

Model Whistleblower Policy

Disclaimer concerning the Use of this Model Policy: This Model Policy is designed for local Associations of REALTORS® in Texas to use as a guide in the adoption of a Whistleblower Policy. Texas REALTORS® does not represent or warrant that this model document addresses all items that should be addressed in a whistleblower policy or that compliance with this model document will eliminate any potential responsibility or liability by the association.

Association of REALTORS® (“Association”) Whistleblower Policy

Whistleblower Policy Purpose.

The purpose of this Whistleblower Policy is to: (1) encourage staff and volunteers to come forward with credible information on illegal practices or serious violations of adopted policies of the Association; (2) specify that the Association will protect the person from retaliation; and (3) identify where such information can be reported.

Encouragement of reporting.

The Association encourages complaints, reports or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the Association’s policies, including illegal or improper conduct by the Association itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy include violations of law, financial improprieties, accounting or audit irregularities, harm to public health or safety, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. Other subjects on which the Association has existing complaint mechanisms or policies should be addressed through channels described in those mechanisms or policies, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment, unless those channels are themselves implicated in the wrongdoing. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

Protection from retaliation.

The Association prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of the Association against staff or volunteers for making good faith complaints, reports or inquiries under this policy or for participating in a review or investigation under this policy. This protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. The Association prohibits retaliation against staff and volunteers for refusal to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of local, state or federal law. The Association will not retaliate against a staff member or volunteer who discloses or threatens to disclose to a supervisor, director, vice-president, the chief executive officer, or law enforcement agency or other governmental agency, any activity, policy, or practice of the Association that the person reasonably believes is in violation of a local, state or federal law. The Association reserves the

right to discipline staff or volunteers who make bad faith, knowingly false, or vexatious complaints, reports or inquiries or who otherwise abuse this policy.

Where to report.

A complaint, report or inquiry may be made under this policy on a confidential or anonymous basis and will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. The complaint, report or inquiry should describe in detail the specific facts demonstrating its basis. A complaint, report or inquiry by staff should be directed to a direct supervisor; if this person is implicated in the complaint, report, or inquiry, it should be directed to the next level above the direct supervisor. A complaint, report, or inquiry by a volunteer should be directed to the Association's Chairman ("Chairman") and; if the Chairman is implicated in the complaint, report or inquiry, it should be directed to the Association's Chairman-elect or Chief Executive Officer. The Association will conduct a prompt, discreet, and objective review or investigation. Staff or volunteers must recognize that the Association may be unable to fully evaluate a vague or general complaint, report or inquiry that is made anonymously.