

# **Town of West Fairlee Fraud Prevention Policy**

**Revised: May 23, 2011**

**Reviewed:**

Honest and ethical behavior is expected of all who work for and serve the Town of West Fairlee. However, fraud perpetrated by one self-serving individual can seriously undermine the public's trust and taints all who faithfully serve the Town.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism for Town employees, officers, residents, or contractors conducting business with the Town of West Fairlee to identify suspected cases of fraud and to immediately bring it to the attention of the Town Auditors or other officials

## **DEFINITION**

**Fraud is very different from errors or mistakes. Fraud is a deliberate act – an intentional deception to steal assets or to manipulate data for personal gain.** Examples of reportable actions which may indicate fraud include, but are not limited to, misappropriation of Town resources; substantial variation in the Town's financial reporting methodology from prior practice or from generally accepted accounting principles; falsification, concealment, or inappropriate destruction of Town financial records; and manipulation or circumvention of purchasing or other policies for personal gain.

## **REPORTS OF IRREGULARITY**

Town employees, officers or other individuals shall not be discharged, demoted, suspended, threatened, harassed, or discriminated against in any manner for raising reasonable questions concerning town financial statements or practices in accordance with this policy.

Any employee or other individual who has questions regarding the integrity of the Town's internal financial controls or questions regarding the accuracy or completeness of financial or other information used in or related to the Town's financial statements and reports; or who observes any questionable accounting practices or other irregularities and suspects fraud should immediately report this information to the Town Auditors or one of the other Town officials listed below.

The report should include a description of the matter or irregularity, the period of time during which the employee or individual observed the matter or irregularity, and any steps that the employee or individual has taken to investigate the matter or irregularity, including reporting it to a supervisor and the supervisor's reaction. The report may include, at option of the individual reporting, the individual's contact information if additional information is needed. However, a report shall not be deemed deficient because contact information was not included.

## **INVESTIGATION**

Upon receiving such a report, the town auditors shall investigate the issues identified in the report. The town auditors may consult with the selectboard, town manager, treasurer, any other Town employee, legal counsel and independent auditors as a part of their investigation. At the conclusion of the

investigation, the town auditors shall prepare a written response to the report, which shall be a public document.

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 1686(c), any town officer who willfully refuses or neglects to submit his or her books, accounts, vouchers, or tax bills to the auditors upon request, or to furnish all necessary information in relation thereto, shall be ineligible for reelection for the year ensuing and be subject to the penalties otherwise prescribed by law.

If you suspect fraud, please contact one of the following

Auditors: Jim McDade 333-3749  
Jon Molesworth 333-3774

Selectboard:	Bev Ash	333-4713	<a href="mailto:beverly.jo.ash@hitchcock.org">beverly.jo.ash@hitchcock.org</a>
	Fred Cook	333-9905	<a href="mailto:fredecook@earthlink.net">fredecook@earthlink.net</a>
	Bonnie Cray	333-9655	<a href="mailto:bonnie@myfairpoint.net">bonnie@myfairpoint.net</a>
	Delsie Hoyt	333-9717	<a href="mailto:delsie@kingdommoonrugs.com">delsie@kingdommoonrugs.com</a>
	Jim Brigham	333- 4725	<a href="mailto:CMCJimCB@aol.com">CMCJimCB@aol.com</a>

Treasurer: Rhonda Cook, 333-9696