

American Elasmobranch Society Whistleblower Policy

The American Elasmobranch Society (AES) requires elected Officers, members of the Board of Governors and all other members to observe the high standards of professional behavior and personal ethics as stated in The Code of Ethics. All members of the AES must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting: It is the responsibility of all Officers, Governors, and general members to comply with the Code and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

No Retaliation: No Officer, Governor or member who in good faith reports a violation of the AES Code of Ethics shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse consequence. Any member who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of membership in the Society. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable members and others to raise serious concerns within the Society prior to seeking resolution outside the Society.

Reporting Violations: Violations of the AES Code of Ethics should be reported to the President of the Society in writing immediately after the violation has occurred. The report should include all the pertinent documentation needed for the President to investigate the violation. The President will serve, *ex officio*, on an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the President to investigate the Code violation. The committee shall consist of five senior members of the AES who will determine the validity of the violation and report to the President.

Accounting and Auditing Matters: The AES Executive Committee shall review the annual audit of income and expenditures each year prior to the submission of IRS Form 990. They shall report to the President any concerns or complaints regarding accounting practices, or auditing.

Acting in Good Faith: Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code of Ethics must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a Code violation.

Confidentiality: Violations or suspected violations must be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations: The President will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.