

Protections Surrounding Reporting and Investigations

Anonymity

Completely anonymous reporting is available when done through the ethics and compliance website or hotline, which is available to employees, interns, volunteers, contractors and others. The reporting party should be mindful that the body of the report does not reveal identities by accident. For example, “From my cube next to Jan Smith . . .” or “In my 33 years . . .” In addition, the HSUS is willing to receive reports where the reporter asks to be anonymous or where the victims are identified in the collective (for example: “someone in State Affairs” or “the women in APL”). Please note that where anonymity is requested, it may limit the ability of the HSUS to fully investigate a matter.

Confidentiality

The HSUS is committed to a reporting and investigation process that provides as much confidentiality as is possible given the particulars of each circumstance. Both during and after the investigation, every step will be taken to protect the identities of all individuals involved to the extent possible.

No Retaliation

The HSUS will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports concerns pursuant to this policy in good faith, who cooperates in such an investigation, or who opposes harassing or discriminatory conduct. No one will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a good faith complaint with the HSUS or cooperating in inquiries or investigations. Such retaliation is a separate violation of HSUS policy, and any employee, intern, volunteer, or contractor who engages in such retaliation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or cessation of the internship or volunteer or contractor relationship. If an employee, intern, volunteer, or contractor experiences any conduct that he or she believes to be retaliatory, he or she should report the concerns using one or more of the reporting procedures.

Respect for Complainants

Whatever the outcome of any investigation, individuals who report concerns or complaints and who try to engage the organization in order to help ensure enforcement of and compliance with our Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy are doing the organization a service. The HSUS thanks those who come forward in good faith, and expects all employees, interns, volunteers, and contractors to, at a minimum, refrain from publicly or openly making disparaging statements or comments regarding complainants—past or future. Comments that disparage or might have the effect of dissuading reporting are a violation of this policy.

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