

# WEST COAST TOWN COUNCIL

## WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

### 1. Policy Objectives

West Coast Town Council is committed to creating and maintaining a culture of high integrity and good corporate governance. The implementation of the Whistle-Blowing Policy underpins the Council's efforts towards upholding a transparent and honest corporate culture, with zero tolerance for improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct, which may cause financial or non-financial loss or damage to the reputation of the Council

This Whistle-Blowing Policy aims to provide :

- (a) An avenue for the employees, Council members, contractors and residents to report to the Town Council if he/she observes or discovers any suspected improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct of employees, Council member or contractors of the Town Council; and
- (b) Assurance that no adverse personnel action would be taken against the Whistle-blower in retaliation to his/her disclosure, in good faith, of any suspected improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct.

### 2. Types of Improper or Inappropriate Practice and Misconduct

The types of improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct shall include but not limited to the following:-

- Corruption, bribery and extortion
- Fraud, forgery and falsified claims
- Physical, emotional and sexual harassment
- Endangering the health and safety of others
- Criminal offences

### 3. **Procedures on Reporting**

- (a) A Whistle-blower who is aware of any suspected improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct of an employee, Council member or contractor of the Town Council, shall make a written report in a sealed envelope marked "Private & Confidential, as soon as possible, send to the Chairman of the Town Council at :

- Blk 441A Clementi Avenue 3 #02-01 Singapore 121441

The report shall include the following :

- Name and address of the Whistle-blower
- Time and date of alleged act took place
- Clear description of the alleged act
- Documentary/audio/visual evidence of the alleged act committed (if available)

The Whistle-blower is expected to identify himself/herself when raising a concern. This will enhance the authenticity, accountability and effectiveness of the investigation, and facilitate feedback to the Whistle-blower. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may sometime require the Whistle-blower who reported a concern, to render assistance in the investigation.

- (b) Any concerns raised in accordance with this Policy shall be treated with strict confidentiality and investigated.
- (c) The Whistle-blower who reported a concern, which is subsequently found to be unsubstantiated, shall not be subject to any disciplinary action, if the concern was reported in good faith.
- (d) However, if the Whistle-blower makes a malicious, frivolous and vexatious allegation or make an allegation for personal gain, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action or reported to the Police

#### **4. Procedures on Investigation**

- (a) Upon receipt of a report on suspected improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct, the Chairman of the Town Council shall initiate an investigation. An Officer or a Town Councillor directed by the Chairman will lead the investigation. Where necessary, the investigation team shall consult and seek legal advice. Where criminal offence and corruption are involved, the matter may be referred to the Police or the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB).
- (b) The investigation team shall handle all matters with confidentiality and complete the investigation. All documents received by the investigation team shall be recorded and filed.
- (c) To safeguard against possibility of bias, prejudice or conflict of interest, the person being complained shall not be participating/involved in the investigation team.
- (d) Upon completion of the investigation, the report shall be submitted to the Town Council Chairman. The Chairman shall review and evaluate the findings. If the Chairman is not satisfied with the findings, he has the right to either :
- Direct a fresh investigation or request that further investigation be conducted by the same investigation team, or appoint a fresh team of investigators;
  - Conduct his own investigation
- (e) If the improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct is proven, the Chairman of the Town Council shall decide on the appropriate course of action to be taken against the employee, Council member or contractor found guilty of the improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct, which may be any one of the following :
- Reprimand, take disciplinary action, impose punishment
  - Transfer employee to another department or office
  - Termination or suspension of employment or appointment
  - Report matter to relevant authorities
  - Any other action deemed appropriate by the Town Council

- (f) The decision on the corrective actions to be taken and the action taken against the person(s) found to have committed the improper or inappropriate practice and misconduct shall be communicated in writing to the Whistle-blower
- (g) Where the concern raised by the Whistle-blower relates to the Town Council Chairman or Vice Chairman, it will be referred to the Town Council Audit Committee, who will be responsible to commission the investigation and decide on how the investigation is to proceed.

## **5. Protection of Whistle-blower**

Protection will be provided to the Whistle-blower so that the person against whom a complaint is made cannot not take any retaliation on the Whistle-blower. The protection accorded to the Whistle-blower is not limited or affected in the event that a Complaint made by the Whistle-blower in good faith does not lead to any corrective actions to be taken against the person(s) against whom the Complaint or Report has been made.

Whistle-blower who reported a concern which is subsequently found to be unsubstantiated, shall not be subject to any disciplinary action if he/she has reported the concern in good faith. However, if the complaint is made out of a malicious, frivolous and vexatious allegation or for personal gain, the Whistle-blower may be subject to disciplinary or police action.

## **6. Complaint Register**

Chairman of the Town Council shall maintain a Complaint Register for the purpose of recording details of all complaints received, including the date, nature and status of such complaints. The Complaint Register shall be handed over to the succeeding Town Council Chairman.