

# FOOTHILLS GATEWAY, INC.

## Whistleblower Protection

### **POLICY:**

It is the policy of Foothills Gateway, Inc. that any person (whistleblower) is free to lawfully disclose whatever fact based information supports a reasonable belief of misconduct or a violation of rule or law, to participate in an investigation or hearing, or to refuse to execute an illegal directive without retaliation or discrimination by the Agency or its personnel.

This policy shall only apply if the whistleblower first brought the alleged misconduct or violation to the attention of the Human Resources Manager or a person with supervisory authority, unless the employee reasonably believed reporting to the HR Manager or supervisor would not result in a prompt remedy of the violation.

### **PROCEDURE:**

- The Human Resources Manager and/or designee will review, evaluate and retain any complaints from declared or anonymous stakeholders or employees (whistleblowers) alleging misconduct, violations, or other questionable operational or financial practices.
- Agency personnel are barred from preventing or interfering with whistleblowers that make good faith disclosures of misconduct or violations.
- The Agency will exercise reasonable efforts to:
  - investigate any complaints of retaliation or interference made by whistleblowers;
  - take immediate steps to stop any alleged retaliation; and
  - discipline any person associated with the Agency found to have retaliated against or interfered with a whistleblower.
- Anyone may file a confidential report with the Human Resources Manager and/or designee alleging retaliation or interference.
  - Reports must be filed no later than 90 days from the date the whistleblower became aware, or should have become aware of the alleged adverse action.
  - The complaint may be filed directly with the President of the Board of Directors if the Human Resources Manager and/or designee have a conflict of interest concerning the complaint.
  - The report must be submitted in writing on the Compliance Violation Reporting Form and should include specific information and pertinent documentation supporting the allegation of interference or retaliation.
- The Human Resources Manager and/or designee will respond to the whistleblower within 20 days of receipt of the whistleblower's allegation. The Human Resources Manager and/or designee will:
  - review the allegation;
  - determine the need for and extent of an investigation;

- notify the whistleblower of the mechanism chosen for resolving the complaint, including provision of copies of relevant protection regulations of U.S. Government funding agencies as appropriate, if any;
- advise the whistleblower of the time allowed for filing additional supporting documentation;
- determine the interim actions necessary to protect the whistleblower against an existing adverse action or credible threat of retaliation; and
- conduct any investigation deemed appropriate in a timely, objective and thorough manner.
- If the whistleblower declines the Human Resources Manager's and/or designee's proposed process, s/he may pursue any other legal rights available for resolution of the complaint, under agency policies and procedures or Federal and State law.
- If the Human Resources Manager and/or designee determines that retaliation or interference has occurred, s/he shall also determine what remedies are appropriate to:
  - satisfy the Agency's regulatory obligation to protect the whistleblower;
  - take measures to protect or restore the whistleblower's position and reputation; and
  - provide protection against further retaliation.
- If the Human Resources Manager and/or designee determine that an adverse action would have been taken relative to the whistleblower, even in the absence of the whistleblower's allegations or participation in the investigation, then no corrective action will be taken to adjust the adverse action.

2/05; 2/06; 4/07; 4/08; 4/09; 5/10; 6/11; 1/13; 2/14; 1/15