WALTON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION POLICY

Walton County is committed to providing a workplace that promotes an open discussion of operations, policies, and practices. Accordingly, anyone with reason to believe the County is violating or not complying with state or federal statutes, rules or regulations is encouraged to report the concern to the County Administrator, any member of County management, or to a County Commissioner.

Any employee, volunteer, vendor, or member of the public who reports suspected law violations, fraud, or abuse will not be terminated or otherwise retaliated against for making the report.

The report will be investigated and even if determined to be unfounded and without merit, the individual making the report will not be retaliated against, providing reporting is not frivolous, libelous, or fraudulent as defined in Florida State Statute 817.49. There will be no punishment for reporting perceived problems, including no termination, demotion, suspension, harassment, or any other type of discrimination.

Except as specifically authorized by Florida Statute, all information received or produced from fact-finding or other investigations of suspected misconduct, law violations, fraud, or abuse are confidential and exempt from the provisions of Florida State Statute 119, Public Records Laws until such time as the investigation is complete and the report on the investigation is prepared.

There are several ways to make a report:

- Verbally submit the report to the County Administrator of any member of management, or
- Verbally submit the report to a County Commissioner, or
- Submit the report in writing to the Walton County Human Resource Office

NOTE: Florida's "Whistle-blower's Act" provides protection against retaliatory action to those reporting information. See F.S. 112.3187 to 112.31895 for details.

Approved 12/09/14