

## **Whistle blower policy: Animal care and use complaints**

### Purpose

To outline a process that will assure community members that all good faith concerns regarding animal care and welfare, and complaints regarding animal mistreatment will be received and investigated without fear of reprisal or retaliation of any kind.

### Scope

This policy applies to concerns voiced by Board of Governor members, College employees, appointees, volunteers, students, visitors, consultants and contractors engaged by the college. The use of the term “college community” shall be considered to include all of these parties. This policy also applies to members of the public that witness interactions of Georgian College employees or students and animals in our care or outlined in our protocols.

This policy applies to Georgian College employees and students that are the subject of concerns voiced by members of the college community or general public.

### Definitions

Whistle blowing - The reporting of serious misconduct, wrongdoing, or illegal activity occurring within the College, including but not limited to a criminal offense; a significant concern of animal mistreatment, improper handling, animal harm, animal abuse or any other negligent activity or actions regarding animals in the care of Georgian College’s Veterinary Technician or Assistant programs.

CCAC: Canadian Council on Animal Care is a national agency, funded in part by the federal granting councils, that provides updated guidelines and policy statements on experimental animal care and use

ACC: Animal Care Committee is comprised of the Animal Care Committee Coordinator (ACC Coordinator), staff veterinarian, non-animal user, community representative, student representative(s) and other members as mandated by CCAC. The ACC reports to the Dean and Associate Dean of Health, Wellness and Sciences. The role of the ACC is to approve and oversee animal use in teaching labs.

Animal Welfare or Complaint form: an incident form that will be filled out by the person(s) witnessing the alleged incident. The form is available through communication with the ACC Coordinator.

Minor Complaint: A complaint that concerns an action that is perceived as inappropriate but would not cause physical harm to the animal.

Major Complaint: A complaint that concerns any action that could endanger the physical well being of the animal.

Protocols – formally referred to as AUP, animal utilization protocol. If an animal is used in a course for teaching purposes, the faculty member must have pre-approval of their protocol by

the ACC. The protocol outlines items such as course details, species of animal required, number of animals desired and specific details about skills taught using the animal.

### Policy

The College has established a process for whistle blowing, in the interests of fostering a transparent and accountable environment. High quality care and welfare of animals in our programs is extremely important to us. Members of the college community and public are encouraged to submit all good faith concerns and complaints, without fear of reprisal or retaliation of any kind.

### Procedure

#### 1. Submission of complaint

1.1 The whistle-blower shall contact the Program Coordinator of the Veterinary Technician Program at 705-728-1968 to begin the formal complaint process. During summer vacation, the contact will be the Summer Coordinator of the Veterinary Assistant Program (VETA) at the same phone number.

1.2 In the event the Program Coordinator is implicated the submission should be made to the Associate Dean, Health Wellness and Science responsible for the ACC. The Associate Dean is available at 705-728-1968.

1.3 The whistle-blower will be asked to submit an "Animal Welfare Concern or Complaint Form".

#### 2. Investigation

2.1 The Animal Welfare Complaint Form will be forwarded to the Animal Care Committee Coordinator. The ACC Coordinator will review the complaint form and classify the complaint as minor or major. During the summer absence of the ACC Coordinator, this decision will be made by the VETA Summer Coordinator in consultation with the Associate Dean. The ACC Coordinator will institute the investigation of all submissions considered major. Minor complaints will be resolved informally. Submissions will only be acted upon if the information provided in the preliminary investigation indicates the disclosure can be properly investigated and is in the interest of maintaining a high level of animal care.

2.2 The Associate Dean will be informed that a major complaint has been made and an investigation has commenced.

2.3 Major complaints will be referred to Campus Safety and Security for investigation.

2.4 The Animal Care Committee Coordinator will ensure the whistleblower is advised of the receipt of the submission and the status of the subsequent investigation.

### 3. Reporting

3.1 The investigation will be conducted following the procedure outlined in the Georgian College Student Code of Conduct Appendix 2, Section 1.4.3.

3.2 Reporting will follow the procedure outlined in Appendix 2, Sections 1.4.3. and 1.4.4

3.3 Decision and Sanction will follow procedures described in Appendix 2 Section 1.4.5