

LEA HOTLINE POLICY

PURPOSE

Promontory School is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive school environment by promoting accountability, transparency, and timely response to concerns raised through the USBE hotline system. The purpose of this LEA Hotline Policy is to establish a clear, accessible process for reporting concerns in alignment with Utah Administrative Rule R277-123. This policy ensures that all reports are handled promptly, confidentially, and in accordance with state requirements, while protecting the rights of all individuals involved.

Rule/Law: Utah Code § 67-21-3

POLICY

ESTABLISHMENT OF LEA HOTLINE

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has established a hotline to provide an avenue for citizens, including employees and contractors, to report improper governmental activities including:

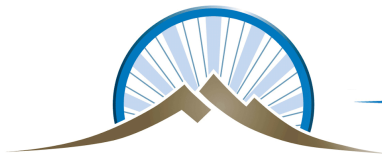
1. Waste or misuse of public funds, property, or manpower
2. Violations of a law, rule, or regulation applicable to the government
3. Gross mismanagement
4. Abuse of authority
5. Unethical conduct

See [Utah Admin. Rules R277-123](#).

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Utah Code §67-21-3 prohibits public employers from taking retaliatory action against their employees for reporting the actions listed above in good faith, to the appropriate authorities. A report is made in good faith when an individual provides information they reasonably believe to be true and is not knowingly making a false or malicious allegation; a report may still be considered in good faith even if the concern is ultimately not substantiated. A person is presumed to have communicated in good faith if they have given written notice or otherwise formally communicated the conduct to USBE, a member of the State Board of Education, the LEA, or to a government official with authority to audit the LEA.

See [Utah Code § 67-21-3](#).



FILING A COMPLAINT WITH USBE

The LEA hotline process is intended for concerns involving alleged improper governmental activities and is not intended to replace standard school communication channels or grievance procedures for routine operational concerns such as grades, placement decisions, discipline, or general school disagreements, unless such concerns involve alleged violations of law or misuse of public resources.

Complaints should be submitted in writing directly to the USBE hotline using the prescribed online forms provided by USBE.

If school personnel, including Administration and Governing Board members, receive a hotline complaint directly from a complainant, they should inform the complainant that complaints must be submitted directly to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) hotline.

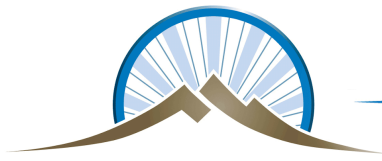
USBE guidance is as follows:

Complainants should also submit any evidence that supports the complaint. Essential information includes specifics on “who, what, where, when” as well as any other details that may be important such as information on other witnesses, documents, and pertinent evidence. Due to limited resources, USBE is unable to accept complaints that are not supported by evidence or provide a means for us to investigate the problem further. At a minimum, USBE requests that complaints use the form as a guide to ensure the necessary information is provided. Submit complaints using the hotline link available on the school website or via the following methods:

1. Send an email to audit@schools.utah.gov.
2. Call the dedicated phone number (801) 538-7813 (if USBE does not answer, a message may be left and USBE will respond as soon as possible depending on hotline volume)
3. Mail a concern to:
Utah State Board of Education
Internal Audit Department
Attention: Debbie Davis
PO Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

Processing of Hotline Complaints by USBE

1. After receipt of the complaint, USBE will appoint an investigator to review the allegation and any evidence provided by the complainant. The list below represents some of the factors that are considered during the screening and prioritization process.
 - a. Does the complaint involve actions by a person subject to the State Board of Education’s authority?

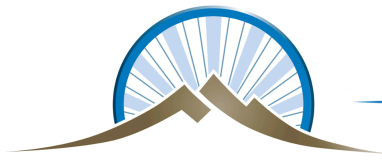


- b. Does the complaint pertain to improper governmental activities? Disagreements with administration decisions or actions taken by Board members that are within the law will not be investigated.
 - c. Has the complainant taken appropriate steps to resolve the issue with the school? If the school is not responsive, the concern relates to school administration, or the complainant desires anonymity, consideration will be increased.
 - d. What is the timing and frequency of alleged improper activity? Allegations of improper activities that are recent and/or on-going may receive a higher priority.
 - e. Should the allegation be investigated by another entity? Are there other agencies that have oversight of the complaint? Is a member of the State Board of Education or the audit committee being accused?
 - f. Can the complaint be efficiently and effectively investigated? Overly broad or vague complaints or complaints where evidence is unavailable may be declined or receive a low priority.
2. The investigator communicates to USBE:
 - a. The allegation of the complaint
 - b. Any facts supporting or refuting the complaint
 - c. A recommendation based upon preliminary inquiry
 3. USBE decides the appropriate next action (if a member of the State Board of Education is the subject of the complaint they may not be included in this process):
 - a. Discontinue the investigation.
 - b. Continue with the investigation.
 - c. Refer the investigation to another agency.
 4. If the investigation proceeds, the Board of Education sets the following:
 - a. Time and resource budget.
 - b. Scope of the audit.
 5. The investigator completes the investigation.
 6. The investigator creates a report outlining the work performed and conclusions.
 7. The investigator provides the report to USBE.
 8. USBE addresses any findings noted in the report.

PROCESSING OF HOTLINE COMPLAINTS RECEIVED FROM USBE

Hotline complaints received by referral from the Internal Audit Department (IAD) of the Utah State Board of Education shall be reviewed and addressed by the school in accordance with Utah Administrative Rule R277-123.

Within forty-five (45) days of receiving the referral, the school shall provide a written update or summary to the Internal Audit Department describing actions taken, planned actions, or status of the review, even if the investigation remains ongoing.



Internal Procedures for Processing Hotline Complaints

Hotline complaints shall be overseen by the Executive Committee of the Governing Board. Any Executive Committee member with a conflict of interest related to the complaint shall recuse themselves. The Board Chair may appoint an alternate trustee to ensure impartial review.

The Executive Committee may, at its discretion, notify the full Governing Board of hotline complaints.

The Executive Committee may notify the full Governing Board when doing so supports appropriate governance oversight. In determining whether to notify the full board, the Executive Committee may consider factors such as legal compliance, financial impact, operational implications, or other significant risks, while maintaining confidentiality as required by law.

Discussion of hotline complaints will be handled in a manner consistent with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act; when appropriate and permitted by law, the Governing Board may discuss such matters in a closed session. Closed sessions shall be limited to purposes permitted under Utah Code 52-4.

The school shall work to address the issue and provide an update or summary of the status of the matter to the Internal Audit Department within forty-five (45) days.

Complaint Review Procedures

In order to ensure an orderly response to hotline complaints, the Executive Committee shall establish procedures that ensure appropriate communication, documentation, confidentiality, and investigation practices, including the following:

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall determine roles and responsibilities for the oversight and handling of hotline complaints.

The Executive Committee may assign investigation responsibilities to administration, legal counsel, human resources personnel, or an independent investigator as appropriate to ensure impartial review.

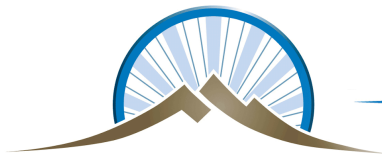
2. Good Faith Contact with Complainant

When contact information is available, the school will make prompt efforts to contact the complainant to:

- acknowledge receipt of the concern
- gather additional relevant information

The school will make at least two good faith attempts to contact the complainant when contact information is available. Contact attempts may include:

- phone
- email
- written communication



- other reasonable methods

3. Documentation of Response Efforts

The school shall maintain documentation regarding complaint response efforts, including:

- individual responsible for response
- method of contact
- date and time of contact attempts
- summary of information received
- resolution, corrective action, or next steps

4. Confidentiality and Privacy

Information related to hotline complaints and investigations shall be handled confidentially to the extent permitted by law and shared only with individuals who have a legitimate need to know. All disclosures shall comply with applicable privacy laws and policies, including:

- FERPA
- GRAMA
- employee privacy protections
- other applicable state and federal law

Nothing in this policy shall require disclosure of information protected under state or federal law.

5. Investigation Procedures

When an investigation is required, the school shall conduct the investigation in a manner consistent with:

- due process principles
- school policies
- applicable federal and state law
- Investigations shall be conducted fairly, objectively, and impartially.

Relevant information may be reviewed to determine appropriate corrective action.

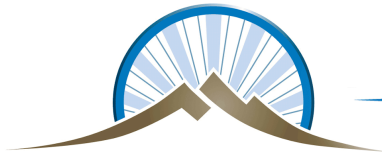
6. Reporting to the Internal Audit Department

The school shall provide required summaries, updates, and documentation to the Internal Audit Department within timelines required by Utah Administrative Rule R277-123 or other applicable law.

The LEA may respond to the IAD that:

- the allegation is being reviewed under local policy
- the allegation falls within LEA authority
- the allegation has been addressed consistent with applicable law

TRAINING REQUIREMENT



PROMONTORY

school of expeditionary learning

Governing Board members and applicable administrators shall complete training regarding LEA hotline requirements in accordance with Utah Administrative Rule R277-123 regarding:

- complaint intake procedures
- confidentiality requirements
- documentation practices
- investigation responsibilities

Training shall:

- occur periodically as required by law
- utilize materials provided by the Internal Audit Department