The University encourages individuals to bring forward information and/or complaints about violations of state or federal law, University policy, rules, or regulations. Retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports and/or participates in the investigation of alleged violations, or who assists others in making such a report, is strictly forbidden.

Who does the policy apply to?

The Policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, contractors and affiliated persons on all UConn campuses, including UConn Health.

What is retaliation?

Per the Policy, retaliation is defined as, “Any adverse action taken, or threatened against an individual because they have, in good faith, reported an allegation concerning the violation of state or federal law, University policy, rule, or regulation, or because they have participated in any manner with an investigation of such an allegation, or in an effort to deter an individual from doing so.”

What is a good-faith vs. a bad-faith report?

A good-faith report is a report made with an honest and reasonable belief that a university-related violation of law or policy may have occurred. This does not mean that the report must lead to a policy violation or be substantiated in order to be considered made in good-faith.

A bad-faith report is a report made that is knowingly false and/or made with malicious intent. This policy does not protect an individual who knowingly files a report or provides information as part of an investigation that is false or is filed in bad faith.
What behaviors may be considered retaliatory?

- unsubstantiated adverse performance evaluations or disciplinary action;
- adverse decisions relating to the terms or conditions of employment or education;
- interference with or denial of promotion or advancement opportunities (whether employment-related or academic);
- reduction in a student’s grade;
- interference with or denial of participation in University programs or activities;
- unfounded negative job references or interfering with one’s job search;
- denial or removal of co-authorship on a publication;
- repeated intimidation or humiliation, derogatory or insulting remarks, or social isolation which may occur indirectly or directly from co-workers and/or a supervisor;
- physical threats and/or destruction of personal or state property

It’s important to note that these behaviors in and of themselves are not retaliatory unless they are found to be in response to an individual who has engaged in a protected activity under the Policy. This is often referred to as a “causal connection” between the protected activity and the adverse action.

What is protected activity under the Policy?

Activity that is protected by the Policy includes:

- good-faith reporting, whether internally or externally;
- inquiring about suspected wrongful or unlawful activity;
- assisting others in making such a report;
- participating in an investigation or proceeding related to suspected wrongful or unlawful activity

What resources exist to report potential retaliation?

There are several resources for reporting suspected retaliatory behavior. First, you can report to the office in which is/was investigating the original matter. For example, if you reported a discrimination allegation and are working with the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), we would encourage you to report the retaliation allegations to them.

Another option is to report it directly to the Office of University Compliance by emailing one of our staff members listed on our Contact Us website or calling our office at 860-482-2530 (UConn) or 860-679-1969 (UConn Health).

Lastly, you can utilize the University’s 24/7 ReportLine by calling and speaking with a call specialist or by submitting a written report through the Reportline website. For more information on the reporting process, please visit our website at: https://compliance.uconn.edu/reporting-concerns/reporting-overview/.