

# **SUMMARY OF UMCES GUIDANCE**

## **for the Communication of Suspected Unethical or Illegal Conduct**

### **(Whistleblower Protections)**

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#### Whistleblower Complaints

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) has a responsibility to conduct its affairs ethically and in compliance with the law. If you suspect that a University employee or contractor is engaged in improper or illegal conduct, the University has policies and procedures that allow you to “blow the whistle” on this behavior and protect you from retaliation. Maryland also has a specific Whistleblower Law that protects employees who make good faith reports about abuse of authority, gross mismanagement or waste, substantial and specific dangers to public health and safety, or violations of law. Maryland’s Whistleblower Law applies to all State employees.

#### Federal Grants & Contracts

Employees who work on Federal Government grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or other awards may report complaints of actual or suspected misconduct to a variety of Federal employees and are protected from discharge, demotion, or other forms of discrimination or retaliation. (Employees who do not work on Federal Government agreements are also protected from retaliation and may report complaints to a variety of University and State of Maryland employees.)

#### UMCES Guidance

The following Guidance is necessary to comply with new federal whistleblower protections. It sets forth the University’s guidelines and procedures related to filing a complaint of suspected or actual illegal or unethical conduct and complaints of retaliation for good faith reporting.