North Los Angeles County Regional Center
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Whistleblower Policy NLACRC Employees, Board Members, and Vendors

REGIONAL CENTER WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY FOR NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER ("NLACRC") EMPLOYEES, BOARD MEMBERS, AND VENDORS.

This policy ("Policy") is adopted to comply with the Department of Developmental Services ("DDS") Regional Center/Employee and Board Member Complaint Process Filing and Contact Information Guidelines. Accordingly, NLACRC has adopted this Policy for complaints by employees and members of the NLACRC Board of Trustees ("Board").

1. General

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a guide and structure to assist any NLACRC employee, vendor, or NLACRC Board member who wishes to report any perceived improper regional center activity and/or improper vendor/contractor activity and be protected from retaliation when doing so. As set forth herein, a whistleblower is an employee of NLACRC or a member of the Board of Trustees of NLACRC (hereinafter referred to as a "trustee"), who in good faith reports any "improper regional center activity" and/or "improper vendor/contractor activity" committed by an employee, a trustee, or a vendor/contractor. Here, the term "good faith" shall have the same meaning as set forth in California Labor Code section 1102.5, which protects employees who disclose reasonable suspicions of illegal activity.

Whistleblower complaints, for purposes of this Policy, are defined as the reporting of an "improper regional center activity" or "improper vendor/contractor activity."

An "improper regional center activity" means an activity by a regional center, or an employee, officer or board member of a regional center, in the conduct of regional center business, that is a violation of state or federal law or regulation; violation of contract provisions; fraud or fiscal malfeasance; misuse of governmental property or constitutes gross misconduct, incompetency, or inefficiency.

An "improper vendor/contractor activity" means an activity by a vendor/contractor, or an employee, officer, or board member of a vendor/contractor, in the provision of DDS-funded services, that is a violation of a state or federal law or regulation; violation of contract provisions; fraud or fiscal malfeasance; misuse of government property; or constitutes gross misconduct, incompetency, or inefficiency.

This Policy protects employees and the trustees from any form of retaliation for the good faith reporting of perceived improper activity committed by NLACRC employees, trustees or officers and/or vendor/contractor employees, trustees or officers. In short, no adverse action will be taken against the person filing a good faith complaint simply because a complaint has been filed. Employees and the trustees are expected to adhere to the highest standards of business and personal ethics in discharging their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of NLACRC, they are obligated to comply with all applicable laws and regulations with honesty and integrity.

2. Persons Permitted to File Complaints

This Policy applies to reports of improper activity by all NLACRC trustees and NLACRC employees, including employees in the San Fernando Valley, Antelope Valley, and Santa Clarita Valley offices.

3. Responsibility and Obligation to Comply with Policy

It is the responsibility of all employees and all trustees to comply with this Policy and to report perceived improper activity to NLACRC's Compliance Officer or any of the other individuals listed below in Part

4. Procedure For Filing a Complaint

4.1 To make a complaint, contact the Compliance Officer. **The Compliance Officer is either the Human Resources Director, or, if the complaint involves the Human Resources Director, then the Executive Director.** Also, as a separate option, a complaint may be made directly to DDS, the Board or the Board's Executive Committee. The Compliance Officer, the Board, or the Board's Executive Committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) business days. All reports will be promptly investigated by the Compliance Officer, and appropriate corrective action will be taken by NLACRC if warranted by the results of the investigation.

a. North Los Angeles County Regional Center

An individual who wishes to file a complaint with Human Resources may contact:

- Human Resources Director
  Phone: (818) 756-6125
  Fax: (818) 756-6440
  Email: whistleblower@nlacrc.org

  9200 Oakdale Avenue, Suite 100
  Chatsworth, CA 91311

Alternatively, if the complaint is about the Human Resources Director, an individual who wishes to file a complaint may do so by filing it with NLACRC's Executive Director as follows:

- Executive Director
  Phone: (818) 756-6423
  Email: director@nlacrc.org

  9200 Oakdale Avenue, Suite 100
  Chatsworth, CA 91311

b. Board, Executive Committee or Specific Officer of the Board

To make a complaint to the Board, the Board's Executive Finance Committee, or to a specific officer of the Board (President, Immediate Past President, Vice-President, Treasurer, or Secretary), the contact information is as follows:

- Board of Trustees or Board of Trustees Executive Committee (Please specify what officer of the Board of Trustees you wish to send your complaint to, if applicable.)
  Phone: (818) 756-6118
  Fax: (818) 756-6140
  Email: boardsupport@nlacrc.org

  9200 Oakdale Ave, Suite 100
  Chatsworth, CA 91311

c. Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

A complaint may be filed with DDS by contacting:

- Office of Community Appeals and Resolutions
  Phone: (833) 538-3723
  Fax: (916) 654- 3641
  Email: Appeals@dds.ca.gov

  1215 O Street, MS 8-20
  Sacramento, CA 95814

4.2 NLACRC requires a clear and concise statement of the alleged improper activity and any evidence you have to support the allegation. NLACRC encourages employees and trustees to notify the Compliance Officer or other individual or entity listed in Part 4.1. above, in good faith when they have reason to believe that any "improper regional center activity" and/or "improper vendor/contractor activity," as those terms are defined in Part 1 of this policy, has occurred.

The recipient of the complaint shall obtain sufficient information from the complainant to refer the complaint to the Compliance Officer for review, investigation, and resolution. If you do not provide a name or other information (witnesses or documents) that clearly identifies the person you are alleging has engaged in improper activity, and the regional center where that person works or is a trustee, we may not have sufficient information to investigate. Copies of documents in support of the complaint, rather than originals, should be submitted with the complaint as they cannot be returned.

If the complaint is verbal, the recipient of the complaint shall document the information provided by the complainant, including the complainant's name (if provided), contact information, the nature of the complaint, who or what the complaint is regarding, the name of possible witnesses, and the date and time the complaint was received.

Although complaints may be filed anonymously, it is extremely difficult and often impossible to investigate if insufficient information is provided and we have no means to contact you to gather basic facts. In such cases, NLACRC may not be able to effectively investigate the allegations.

Under certain limited circumstances, including but not limited to, when a member of the executive staff or the Compliance Officer is alleged to have engaged in improper regional center conduct, NLACRC may seek an appropriate impartial party, such as arbitrator, organizational ombudsman, investigator, or mediator or NLACRC's corporate counsel, to investigate suspected improper activity and to make recommendations to NLACRC. The Compliance Officer will inform the Executive Committee of recommendations by the appropriate impartial party, including appropriate corrective action. The Executive Committee shall then make recommendations to the full Board for Board action, if any.

4.3 The Compliance Officer shall notify the Executive Director and the Board's Executive Committee of any whistleblower complaint he or she receives and the ongoing progress of the investigation of the complaint. All reports shall be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken by NLACRC if determined warranted by the investigation. The Compliance Officer shall inform the Executive Committee of the resolution of the complaint. In addition, the Compliance Officer is required to report to the Executive Committee at least annually on compliance activity.

4.4 At the present time, and in accordance with Special Contract Language and for so long as the operative agreement between NLACRC and DDS requires, the Compliance Officer shall issue a report to DDS every 30 days about whistleblower complaints received. Reports shall contain, at a minimum: (1) The date a complaint was received; (2) The complaint type, if known (e.g., regional center staff, service provider, community member etc.); (3) The date an acknowledgment of receipt was sent to the complainant; (4) The nature of complaint; (5) Details of the investigation; (6) The results of investigation; (7) Corrective action taken, if applicable.

4.5 The Compliance Officer will notify the complainant, if known, of its findings and any corrective action taken to the extent that it does not breach any confidentiality rights of an individual served, their family or an employee.

5. Policy When Complaints Are Filed

5.1 Anti-Retaliation- No employee or trustee who in good faith reports improper activity shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse consequence, including employment consequence. In short, no adverse action will be taken against a person filing a good faith complaint, simply because a complaint has been filed. This Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and trustees to raise serious concerns with NLACRC, in order to permit NLACRC to address the concerns prior to a complainant seeking resolution outside the regional center. An NLACRC staff member who retaliates against an employee or trustee who reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment. Furthermore, if an employee or trustee makes allegations that are found to be

malicious, knowingly false, or otherwise in bad faith, NLACRC will view these actions as a serious offense and reserves the right to take action within the boundaries of the law.

5.2 Confidentiality- Improper activity violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. In accordance with Part 7 below, reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation, or to comply with other laws and obligations.

6. This Policy is Consistent with the State's Directive Entitled "Department of Developmental Services Whistleblower Complaint Process," dated July 28, 2010

To comply with the DDS Directive dated July 28, 2010, this Policy will:

6.1 Allow for multiple employees within the regional center to be available to accept complaints. More specifically, the Compliance Officer is the Human Resources Director, except that if the complaint involves the Human Resources Director, the Compliance Officer is the Executive Director. Also, complaints may be made directly to the Board, the Board's Executive Committee or DDS.

6.2 As noted in 6.1 above, allow direct access to the Board, including the Board President, for the purpose of filing complaints.

6.3 Protect any person making a complaint from retaliation. More specifically, NLACRC will not retaliate against any complainant.

6.4 Follow NLACRC's procedure, set forth in Part 4 above, to investigate and take appropriate action on complaints, including complaints of retaliation.

6.5 Ensure complainant confidentiality when possible as provided in Part 7 of this Policy, consistent with the State's Whistleblower Policy, including consumer health and safety.

6.6 Provide for the notification of employees, board members, consumers/families, and vendor community, of the existence of both NLACRC's and the State's Whistleblower Policies within thirty (30) days of the effective date of NLACRC's Policy and annually thereafter.

6.7 In addition, NLACRC will ensure that this Policy will be posted on NLACRC's website within thirty (30) days after being adopted.

7. Confidentiality

NLACRC will do everything possible to maintain the confidentiality of a complainant making a whistleblower complaint, if requested. However, in the rare circumstances where NLACRC is unable to maintain confidentiality due to its statutory responsibilities (including ensuring the health and safety of consumers and regional center contract compliance), or due to its need to address the improper activity, NLACRC will attempt to inform the complainant of its need to disclose

information prior to releasing identifying information. Additionally, the identity of the complainant may be revealed to appropriate law enforcement agencies conducting a criminal investigation. All mandatory abuse reporting requirements will remain in effect as an exception to confidentiality.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO COMPLY

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the rules regarding the Regional Center Whistleblower Policy for NLACRC Employees and Board Members. I understand that compliance with the foregoing Policy and procedure is a condition of employment and Board membership at NLACRC.

[Approved by Board: 11/04/2026]