

# AMERICAN AUTOIMMUNE RELATED DISEASES ASSOCIATION

## Employee Protection (Whistleblower) Policy

The American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA) is committed to facilitating open and honest communications relevant to its governance, finances, and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. It is important that AARDA be apprised about unlawful or improper behavior including, but not limited to, any of the following conduct:

- theft;
- financial reporting that is intentionally misleading;
- improper or undocumented financial transactions;
- improper destruction of records;
- improper use of assets;
- violations of the AARDA conflict-of-interest policy; and
- any other improper occurrence regarding cash, financial procedures, or reporting.

If any employee reasonably believes that some policy, practice, or activity of AARDA is in violation of law, a written complaint must be filed by the employee with the Executive Director /President.

It is the intent of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association to adhere to all laws and regulations that apply to the organization, and the underlying purpose of this policy is to support the organization's goal of legal compliance. The support of all employees is necessary to achieving compliance with various laws and regulations. An employee is protected from retaliation only if the employee brings the alleged unlawful activity, policy, or practice to the attention of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association and provides the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. The protection described below is available only to employees who comply with this requirement.

Any employee who has a concern regarding an action concerning AARDA's governance, finances, or compliance with all applicable laws and regulations should raise the concern with a supervisor, the Executive Director/President, or the Director, Finance and Administration.

If for any reason the employee does not believe these channels of communication are adequate, the concern should be reported immediately to either the chair of the board or the chair of the Audit Committee. Anonymous reports will be accepted, and all reports will be handled on a confidential basis. The contact information for the board chair and the chair of the Audit Committee appears below.

The board chair or the chair of the Audit Committee will coordinate the investigation, and AARDA will take appropriate action as it deems justifiable by the circumstances.

The American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association will not retaliate against an employee who, in good faith, has made a protest or raised a complaint against some practice of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association or of another individual or entity with whom the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association has a business relationship, on the basis of a reasonable belief that the practice is in violation of law.

The American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association will not retaliate against employees who disclose or threaten to disclose to a supervisor or a public body any activity, policy, or practice of the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association that the employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law, a rule or a regulation mandated pursuant to law, or is in violation of a clear mandate of public policy concerning the health, safety/welfare, or protection of the environment.

This policy is to be posted in the AARDA office, included in the personnel manual, and communicated to all new staff as part of their orientation. In addition, every year, after the annual election of the board chair and after the chair of the Audit Committee has been selected, the director, finance and administration, will have the responsibility of updating the contact information for both of those individuals and then sending the policy with the updated contact information to all staff.