

**WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION
Policy Number 5280**

I. POLICY BACKGROUND/PURPOSE

The Whistleblower Act, set out in Chapter 42.40 RCW, encourages employees to disclose improper governmental actions and protects the rights of the employees to make such disclosures. The objective of this Policy is to provide information regarding the reporting of suspected improper governmental action(s).

II. AUTHORITY

Chapter 42.40 RCW

III. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all employees of the college.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A.** Any current Washington State employee may report a suspected improper governmental action through the Whistleblower Program. This includes temporary employees, classified and exempt civil service employees. RCW 42.40.020(2) & (6)(b)
- B.** Whistleblowers must make a reasonable attempt to ascertain the correctness of their complaint and file assertions in good faith. Employees cannot knowingly report false, malicious or frivolous information, recklessly disregard the truth or omit relevant information in order to report in good faith. RCW 42.40.020(3)
- C.** The identity of a whistleblower or any person who provides information in an investigation is confidential at all times unless the whistleblower or other person consents to disclosure or unless the state auditor determines the information has been provided other than in good faith. Filing a tort claim, lawsuit or complaint with the Human Rights Commission may waive whistleblower confidentiality. RCW 42.40.040
- D.** All College employees must cooperate fully in any investigation and shall take appropriate action to preclude the destruction of any evidence during the course of an investigation.
- E.** No employee shall directly or indirectly use or attempt to use their official authority or influence for the purpose of or attempting to intimidate, threaten, coerce, command, or influence any individual for the purpose of interfering with the right of the individual to disclose to the state auditor or college representative or other public official, information concerning improper governmental action. RCW 42.40.030
- F.** No employee shall directly or indirectly use or attempt to use their official authority or influence for the purpose of or attempting to engage in, support or ignore reprisal or retaliatory action against a whistleblower, perceived whistleblower, or any witness or perceived witness who provided information during the investigation.

V. REPORTING

- A. Whistleblowers are to submit their assertions of suspected improper governmental action on the State of Washington Whistleblower Reporting Form.
- B. Whistleblowers are allowed to file their State of Washington Whistleblower Reporting Form through the following:
 1. College Public Officials:
 - Derek Brandes, President
 - Doug Bayne, Vice President of Advancement
 - Chad Hickox, Vice President of Instruction, CIO
 - Davina Fogg, Vice President of Administrative Services
 - Jose da Silva, Vice President of Student Affairs
 - Melissa Andrewjeski, Dean of Corrections Education, CRCC
 - Brent Caulk, Dean of Corrections Education, WSP
 - Chad Miltenberger, Dean of Clarkston Campus
 - Sherry Hartford, Vice President of Human Resources

The designated College official will forward the assertions to the State Auditor's Office within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt.
 2. State Auditor's Office:
 - Washington State Auditor's Office
 - Attention: State Employee Whistleblower Program
 - P.O. Box 40031
 - Olympia, WA 98504-0031
 - Facsimile: (360) 586-3519
 - E-Mail: whistleblower@sao.wa.gov
 - Website: <http://www.sao.wa.gov/investigations/Pages/Whistleblower.aspx>
- C. Whistleblower assertions may be submitted anonymously.
- D. For an improper governmental action to be investigated by the State Auditor's Office, it must be provided to the state auditor within one (1) year after occurrence of the action. RCW 42.40.040(1)(a)
- E. The State Auditor's Office can be contacted directly at (360) 902-0378 or more detailed information about the Whistleblower Act and Program can be found at the State Auditor's website referenced above.

VI. PROTECTION

- A. Whistleblowers are entitled to protection from reprisal or retaliatory action as a result of their status as whistleblowers. If you feel you are being retaliated against as a result of filing an assertion, providing information during an investigation, or are believed to have filed a whistleblower report or provided information, you may file a claim with the Washington State Human Rights Commission at the following address:
 - 711 South Capitol Way, Suite 402
 - Olympia, WA 98504-2490
 - Website: <http://www.hum.wa.gov>
- B. Whistleblowers have two (2) years in which to file a whistleblower retaliation complaint. RCW 49.60.230(2)

VII. NOTIFICATION

The Human Resources department is responsible to ensure:

- A. A written summary of the Whistleblower law and procedures is provided to each new employee of the College.
- B. Employees are notified each year of the procedures and protections. The annual notice shall include a list of College officials authorized to receive whistleblower reports.
- C. The list of College officials authorized to receive whistleblower reports is prominently displayed along with other required employment related postings. RCW 42.40.070.

Attachment: Whistleblower Posting (RCW 42.40.070) (1 page)

Policy Contact:	Vice President of Human Resources
Approved by:	Dr. Derek Brandes, President
Date Originally Approved:	4/13/2009
Last Reviewed/Revised on:	4/10/2018