepted for review, an investigation will begin. The investigation may include, but is not limited to, review of written statements from both parties, witness interviews, obtaining witness declarations, review of documentation, and on-site investigation. Any person conducting an investigation will maintain a written record of all witness interviews, evidence gathered, the outcome of the investigation, and any other appropriate documents. Records of such an investigation will not be maintained in personnel files unless they are part of a formal corrective action.
7. Results of the investigation will be shared with the appropriate people. When there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint, written notification of investigative findings will be sent to the complainant and the respondent.
8. If it is concluded that a violation has occurred, a determination will be made as to the appropriate sanctions or corrective action.

## **XI. STATUS CHANGES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

### **A. Voluntary Termination:**

All employees making a voluntary termination shall submit a written notice of such action in advance of the termination date. It is expected that Administrative employees, Head Start Teaching Staff (Teachers and Assistant Teachers), Head Start Family/Health