

Title of Manual: Mid-South Substance Abuse Commission Policy and Procedures			Page 1 of 3	
			History	
Policy Number: <b>A015</b>	Subject/Title: Whistle-Blowing Policy		Replaces:	NEW
			Last Reviewed:	
Issued By: Executive Director	Approved By: Board of Directors Date: 08/23/2010	Scope: Administration	Effective:	08/23/2010

## 1. **POLICY**

Mid-South is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty, and accountability. In consideration of that commitment, Mid-South expects employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of Mid-South's operations to come forward and voice those concerns. This Whistle-Blowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within Mid-South without fear of retaliation.

## 2. **PURPOSE**

Employees are often the first to realize that there may be something seriously wrong within an organization. However, they may refrain from expressing their concerns because they feel speaking up would be disloyal to their colleague. They may also fear harassment or victimization. This policy aims to provide avenues for employees to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken, reassure employees that they will be protected from retaliation or victimization for providing information in good faith, and inform employees how to take the matter further, if they are dissatisfied with the response. This Whistle-Blowing Policy is intended to cover concerns of any employee or of any individual closely involved in the operating of Mid-South. These concerns may be about something that is unlawful, violates Mid-South's stated policies, falls below established standards of practice, or represents improper conduct.

## 3. **PROCEDURES**

3.1. Mid-South recognizes that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, possibly because of the fear of retaliation from those responsible for the misconduct. Mid-South will not tolerate harassment or victimization and will take action to protect those who raise a concern in good faith.

Every effort will be made to protect an individual's identity if they report a concern and do not want their name disclosed. The investigation process, however, may reveal the source of the information, and/or a statement by the individual may be required as part of the evidence. Individuals are encouraged to put their names to allegations. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they may be considered at the discretion of Mid-South. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be considered include the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegations from attributable sources.

If an allegation is made in good faith, but is not corroborated by the investigation, no action will be taken against the originator of the allegation. If individuals make malicious allegations disciplinary action may be considered against that individual.

### 3.2. Raising a Concern

For less serious issues, employees should normally raise concerns with the Executive Director. In

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general, however, the Whistle-Blowing; Policy should be applied for potentially more serious and sensitive issues. The first step is to approach the Executive Director. If the subject of the allegation happens to be the Executive Director, then the Executive Committee of the Board of Mid-South should be contacted. In all cases, an initial investigation will determine whether or not a full investigation is required

Concerns should be reported in writing using the Fraud, Theft and Corruption Disclosure Form (attached). This form can be obtained, confidentially, by accessing the electronic version of the Policy. The background and history of the issue, together with pertinent dates, should be included on the form. Include as much detail as possible, including the reason why the individual suspects fraud, theft, or corruption. The earlier the concern is reported, the easier it is to investigate and take action. Although employees are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for concern.

### 3.3. How the Complaint Will Be Handled

The action taken by Mid-South will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may be investigated internally and/or reported to the police. The amount of contact between the investigator and the originator of the complaint will depend on the nature of the issues raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the clarity of the information provided. Mid-South will take steps to minimize any difficulties that the originator of the complaint may experience as a result of their concern.

#### 3.3.1. Allegations will be addressed as follows depending on the nature of the allegation:

- An internal investigation by the Executive Director, the Executive Committee, or an external auditor.
- Referral of criminal matters to the police.

#### 3.3.2. The complainant will receive, within ten (10) working days of a concern being received, written communication:

- Acknowledging that the concern has been received
- Indicating how the matter will be handled
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response
- Telling them the status of the initial investigation
- Telling them if any further investigation will take place, and if not, why not

#### 3.3.3. The investigation will be planned with consideration to the following:

- Resources required to investigate the allegation
- Legal status of the allegation (e.g. theft or breach of procedure)
- Internal disciplinary procedures
- Level of evidence required
- Protection of data and documents required
- Minimization of the effect on employees and others
- Recovery of lost funds and minimizing the potential for further loss
- Review of any improvements required to prevent reoccurrence.

#### 3.3.4. Mid-South understands that individuals who report the alleged fraud, theft, or corruption need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, where appropriate,

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and subject to legal constraints, they will receive information about the outcome of any investigation.

- 3.3.5. If the allegation of fraud, theft, or corruption directly impacts another organization, the highest ranking officer at that organization will be informed.