

Frequently Asked Questions

In April 2008, the A&M System launched the Risk & Misconduct Hotline, which provides faculty, staff, students and members of the public with a mechanism for anonymously reporting possible improprieties within the A&M System. The Hotline is managed by EthicsPoint, an independent third party provider of employee reporting systems. Since the launch of the Hotline, many questions have arisen regarding its purpose, how to use it and how the information will be used. The following are the most frequently asked questions.

Q: What is the Risk & Misconduct Hotline?

The Risk & Misconduct Hotline is a comprehensive reporting tool used to assist management and employees in working together to address misconduct and wrongdoing in the A&M System.

Q. Why do we need the Risk & Misconduct Hotline?

- We believe that our faculty, staff and students are our most important assets. By creating open channels of communication, we can promote positive work and educational environments.
- Publicly traded companies are required by law to have an anonymous reporting mechanism to address accounting and auditing fraud. Although not a requirement for institutions of higher education, an effective reporting system can be the A&M System's most effective tool in promoting ethical behavior, in addition to mitigating the various risks facing the A&M System.

Q. Does management really want me to report?

The answer to this is definitely yes. In fact, we *need* you to report. You know what is going on in your workplace - both the good and the bad. By reporting an activity that you have concerns about, you can minimize the potential negative impact to the A&M System, its employees and its students.

Q. What type of things should I report?

The Hotline can be used for reporting possible misconduct or wrongdoing in any areas of the A&M System. The most frequent areas in which reports are submitted include accounting and finance, human resources, research, athletics, risk and safety, medical, information technology and academic affairs.

Q. How do I file a report?

You can file a report on the Internet by clicking on the Risk & Misconduct Hotline link in the footer section of any System member's homepage or by going to www.ethicspoint.com and selecting the member involved. You can also call 1-888-501-3850 toll free to speak to an EthicsPoint call specialist. All reports can be submitted anonymously.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How can I remain anonymous in this technological age?

A report submitted from home, from a neighbor's computer, or from any Internet portal will remain secure and anonymous. An Internet portal never identifies a visitor by screen name and the EthicsPoint system strips away Internet addresses so that anonymity is maintained. EthicsPoint *does not* generate or maintain any internal connection logs with IP addresses, so no information linking your computer to EthicsPoint is available. However, as a reporting party, you need to ensure that the information contained in the report does not reveal your identity by accident. For example, including statements like "From my cube next to Jan Smith..." or "In my 33 years..." could identify you to other parties.

Q. Where do these reports go? Who can access them?

Hotline reports are entered directly on the EthicsPoint secure server, not an A&M System server, to prevent any possible breach in security. The reports are made available to only a few individuals designated by each A&M System member. These individuals are then responsible for reviewing the reported information and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken.

Q. What if my boss or other managers are involved in a violation? Won't they get the report and start a cover-up?

The Hotline and report distribution are designed to prevent an implicated party from being notified or being granted access to reports in which they are named.

Q. What if I remember something important about the incident after I filed the report? Or what if there are questions concerning my report?

When you file a report on the Hotline via the Internet or through the call center, you receive a unique user name and are asked to choose a password. You can return to the Hotline again either by Internet or telephone and access the original report to add additional information. We suggest that you return to the site within three to five days to answer any questions posted by the assigned reviewer. As with your initial report, any responses or additional postings will be anonymous.

Q. How do I know if anything is done with my report?

Once a report has been filed, the responsible individual(s) will post a notification to the reporter informing them that their report was received. Once the report has been reviewed, the responsible individual(s) will post a notification that the review has been complete. The reporter can view these postings by logging onto the Hotline using their unique report key and password.