**Veterans and First Responders Ministry, Inc. Retaliation Policy**

**Adoption date: September 27th, 2024**

**Purpose:** This policy aims to provide a clear and fair process for preventing and addressing retaliation within the organization. It ensures that employees can report concerns without fear of adverse consequences.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors of the organization.

**Policy:**

**Non-Retaliation Statement:** The organization strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, reports a concern, participates in an investigation, or engages in any protected activity under applicable laws.

**Definitions:**

**Retaliation:** Any adverse action taken against an employee because they engaged in a protected activity. This includes, but is not limited to, termination, demotion, harassment, or any other form of discrimination.

**Protected Activity:** Actions such as reporting discrimination, harassment, safety concerns, unethical behavior, or participating in an investigation or legal proceeding related to such reports.

**Prohibited Conduct:**

Any form of retaliation against employees who report concerns or participate in investigations.

Adverse actions that could dissuade a reasonable person from reporting concerns or participating in investigations.

**Reporting Procedures:**

Employees who believe they have been subjected to retaliation should report it to [Designated Person/Department].

Reports can be made in person, via email, or through an anonymous reporting system.

**Investigation Process:**

All reports of retaliation will be promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated.

An impartial investigator, typically from HR or an external party, will be assigned to handle the investigation.

The investigator will gather relevant evidence, including interviews with the complainant, the accused, and any witnesses, as well as reviewing any pertinent documents or records.

The investigation will be conducted in a confidential manner to protect the privacy of all parties involved.

**Resolution:**

Based on the findings of the investigation, appropriate corrective and preventive actions will be taken.

Possible actions may include disciplinary measures, policy updates, additional training, or other measures to address and prevent future issues.

The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, while maintaining confidentiality regarding specific details.

**Confidentiality:**

The confidentiality of individuals involved in retaliation reports and investigations will be protected to the greatest extent possible.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to conduct a thorough investigation and implement corrective actions.

**No Retaliation Assurance:**

The organization assures that no employee will face retaliation for reporting concerns or participating in investigations.

Any employee found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Responsibilities:**

**Employees:** Report retaliation promptly and provide accurate information during investigations.

**Managers and Supervisors:** Support employees in reporting retaliation, ensure complaints are taken seriously, and cooperate with investigations.

**HR Department:** Conduct or oversee investigations, maintain confidentiality, and implement corrective actions.