

CITY OF LEESBURG
WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

The City of Leesburg encourages its employees to be vigilant in detecting and reporting improper government action or behavior. Therefore, in accordance with Florida Statute §112.3187, any employee who correctly reports suspected or actual violations of any covered law or regulation, or who discloses certain other covered actions committed by another employee or agent of the City of Leesburg, shall be protected from having any adverse or disciplinary action, including taken against them as a result of such disclosure. This protection extends to employees that participate in any official inquiry by the City into such violations or actions.

DEFINITIONS

Except where the context otherwise requires, as used in this policy:

- A. Covered Law or Regulation means those suspected or actual violations that create or presents a substantial and specific danger to the public's health safety or welfare.
- B. Covered Actions are those which rise to the level of gross mismanagement, malfeasance, misfeasance, gross neglect of duty or gross waste of public funds.

REPORTING GUIDELINES

- A. All information must be reported to the appropriate City of LEESBURG official for internal investigation and resolution. Reporting to any other person or outlet is not sufficient.

- B. All disclosures or complaints of this policy's violation shall be made in writing and signed by the initiating party. The disclosure or complaint must contain specific facts, dates, events and/or people which the initiating party relies upon. It must also be clearly expressed in such a way as to convey a full understanding of the situation(s) being reviewed. Failure to submit a thorough, cohesive and signed disclosure will result in the summary dismissal of the complaint by the receiving official.
- C. Any employee or person who, in good faith,
1. Correctly discloses information to the CITY as provided for herein;
 2. Who participates at the request of the CITY in an investigation, hearing or inquiry into allegations concerning this policy's violation; or
 3. Who refuse to participate in any adverse action(s) as found by the CITY to be prohibited by this policy;
- shall be protected from any adverse action occurring that is in violation of and defined by this policy.
- D. No protection hereunder is afforded to any employee or person who discloses information known to be false. A finding that such a disclosure has occurred shall be grounds for the employee(s) dismissal for cause.

REVIEW BOARD PROCESS

- A. Once a facially valid complaint is timely received by the appropriate official, the matter will be investigated and heard by a three (3) person Review Board

appointed by the City's ordinance establishing administrative procedures to effectuate this policy.

- B. The Review Board will have the authority to investigate the alleged disclosure and gather evidence and statements as they deem necessary for use at the hearing.
- C. The Review Board will control the conduct, procedure and duration of the hearing. Notice of the time and place of hearing will be sent to the Complainant and/or any other employee(s) or person(s) to appear before the Review Board. After receipt of the Notice, the employee(s) SHALL appear before the panel on the date and time specified. Failure to appear may be considered grounds for termination of that employee(s) for cause and/or dismissal of the Complaint to be heard.
- D. The Review Board shall make findings of fact and conclusions of law as to the action or inaction complained of and render a written decision. Such decision shall also determine what, if any, corrective action is to be taken for any violation(s) found to have occurred. All parties shall receive a copy of the decision and be notified of such by mail. The decision of the Review Board shall be final.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The City of Leesburg shall enact by ordinance certain administrative procedures concerning the specific handling of the complaint(s) filed hereunder. To the extent not specifically set forth herein, such administrative procedures, as amended from time to time, shall become part of this

policy for all intents and purposes and must be followed in the same manner as if set forth herein.

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