



WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Policy No: 208 | Title: Whistleblower Policy
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Issued By: Human Resources Department

Legal Review		CEO	
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Policy:

It is the policy of Melwood Horticultural Training Center, Inc. to encourage individual(s)/person(s) served, employees and volunteers to report information relating to illegal, dishonest or unethical activity or violation of adopted Melwood policies that such persons in good faith have reasonable cause to believe is credible. Such information should be reported to his or her immediate supervisor, the Vice President of Human Resources or through the Hotline. (See attached Hotline Procedures). Examples of illegal, dishonest or unethical activities are as follows:

- Violations of federal, state or local laws, including §1396(a)(68) of the Social Security Act;
- Billing for services not performed or for goods not delivered;
- Fraudulent financial reporting;
- Forgery or alteration of documents;
- Unauthorized alteration or manipulation of computer files;
- Misappropriation or misuse of Melwood resources, such as funds, supplies, Melwood vehicles or other assets;
- Authorizing or receiving compensation for goods not received or services not performed;
- Authorizing or receiving compensation for hours not worked; and
- Deriving personal benefit from Melwood's business transaction (i.e., "kickbacks").

Anyone reporting a violation must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing that the information shared in the report indicates that a violation has occurred.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained to the best of management's ability. However, identity may need to be disclosed in order to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with the law, specifically as it relates to providing accused individuals their legal rights of defense. Reporting illegal and dishonest activities is an extremely serious allegation. Therefore, any employee or volunteer who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. False reporting could ruin an employee's credibility and/or professional reputation.

Retaliation: Melwood shall not retaliate against a whistleblower. This includes but is not limited to protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any person entitled to protection who believes that he or she is the subject of any form of retaliation for such participation should immediately report the same as a

violation of and in accordance with this policy. Any individual within Melwood who retaliates against another individual who has reported a violation in good faith or who has cooperated in good faith in the investigation of a violation is subject to discipline, including termination of employment or volunteer status.

The right of a whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing.

Purpose:

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is a(n) individual/person served, an employee or volunteer that has direct knowledge or a good faith concern of illegal, dishonest or unethical activity or violation of adopted Melwood policies, and informs a manager, supervisor, Executive Management or submits a report via the Hotline about the activity. The whistleblower must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. Persons making baseless allegations may be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination and/or legal claims by individuals' accused of such conduct.

All employment-related concerns (e.g., pay, benefits, attendance) should continue to be reported through normal channels to supervisors, Human Resources representatives or to the Vice President of Human Resources. All reports will be promptly investigated and corrective action will be taken as needed.

Applicability:

This policy applies to all Melwood employees, contractors, individual(s)/person(s) served, and consultants affiliated with Melwood, interns and volunteers.

Procedures and Accountability:

The Human Resources Department will be responsible for distributing the policy to all Board of Directors, Melwood Executive Management, and individual(s)/person(s) served, employees, volunteers and consultants of Melwood.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Vice President of Human Resources have the overall responsibility to ensure compliance. However, executive staff, managers and supervisors are responsible for maintaining the system of management controls, which detect and deter fraudulent or dishonest conduct. All concerned have an obligation to report an activity that he or she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more of the parties specified in this Whistleblower Policy.

HOTLINE PROCEDURES

The Whistleblower Policy and the Hotline are intended to cover serious concerns that could have a significant impact on Melwood.

Harassment or Victimization

Harassment or victimization of individuals submitting hotline reports will not be tolerated.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to protect the reporter's identity by our hotline vendor. Please note that the information provided in a hotline report may be the basis of an internal

and/or external investigation by Melwood into the issue being reported. It is possible that, as a result of the information provided in a report, the reporter's identity may become known to Melwood during the course of the investigation.

Malicious Allegations

Malicious and/or false allegations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reporting

Serious concerns relating to financial reporting, unethical or illegal conduct may be reported to the Hotline in the following ways:

- English-speaking USA and Canada: toll-free (855) 901-0005 (not available from Mexico);
- Spanish-speaking North America: toll-free (800) 216-1288 (from Mexico, user must dial 001-800-216-1288);
- Website: www.lighthouse-services.com/melwood;
- E-mail: reports@lighthouse-services.com (must include company name with report); and/or
- Fax: 215-689-3885 (must include company name with report).

Evidence

Although reporters are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, the person submitting the hotline report needs to demonstrate in the report that there are sufficient grounds for concern.

Report

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. The General Counsel of Melwood will receive a copy of each report and an appropriate investigator will be selected for follow-up and reports on actions taken by the company.

Feedback to Reporter

Whether reported directly to Melwood Management or through the Hotline, the individual submitting a report will be given the opportunity to receive follow-up correspondence regarding their concern:

- Acknowledging that the concern was received;
- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with;
- Providing an estimate of the time it will take for a final response; and
- Indicating whether further investigations will follow, and if not, the reasons for reaching such conclusion.

Further information may be sought from the reporter; however, at the discretion of the company and subject to legal and other constraints, the reporter may not be entitled to receive information about the outcome of an investigation.

**Melwood reserves the right to modify or amend this policy at any time as it may deem necessary.*