



## Protection Against Retaliation – Whistleblower Protection

### Policy Statement

**Protections Afforded:** University employees may not interfere with the right of another employee to report concerns or wrongdoing and may not retaliate against an employee who has reported concerns or wrongdoing, has cooperated with an authorized investigation, has participated in a grievance or appeal procedure, or otherwise objected to actions that are reasonably believed to be unlawful, unethical, or a violation of USG or University policy. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include the termination of employment.

**Conduct Prohibited:** Retaliation is any action or behavior that is designed to punish an employee for reporting concerns or wrongdoing, cooperating with an investigation, participating in a grievance or appeal procedure, or otherwise objecting to conduct that is unlawful, unethical or violates USG or University policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, dismissal from employment, demotion, suspension, or other adverse employment action taken by a supervisor against an employee, which includes, but is not limited to, loss of salary or benefits, transfer or reassignment, denial of leave, loss of benefits, denial of promotion that otherwise would have been received, and non-renewal.

### UGA Procedures

All reports of retaliation shall be investigated in a thorough and timely manner. At the conclusion of an investigation, the administrator responsible for the investigation shall provide a written summary of the investigation and the findings and actions to be taken, if any, to the appropriate parties. Any employee who is found to have retaliated against another employee shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the University of Georgia.

Allegations of actions that violate this policy should be reported through the administrative process and procedures as follows:

Subject	Office	Phone	Email
Retaliation related to policies administered by the Equal Opportunity Office, including the Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Sexual Misconduct Policy	Equal Opportunity Office	(706) 542-7912	<a href="mailto:ugaeoo@uga.edu">ugaeoo@uga.edu</a>

Retaliation related to the Research Misconduct Policy	Research Integrity Office	(706) 542-4016	<a href="mailto:cking@uga.edu">cking@uga.edu</a>
Retaliation related to an investigation by the Internal Audit Division of unethical behavior, including fraud, waste, and abuse	Internal Auditing Division	(706) 542-1494	<a href="mailto:mwhitley@uga.edu">mwhitley@uga.edu</a>
Retaliation related to a Hotline Report	University of Georgia Ethics and Compliance Reporting Hotline	1-877-516-3467	
Retaliation related to the Grievance and Disciplinary Review Policy	Office of Legal Affairs	(706) 542-0006	<a href="mailto:legal@uga.edu">legal@uga.edu</a>
All other claims of retaliation	Human Resources (Staff)	(706) 542-2222	<a href="mailto:hrweb@uga.edu">hrweb@uga.edu</a>
	Faculty Affairs (Faculty)	(706) 542-0547	<a href="mailto:facultyaffairs@uga.edu">facultyaffairs@uga.edu</a>

### False Reports/False Information

This policy does not protect an employee who files a false report or who provides information without a reasonable belief in the truth or accuracy of the information. Any employee who knowingly files a false report or intentionally provides false information during an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action, which may include the termination of employment.

#### Confidentiality:

Reasonable efforts shall be made to protect the identity of the reporting employee. The identity of the reporting employee shall be shared within the University only as required to investigate and address the alleged retaliation and to comply with any confidentiality, discovery, or disclosure obligations required by law. In no event shall the identity of the reporting employee be disclosed to any person outside the University without (1) the written consent of the reporting employee, or (2) in the event the University determines it is necessary and unavoidable, written notice to the employee seven days prior to disclosure.

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Related information

16.6.3 - USG Protection against Retaliation – Whistleblower Protection

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Responsibilities

**Responsible University Senior Administrator:** Vice President for Finance & Administration

**Responsible University Administrator:** Associate Vice President for Human Resources

**Policy Owner:** University Human Resources (UHR)

**Policy Contact:** Senior Director for Workforce Engagement

**Contact Information:** UHR (706) 542-9756

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Policy Dates

Effective Date: 8/5/2022

Date Last Updated: 8/5/2022