**Whistleblower Policy Template**

**Objective:**
This policy aims to establish a structured process for employees of [Your Company Name] to report suspected illegal or unethical conduct. It details the steps for reporting such activities and the protections granted to those who come forward.

**Definition of a Whistleblower:**
For the purposes of this policy, a whistleblower is an employee of [Your Company Name] who reports actions they believe to be illegal or unethical to designated authorities within the company. The whistleblower's role is not to investigate the activities or assign blame; these tasks are handled by the appropriate management team.

**Examples of Illegal or Dishonest Activities:**

* Breaking federal, state, or local laws
* Charging for services not provided or goods not delivered
* Misleading financial reporting

**Procedure(s) for Reporting:**
Employees who are aware of or suspect illegal or unethical conduct should report their concerns to their immediate supervisor or Human Resources. It is essential to use good judgment to avoid making unfounded accusations. Employees who deliberately make false claims will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Protections for Whistleblowers:**
There are two key areas of protection for whistleblowers: confidentiality and protection from retaliation.

1. **Confidentiality:**
* The confidentiality of the whistleblower will be protected to the extent possible. However, their identity might need to be revealed to conduct a thorough investigation, comply with legal requirements, and allow accused individuals to defend themselves.
1. **Protection from Retaliation:**
* [Your Company Name] will not tolerate retaliation against whistleblowers. This includes any negative employment actions such as firing, salary reduction, poor job assignments, or threats of physical harm.
* Whistleblowers who feel they are being retaliated against should contact Human Resources immediately. The protection from retaliation does not exempt whistleblowers from disciplinary action if they are found to have engaged in wrongdoing.

**Compliance with the Defend Trade Secrets Act (DTSA) – Protection from Liability for Confidential Disclosure of Trade Secrets to the Government or in Legal Proceedings:**

1. **Protection:**
* An individual will not be held criminally or civilly responsible under any federal or state trade secret law for revealing a trade secret if the disclosure:
	+ (A) is made:
		- (i) confidentially to a federal, state, or local government official, either directly or indirectly, or to an attorney; and
		- (ii) solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law; or
	+ (B) is made in a complaint or other document filed in a legal proceeding, provided that the filing is made under seal.
1. **Use of Trade Secret Information in Retaliation Lawsuits:**
* An individual who files a lawsuit for retaliation by an employer for reporting a suspected violation of law may disclose the trade secret to their attorney and use the trade secret information in the court proceeding if the individual:
	+ (A) files any document containing the trade secret under seal; and
	+ (B) does not disclose the trade secret except by court order.

**Investigation and Resolution:**

All reports of illegal or unethical activities will be promptly forwarded to the [Insert Name and Role], who will oversee the investigation and corrective actions.

**Inquiries:**

Employees with questions about this policy should contact [Insert Name and Role].

*This sample policy provides a thorough framework for organizations to implement, ensuring that employees are protected and supported when they report illegal or unethical activities.*