

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH PLAN POLICY

CHAPTER HEADING: Problem Reporting and Non-Retaliation

POLICY #: Comp 04-04

ORIGINATOR: Richard L. Dropski **DATE APPROVED:** January 22, 2004

REVISED:

APPROVED BY: Executive Committee

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: March 2004

DATE OF LAST REVISION:

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Quality and Compliance

IMPACTED TEAMS: All NHP

POLICY

- NHP employees are urged to report perceived violations of NHP policies, procedures or potential violation of laws or regulations.
- NHP employees must feel safe to report such perceived violations.
- An “open-door policy” will be maintained at all levels of management to encourage employees to report problems and concerns pertaining to perceived misconduct or potential violation of NHP’s policies and procedures or laws and regulations.
- Employees may report their concerns to their higher level manager (director, vice president) or communicate with the Human Resources Department or the Compliance Office if their problem or concern is not resolved.
- Employees are encouraged to utilize the Compliance Hotline/Helpline. Users of the hotline/helpline may remain anonymous or may seek confidentiality.
- Any form of retaliation or retribution against any employee who reports a perceived problem or concern in good faith is strictly prohibited.
- Any employee who commits or condones any form of retaliation or retribution subsequent to the expression of a concern will be subject to discipline up to, and including, termination.

PURPOSE

NHP recognizes that a critical aspect of its compliance program is the establishment of a culture that promotes prevention, detection, and resolution of

instances of conduct that do not conform to federal and state requirements, as well as the organization's ethical and business policies. To promote this culture, NHP has established a problem resolution process and a strict non-retaliation non-retribution policy to protect employees and others who report problems and concerns in good faith. Any form of retaliation or retribution can undermine the problem resolution process and result in a failure of communication channels in the organization.

DEFINITIONS

Anonymity means that the informant can choose not to disclose his/her identity and that no tracking systems (e.g. caller ID) are in place which would enable identification of the caller or phone from which the call is being placed.

Confidentiality means that the informant's name will not be revealed to NHP without the informant's authorization unless discoverable as part of a criminal investigation.

Good faith reporting means that the employee truly believes the problem or information they are reporting is accurate and in violation of NHP's policies or procedures or other rule, regulation or law.

Retaliation and Retribution includes any form of disciplinary action, considerations for merit increases, promotions or other forms of employee benefits. However, contacting the Compliance Hotline/Helpline will not preclude disciplinary action from being taken if the caller was personally involved in the wrongdoing that he or she is reporting, although the self-reporting may be taken into account in determining the appropriate course of action.

PROCEDURES

Procedures that apply to all employees:

- Knowledge of misconduct, including actual or potential violations of laws, regulations, policies, procedures, or the organization's Code of Conduct must be immediately reported to management, the Human Resources Department, the Compliance Office, or the Compliance Hotline/Helpline.

Procedures that apply to management:

- Management must act to ensure support of this policy and encourage the reporting of problems and concerns. At a minimum, the following actions should be taken and become an ongoing aspect of the management process:
 - Meet with department staff to discuss the main points within this policy;
 - Provide all department staff with a copy of this policy;

- Review this policy with all new hires; and
- Maintain an “open-door” policy that encourages employees to communicate their concerns directly.

Procedures that apply to the Compliance Office:

- The Compliance Office, in concert with the Human Resource Department, will be responsible for the investigation and follow-up of any reported retaliation against an employee.