CALLING ALL HEROES

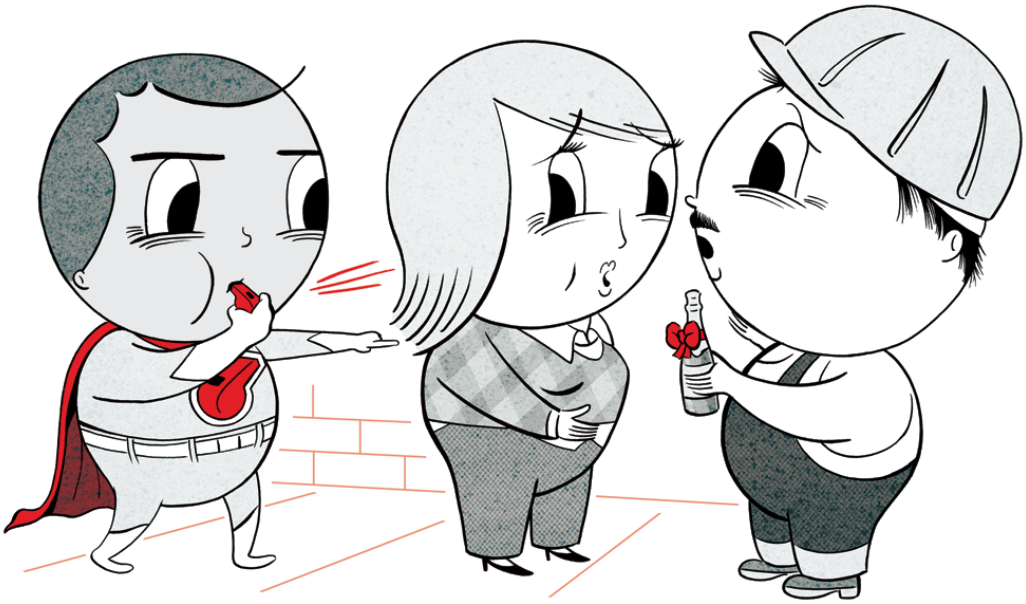
How the Whistleblower Code protects people like you

SEEC
SEATTLE ETHICS & ELECTIONS COMMISSION

You're an honest, dedicated public servant. You've devoted your career to public service and take pride in what you accomplish. Hopefully, you'll spend your whole career with the City of Seattle alongside co-workers who share your commitment to honor and excellence. But... What if you saw a co-worker doing their job in a way that endangered the public's health or safety? What if you saw a colleague wasting your department's budget? What if you saw a manager abusing their authority or violating a law? What should you do?

You're Right To Report a Wrong

The City Can't Solve Problems It Doesn't Know About



YOU DON'T NEED SUPERPOWERS to do the right thing. If you suspect misconduct or know of wrongdoing, be part of the solution by making a report to the Ethics and Elections Commission. It's simple: call us at 684-8500, e-mail us at ethicsandelections@seattle.gov, or stop by our offices on the 40th floor of the Municipal Tower.

We can talk to you about the next steps to take, such as what needs to be put in writing, and guide you through the process. We can answer any questions and help you to protect yourself under the Whistleblower Code.

Once we've received your report, we'll take it from there. Sometimes we take a preliminary look into a complaint and ►

refer it to another office. If we do, we keep your name confidential while a thorough, independent investigation is completed. Or we may open our own independent investigation.

Of course, there are some things the Whistleblower Protection Code doesn't cover. If you are reporting your own misconduct or making a report in bad faith, filing a report with us won't protect you. Or if you believe that a personnel action wasn't right—you were denied a promotion you should have received, or unfairly disciplined, or any similar workplace action unrelated to an ethics violation report—that can't be investigated by our office. (You may want to contact the Civil Service Commission with these kinds of issues.)

YOUR SECRET IDENTITY

If you make a report to our office, we will keep your identity confidential unless we receive a court order requiring us to disclose your identity. We take our responsibility to protect whistleblowers very seriously.

You're Protected When You Take a Stand

Zero Tolerance for Retaliation

UNDER THE WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION CODE, there is zero tolerance for retaliating against an employee who makes a good faith report to our office. But what do you do if after making a report, you suddenly find yourself demoted, reassigned, denied a promotion or face some similar adverse change in the terms of your employment?

You have 30 days from the date you believe you have been retaliated against to file a written complaint with the Mayor's office specifying how you were retaliated against and what you would like done to rectify the situation.

The Mayor's office has 30 days in which to respond to your complaint. If you aren't satisfied with that response, you have 15 days to ask the Mayor's office for a hearing before a state administrative law judge.

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

The SEEC is an independent City Commission that administers and enforces four codes covering Whistleblower Protection, Ethics, Elections, and Lobbying. The six member SEEC staff investigates allegations of wrongdoing, and provides advice and training to all levels of government. The Commission has the authority to impose fines for violations of the Ethics, Elections, and Lobbying Disclosure Codes.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

The SEEC conducts regular trainings that are advertised through the Personnel Department. We're also happy to come to your office and discuss the Codes we administer with you or your entire team.

If you want to know more about how the Whistleblower Protection Code works for you, give us a call or stop by our office. If you'd like, you can review the Code yourself at SMC 4.20.800 through 4.20.860. You can also visit us at www.seattle.gov/ethics or on the inweb at inweb/ethics.

BE BRAVE AND BE SMART:

report any wrongdoing to the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission. It's part of what it means to be a public servant, taking pride in doing your part to protect the City and the citizens it serves.

COMMISSION MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 94729
Seattle, WA 98124-4729

COMMISSION STREET ADDRESS:
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 4010
Seattle, WA 98104

MAILSTOP: SMT-40-10
PHONE: (206) 684-8500 Fax: (206) 684-8590
E-MAIL: ethicsandelections@seattle.gov
WEB: http://www.seattle.gov/ethics

SEEC
SEATTLE ETHICS & ELECTIONS COMMISSION