

THE NATURE FOUNDATION OF WILL COUNTY

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

This policy is intended to encourage Board members, staff (paid and volunteer) and any others to report suspected or actual occurrence(s) of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events (behaviors or practices) without retribution.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The Nature Foundation of Will County's (Foundation) Code of Ethics requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the Foundation, they must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

SECTION 2: REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all directors, officers, employees, and volunteers to comply with the Code of Ethics and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with the Whistleblower Policy.

SECTION 3: NO RETALIATION

No director, officer, volunteer, employee or any other agent of the Foundation who in good faith (that was not done primarily with malice to damage another or the organization) reports a violation of the Code of Ethics shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse consequences. Anyone who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of Board or employee status. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the Foundation prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

SECTION 4: REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Crimes against a person or property, such as assault, rape, burglary, etc. should immediately be reported to local law enforcement personnel. If an individual has a reasonable belief that a director, officer, volunteer, employee, or the Foundation has engaged in any action that violates any applicable law, or regulation, including those concerning accounting and auditing, or constitutes a fraudulent practice, the individual is expected to immediately report the information. A written complaint may be filed by the individual with the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the individual does not feel comfortable reporting the information to the Chair, he or she is expected to report the information to another officer including the Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer or the Executive Director.

SECTION 5: INVESTIGATION

All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation. The Foundation's Officers are responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Code of Ethics and, at their discretion, shall advise the Board of Directors. The individual shall receive a report within five business days of the initial report, regarding the investigation, disposition or resolution of the issue. If the investigation of a report, that was done in good faith and investigated internally by the officers, is not to the individual's satisfaction, then he/she has the right to report the event to the appropriate legal or investigative agency.

SECTION 6: AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING

The Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. Officers shall immediately notify the Board of any such complaint and work with the Board until the matter is resolved.

SECTION 7: ACTING IN GOOD FAITH

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code of Ethics must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code of Ethics. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. An individual who makes a report that is not done in good faith is subject to discipline, including termination of the Board or employee relationship, or other legal means to protect the reputation of the organization and members of its Board, staff and volunteers.

SECTION 8: CONFIDENTIALITY

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

SECTION 9: HANDLING OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS

The Chair will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days.

Approved May 20, 2015
Amended December 4, 2019