

Policy subject: Protection of Whistleblowers Against Discrimination Policy	Policy number: 24/P.D/2024	Date of last revision: 2024/11/15
Implementing body: Administrative Affairs Department	Implementing start date: 2024/11/20	Policy reference: Planning and Development Department

1. Overview:

Palestine Ahliya University is dedicated to maintaining an ethical, transparent, and accountable environment for all members of its community. The Protection of Whistleblowers Against Discrimination Policy encourages the reporting of unethical behaviours and ensures that whistleblowers are safeguarded from retaliation or discrimination. This policy establishes a clear and safe reporting system, fostering integrity and accountability within the University.

2. Objectives:

- **Encourage Reporting:** Provide safe avenues for reporting misconduct, including corruption, fraud, harassment, safety violations, and discrimination.
- **Ensure Protection:** Safeguard whistleblowers from retaliation or discrimination for reporting in good faith.
- **Promote Accountability:** Cultivate a culture of transparency and ethical conduct.
- **Legal Compliance:** Comply with laws protecting whistleblowers.
- **Offer Support:** Provide necessary support, including guidance and legal or psychological assistance, to whistleblowers.

3.

Scope:

This policy applies to all members of the Palestine Ahliya University community (students, faculty, staff, contractors, visitors) involved in University-related activities. It covers all types of misconduct and unethical behavior, including academic violations, financial misconduct, and harassment, as well as all reporting methods (written, verbal, anonymous).

4. Statements:

- **Commitment to Protection:** The University protects individuals who report misconduct from retaliation, including harassment, job termination, or discrimination.
- **Zero Tolerance for Retaliation:** Retaliation against whistleblowers will result in disciplinary actions, including termination or expulsion.
- **Reporting and Investigation:** Reports will be confidential, with investigations conducted fairly. Whistleblowers can remain anonymous, and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.
- **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The University will protect the identity of whistleblowers and respect requests for anonymity where possible.

5. Procedures:

1. Reporting Misconduct or Concerns:

- **Whistleblower Channels:** Reports can be made through a designated Whistleblowing Officer, anonymous reporting platforms, or written reports via email or post.
- **Types of Misconduct:** Reports should cover corruption, harassment, fraud, safety issues, violations of University policies, and other misconduct.

2. Investigation and Follow-Up:

- **Investigation Process:** The designated officer will assess and investigate the reported concern fairly and impartially. External or internal investigators may be appointed.
- **Confidentiality:** The identity of the whistleblower will be protected, and only necessary parties will have access to information.
- **Outcome:** After investigation, appropriate actions will be taken, and the whistleblower will be informed of the outcome, if confidentiality allows.

3. Protection Against Retaliation:

- **No Retaliation Policy:** Retaliation, such as job termination, harassment, or altered academic standing, is strictly prohibited.
- **Reporting Retaliation:** Whistleblowers who experience retaliation should report it immediately through designated channels for investigation and action.

4. Support for Whistleblowers:

- **Emotional and Psychological Support:** The University offers confidential counseling services for whistleblowers to manage any stress or anxiety.
- **Legal Support:** Legal guidance on rights and protections related to whistleblowing is available.

5. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:

- The University will regularly monitor and review the implementation of the policy and gather feedback to improve the process and effectiveness of protection measures.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

1.	Resolution Rate of Whistleblower Complaints
2.	Number of Cases Utilizing Legal Protection