



Wiregrass 211
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Whistleblower Protection Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Whistleblower Protection Policy is to encourage and protect employees of Wiregrass 2-1-1 (the "Company") who report suspected misconduct, illegal activities, or violations of the Company's policies.

This policy aims to create a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity within the Company, and to ensure that employees feel safe and supported when reporting concerns.

The Company is committed to the highest standards of ethical and legal conduct and believes that encouraging and protecting whistleblowers is essential to maintaining these standards.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers of the Company, regardless of their location or position.

It covers all reports of suspected misconduct, illegal activities, or violations of the Company's policies, whether made internally or externally.

The policy also applies to any third parties who may be involved in the reporting or investigation process, such as legal counsel, auditors, or regulatory authorities.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURES

Employees are encouraged to report any suspected misconduct, illegal activities, or violations of the Company's policies, including but not limited to:

- Financial irregularities or fraud, such as false accounting, embezzlement, or misappropriation of funds
- Corruption or bribery, including kickbacks, favors, or gifts intended to influence business decisions



- Harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, age, religion, or any other protected characteristic
- Health and safety violations that pose a risk to employees, customers, or the public
- Environmental damage or non-compliance with environmental regulations
- Insider trading or other securities law violations
- Any other illegal or unethical conduct that may harm the Company, its employees, or its stakeholders

REPORTING PROCEDURE

Employees should report their concerns to the Executive Director, immediate supervisor or a Board Member of the Wiregrass 211 Board of Directors. Contact information is available to the staff.

Reports can be made in person, by phone, or in writing, and should include as much detail as possible about the suspected misconduct or violation.

Anonymous reports will also be accepted and investigated to the extent possible, but employees are encouraged to identify themselves to facilitate follow-up and investigation.

The Company will acknowledge receipt of all reports and keep the whistleblower informed of the progress and outcome of the investigation, to the extent possible.

INVESTIGATION

All reports will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Executive Director, immediate supervisor or a Board Member of the Wiregrass 211 Board of Directors as necessary.

The investigation will be conducted in a fair, objective, and unbiased manner, and will seek to gather all relevant facts and evidence.

The identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential to the extent possible, and will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis to those involved in the investigation.

The Company will take appropriate corrective action based on the findings of the investigation, which may include disciplinary action, termination of employment, or referral to law enforcement or regulatory authorities.

PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION

The Company prohibits any form of retaliation against employees who make a good faith report of suspected misconduct or participate in an investigation.

Retaliation may include, but is not limited to, termination, demotion, suspension, threats, harassment, or any other adverse employment action.



Any employee who engages in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to retaliation should report it immediately to the Executive Director, immediate supervisor or a Board Member of the Wiregrass 211 Board of Directors, and the Company will promptly investigate and address any such reports.

The Company will also provide appropriate support and protection to whistleblowers, such as legal representation or counseling services, as needed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Company will maintain the confidentiality of the whistleblower's identity to the extent possible, and will only disclose it on a need-to-know basis to those involved in the investigation or as required by law.

All employees involved in the reporting or investigation process are expected to maintain strict confidentiality and not discuss the matter with anyone outside of the designated channels.

Any breach of confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The Company will also protect the confidentiality of any documents or evidence related to the investigation, and will store them securely with restricted access.

FALSE REPORTS

Employees who knowingly make false reports or provide false information during an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

False reports include those made in bad faith, with malicious intent, or with reckless disregard for the truth.

Employees are expected to report concerns honestly and accurately, and to cooperate fully with any investigation.

However, employees who make reports in good faith will not be subject to disciplinary action, even if the concerns are not substantiated by the investigation.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

The Company will provide regular training to all employees on this Whistleblower Protection Policy and their rights and responsibilities under it.



The training will cover the purpose and scope of the policy, the reporting procedure, the investigation process, and the protections against retaliation.

The training will also emphasize the importance of ethical conduct and the Company's commitment to transparency and accountability.

The policy will be prominently displayed in the workplace, on the Company's website, and in other relevant communications, and will be included in the employee handbook and orientation materials.

The Company will also provide additional resources and support to employees who have questions or concerns about the policy or the reporting process.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Director and the Wiregrass 211 Board of Directors as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The review will consider any changes in the Company's operations, legal requirements, or best practices, and will seek feedback from employees, stakeholders, and external experts as appropriate.

Any amendments to the policy will be communicated to all employees and will be subject to approval by the Company's board of directors or other governing body.

The Company reserves the right to modify or terminate this policy at any time, but will provide reasonable notice and transition procedures to employees in the event of any significant changes.