

**Standard Operating Policy**  
**TVAREF Addendum – 03A – Whistleblower Policy**  
**Original Date – January 5, 2015**

**Whistleblower Policy for the Tampa VA Research and Education Foundation  
(TVAREF)**

This policy is intended to encourage the Board of Directors (Board), staff (paid and volunteer) and others to report suspected or actual occurrence(s) of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events (behaviors or practices, i.e., fraud, errors in financial reporting, misrepresentation or false statements) without retribution.

1. The Whistleblower should promptly report, in writing or by e-mail, the suspected or actual event to his/her supervisor. The supervisor will inform the Executive Director who in turn will inform the Board.

2. If the Whistleblower is uncomfortable or otherwise reluctant to report to his/her supervisor, then the Whistleblower can report the event to the next highest or another level of management, including the Executive Director or a member of the Board. A report of the incident should be made in writing or by e-mail to the individuals listed above or to the TVAREF office at [TVAREF@tampavaref.org](mailto:TVAREF@tampavaref.org)

**3. The Whistleblower may also file a disclosure anonymously by submitting the facts of the incident via:**

- Fax - (813) 779-8652
- Telephone – (813) 780-2623, Ext. 101 or 103
- Mail - TVAREF, PO Box 1630, Zephyrhills, FL 33539-1630.

4. The Whistle blower shall receive no retaliation or retribution for a report that was provided in good faith – that was not done primarily with malice to damage another or the organization.

5. A Whistleblower who makes a report that is not done in good faith is subject to discipline, including termination of the Board or employee relationship, or other legal means to protect the reputation of the organization and members of its Board and staff.

6. Anyone who retaliates against the Whistleblower (who reported an event in good faith) will be subject to disciplinary action including termination.

7. Crimes against person or property, such as assault, rape, burglary, etc., should immediately be reported to local law enforcement personnel.

8. Supervisors, managers and/or Board members who receive the reports must promptly act to investigate and/or resolve the issue (allegation).

9. The Chairperson and President of the Board (Chairperson) will convene a Board of Inquiry (BOI). The BOI will be composed of the Executive Director or his designee and two other TVAREF employees who are selected by the Chairperson. The BOI will provide a report of their inquiry along with any recommendation(s) within 45 days from the convening of the BOI. The Board of Directors will review the findings of the BOI along with their recommendation and determine the disposition of the allegation which may include disciplinary action up to termination. The individual against who the allegation(s) was (were) made may appeal to the Board. The Board will consider any additional facts submitted. The Board will then issue a final determination.

10. The identity of the Whistleblower, if known, shall remain confidential to those persons directly involved in applying this policy, unless the issue requires investigation by law enforcement, in which case members of the organization are subject to subpoena.

11. Any report of suspected or actual occurrence(s) of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events (behaviors or practices, i.e., fraud, errors in financial reporting, misrepresentation or false statements) made against a statutory board member or employee of the VA, who has been delegated to work for TVAREF, will be reported to the Director of the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital or his or her designee for disposition by the VA.

William R. Gower, Jr., Ph.D.  
President and Chairman of the Board  
TVAREF