

Employee Whistleblower Rights and Protections related to Certain Federal Contracts

Background: Under a federal government pilot program, employees of contractors of the federal government, including the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics, are afforded protection against reprisal for whistleblowing activities in connection with certain federal contracts. The pilot program is effective until January 1, 2017. UWHC is required to notify employees in writing about the program, so we have summarized the details of the program below.

Source: 41 U.S.C. § 4712; 48 C.F.R. §§ 3.908–3.908-9, 52.203-17

Protected Disclosures:

Type of Information Disclosed: Under the program, an employee is protected against reprisal his or her employer for disclosing information (except for classified information) that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of any of the following: gross mismanagement of a federal contract; gross waste of federal funds; abuse of authority relating to a federal contract; substantial or specific danger to public health or safety; or violation of law, rule, or regulation related to a federal contract (including competition for or negotiation of a contract).

Recipient of Disclosure: To be protected, the disclosure must be made to one of the following: member of or representative of a committee of the U.S. Congress; an inspector general; the Government Accountability Office; a federal employee responsible for contract oversight or management at the relevant agency; an authorized official of the Department of Justice or other law enforcement agency; a court or grand jury; or a management official or other employee of the UWHC or a subcontractor who has the responsibility to investigate, discover, or address misconduct. An employee who initiates or provides evidence of misconduct in any judicial or administrative proceeding related to waste, fraud, or abuse on a federal contract is also deemed to have made a protected disclosure.

Communication to UWHC regarding Questions or Potential Non-Compliance: UWHC endeavors to operate with integrity and in full compliance with all applicable laws and policies, and it is committed to investigating and addressing concerns regarding potential non-compliance. Concerns regarding UWHC activities with regard to federal contracts or questions about the pilot program may be reported to any of the following: (1) your supervisor; (2) the compliance and privacy officer, Daniel J. Weissburg, JD, CHC, at (608) 203-4631; or (3) any one of the listed [contacts](#). To anonymously report a compliance issue, call the Compliance Help Line at (608) 265-7400.

Submitting a Complaint to a Federal Agency regarding Alleged Discrimination: An employee who believes he or she has been discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against for reporting information as described above may, within three years of the alleged discrimination, submit a complaint to the Inspector General of the federal agency involved with the contract. The Inspector General will generally perform an investigation and submit the report to the federal agency, which then determines whether the alleged discrimination occurred and what, if any, remedies will be available to the employee (including, but not limited to, reversing the reprisal; reinstating the employee with compensatory damages, including back-pay and employment benefits; and paying costs incurred by the employee in bringing the complaint). The employee or employer may challenge the agency's decision in court.