I. PURPOSE & INTENT

A. The University of South Florida System, (“USF System”) is committed to the values of excellence, integrity and truth in attaining its academic, research and public service mission. These values are exemplified by each employee’s responsible performance of duties consistent with the USF System's policies, regulations, rules and professional standards.

B. It is the responsibility of all USF System employees to report violations of law, rule, regulation, policy or other misconduct to permit the USF System to meet its responsibility to the public, its employees and students. Employees should promptly report their concerns to their immediate or next level supervisor, if feasible. Otherwise, other communication channels are available for reporting concerns such as: the Office of Human Resources, the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity, the Office of University Audit, USF System & Compliance & Ethics Program, or the USF System anonymous hotline EthicsPoint (1-866-974-8411) or www.ethicspoint.com.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The USF System encourages an atmosphere of open dialogue and expression, including the promotion of good faith filing of grievances, reporting of complaints or concerns by employees and students regarding violations of law, rule, regulation, policy or other misconduct. Employees who learn of retaliation should report it immediately.
B. In support of an environment of open communication within the USF System community, the USF System will not tolerate retaliation, retribution or reprisals against an employee or student who, in good faith, files a grievance, complaint or report of violations of law, rule, regulation, policy or other misconduct.

C. Employees who engage in retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to dismissal from employment.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. For purposes of this Policy, the term employee includes, but is not limited to: all faculty, Administration employees, Staff employees, Temporary employees, all graduate assistants and other student employees, or any other employee classifications that may be developed by the Florida Board of Governors or the University of South Florida Board of Trustees.

B. For purposes of this Policy, the term student includes, but is not limited to, any individual who is enrolled in an on or off campus program leading to the award of academic or course credit from the USF System. Such enrollment may be for day or night programs whether full time or part time, regardless of the number of hours or days attending classes.

C. For purposes of this Policy, retaliation, retribution or reprisal (hereafter referred to as retaliation) is defined as adverse action taken against an employee or student as a result of an employee or student’s good faith reporting of violations of law, rule, regulation policy or other misconduct.

D. For purposes of this Policy, good faith is defined as an honest belief, with the absence of malice or intent to defraud or seek unscrupulous advantage.

E. For purposes of this Policy, examples of adverse actions include, but are not limited to: the discharge, suspension, transfer or demotion of an employee; the withholding of bonuses; reduction in salary or benefits; giving deflated performance evaluations; or the inappropriate assignment of low grades.
IV. REPORTING RETALIATION, RETRIBUTION OR REPRISALS

A. An employee or student who believes retaliation may have been taken against them as a result of filing a grievance, complaint or report of violations of law, rule, regulation, policy or other misconduct, should immediately report the retaliation to their next level supervisor, if feasible, otherwise, reports of retaliation should be made as follows:

1. Retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or discrimination should be reported to the Office of Diversity & Equal Opportunity.

2. Retaliation for filing an employment grievance should be reported to Human Resources/Employee Relations.

3. Any retaliation complaint by faculty, graduate student employees, or students should be reported to the Provost’s Office.

4. All other retaliation complaints, including whistleblower complaints as defined by Florida Statute §112.3187, should be reported to the Office of University Audit & Compliance.

B. An appropriate and timely review and response will be provided to an employee or student who alleges retaliation, consistent with USF System policy, rules and regulations.

Regional campuses and separately accredited institutions may have unique characteristics. Students, faculty and staff must check with their individual campuses and apply System-wide policies in conjunction and consistent with the specific characteristics and guidelines applicable to those campuses.

*Current Responsible Office: USF System Services

*Refer to the appropriate Responsible Office website for a current name of the Vice President or other Responsible Officer.

History: New 12-16-04, Amended 5-11-17 (technical).