

American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

This Whistleblower Policy of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists (ACVO): (1) encourages staff, contractors and volunteers to come forward with credible information illegal practices or serious violations of adopted policies of the ACVO; (2) specifies that the ACVO will protect the person from retaliation; and (3) identifies where such information can be reported.

Scope. This Policy applies to all ACVO employees, including part-time, temporary, and contract employees, as well as directors, officers and other organization volunteers (including the ABVO and its committees).

- 1. Encouragement of reporting.** The ACVO encourages complaints, reports or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the ACVO's policies, including illegal or improper conduct by the ACVO itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy would include financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, alleged discrimination or harassment, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.
- 2. Protection from retaliation.** The ACVO prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of the ACVO against staff, contractors, or volunteers for making good faith complaints, reports or inquiries under this policy of 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 ACVO reserves the right to discipline persons who make bad faith, knowingly false, or vexatious complaints, reports or inquiries or who otherwise abuse this policy.
- 3. Where to report.** Complaints, reports or inquiries may be made under this policy on a confidential or anonymous basis. They should describe in detail the specific facts demonstrating the bases for the complaints, reports or inquiries. They should be directed to the ACVO's Executive Director or Board President; if both of those persons are implicated in the complaint, report or inquiry, it should be directed to the ACVO's President. The ACVO will conduct a prompt, discreet, and objective review or investigation. Staff or volunteers must recognize that the ACVO may be unable to fully evaluate a vague or general complaint, report or inquiry that is made anonymously.