



Confidential Compliance Hotline

Current Policy/Procedure Information

Policy/Procedure Number	Resolution Number	Revision Date	Next Scheduled Review	Responsible Department/Individual
COMP 1.4	N/A	N/A	October 2024	Compliance Office, Human Resources Commissioner



Sullivan County Corporate Compliance Program

Confidential Compliance Hotline

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I. Purpose

To outline the process whereby individuals can anonymously share or report concerns to the Corporate Compliance Officer and ensure that due diligence is exercised in responding to any and all reports of potential violations of laws, regulations, policies, or questionable conduct, from any source.

II. Scope

This procedure applies to all County employees, contractors, vendors, and volunteers.

III. Reference

NYCRR Title 18 Part 521, Resolution No. 305-19, Resolution No. 442-22, Sullivan County Whistleblower Policy, NYS Civil Service Law §75-b, Sullivan County Code of Conduct, Sullivan County False Claims Act, Corporate Compliance Investigations: Detection, Response, and Resolution.

IV. Definitions

Anonymity: Refers to the protection of identity.

Confidentiality: Refers to the protection of information.

Subject: The individual suspected of noncompliance.

Complainant: The individual who submitted a noncompliance report.

Investigator: The individual conducting the compliance investigation.

Retaliation: Including but not limited to discipline, demotion, harassment, threats, change of assignment, exclusion, avoidance, shunning, lack of recognition, or being passed over for promotion or assignment.

Whistleblower: An employee, volunteer, contractor, or vendor of the County of Sullivan, who reports an activity that they consider to be illegal, immoral, illicit, unsafe, or fraudulent.

V. Procedure

A. Proper Use of the Hotline

1. The Confidential Compliance Hotline is designed and administered to help protect the anonymity of complainants. It may be used to report any instance of noncompliance with a federal, state, or local law; other legal obligation; or any institutional policy or procedure;
2. The County has contracted with a third-party to manage the compliance hotline;
3. The toll-free phone number for the Confidential Compliance Hotline is 1-833-955-1559 and is available 24/7/365;
4. Any employee or person doing business with the County who suspects a compliance violation(s) should in good faith report the issue(s) by calling the hotline and following its prompts;
5. Employees who fail to report suspected compliance problems may be subjected to disciplinary action;

6. Complainants who wish to be contacted will be contacted by the Corporate Compliance Officer or the Commissioner of Human Resources within two business days of submitting their report.

B. Initial Review, Assignment, and Response

1. Once a complaint is submitted, the third-party vendor sends the report via email to the Corporate Compliance Officer and the Commissioner of Human Resources;
2. Upon receipt of a compliance hotline report, the Corporate Compliance Officer, in consultation with the Commissioner of Human Resources will conduct an initial review of the report;
3. If the report or information learned in investigating the report includes a specific allegation of non-compliance by the Corporate Compliance Officer or the Commissioner of Human Resources, then that person will be excluded from access to the hotline record for that report and from any responsibility for investigating or making determinations or decisions based on that report. If necessary, in circumstances involving a conflict of interest, the review, investigation, and resolution of the report will be reassigned where no such conflict of interest exists;
4. If the Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the report involves an immediate threat to the safety or security of a person or property, then, as soon as practical, they will report to the appropriate emergency first responders and County Manager and, if appropriate, to other relevant authorities;
5. If the Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the report poses a substantial threat or major risk to the County, then unless there is an actual or potential conflict of interest, the investigator will provide notice of the report to the County Manager and County Attorney;
6. If the Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the report is frivolous or implausible on its face or makes allegations that, even if accepted as true, would not constitute a legal or policy violation, then the Corporate Compliance Officer will respond to the complainant that the report does not meet this minimum standard and will not be investigated without additional facts or evidence;
7. If the Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the issues raised in the report should be resolved informally without an investigation, then the report may be referred directly to the appropriate County official (e.g., the supervisor of the subject) for informal resolution. The County official then should report to the Corporate Compliance Officer with information about the informal resolution;
8. The Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the issues raised in the report may necessitate mandatory reporting obligations to an outside person or entity, then the Corporate Compliance Officer, in consultation with the County Attorney, should make a determination on whether to make such a report immediately or if further investigation is necessary before making such a report;
9. Upon review of the report, if the Corporate Compliance Officer determines that the report warrants a formal response or investigation, then (a) the Corporate Compliance Officer will assign an individual (investigator) who will coordinate the response and the investigation;

10. While the investigation is being conducted, the investigator may request additional facts or evidence from the complainant (if identified), whether in the form of written or electronic documents or an interview(s);
11. The investigator may also conduct research to support the complaint/investigation including but not limited to interviews, review of County documents, and electronic files;
12. All hotline compliance issues will be resolved as quickly as reasonably possible;
13. Alternatively, individuals who do not wish to use the hotline may submit reports of suspected or actual non-compliance to the Corporate Compliance Officer or the Human Resources Commissioner;
14. If a report of non-compliance is made to an individual other than the Corporate Compliance Officer or the Human Resources Commissioner, that individual must inform the Corporate Compliance Officer or the Human Resources Commissioner;
15. If the complaint is on the Corporate Compliance Officer, then the report must be turned over to the Human Resources Commissioner;
16. If the complaint is on the Human Resources Commissioner, then the report must be turned over to the Corporate Compliance Officer;
17. Failure to notify the appropriate individual could result in disciplinary action.

C. Anonymity, Confidentiality, and Retaliation

1. Those who use the Confidential Compliance Hotline to report compliance issues may choose to do so anonymously;
2. The County will protect the identity of the complainant to the extent of the law;
3. Depending on the facts and circumstances of the submitted report, the County cannot guarantee anonymity in every situation. Reports of including, but not limited to harassment, discrimination, bullying, abuse, and threatening language cannot always be kept anonymous;
4. In order to further assist with an investigation, anonymous complainants can maintain anonymity, but submit contact information in their report i.e. a phone number or email address;
5. The County will not employ methods to identify anonymous complainants;
6. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. The report and the ongoing investigation will only be revealed to those necessary to conduct a thorough investigation i.e. the County Manager, the Corporate Compliance Officer, Department Head, the County Attorney, and the Commissioner of Human Resources;
7. All individuals interviewed or contacted will be informed of the sensitivity to maintaining confidentiality;
8. Employees should be aware that the County is legally required to report certain types of crimes or potential crimes and infractions to external governmental agencies;
9. If an employee breaks confidentiality, they may be subject to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to suspension or termination;
10. The County is committed to a non-retaliation policy, recognizes the various applicable Federal and State laws and will protect any whistleblower;
11. All allegations or concerns which are reported in good faith will be investigated without fear of retaliation or intimidation;

12. Those who engage in such improper interference or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to suspension or termination.

D. Hotline Marketing

1. The Confidential Compliance Hotline will be published and visibly posted in a manner consistent with employee notification in locations frequented by County employees i.e. timeclocks and break areas;
2. The Confidential Compliance Hotline will be included in the County's orientation and annual Corporate Compliance Education and Training;
3. The Confidential Compliance Hotline number will be shared electronically via email to all employees twice annually;
4. The Confidential Compliance Hotline and information about the County's Corporate Compliance Program can be located on the County's Compliance Program webpage and on the reverse of employee identification badges;
5. Information about the Confidential Compliance Hotline will be included in contractual agreements with vendors, contractors, and anyone doing business with the County;
6. The Confidential Compliance Hotline must be made available to Medicaid recipients of service from the County;
7. At least twice annually, senior level manager's will be encouraged to disseminate compliance reporting mechanisms during department-level meetings.



**Sullivan County
Corporate Compliance Program**

VI. Document History

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