Whistleblower Protection Policy

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, interns, and board members of Bastion Community of Resilience regardless of role or location, including those based in Louisiana and Texas. It is intended to promote ethical and lawful conduct by providing a safe and confidential way for individuals to report concerns about suspected misconduct, violations of law, unethical behavior, or unsafe practices.

Bastion encourages all individuals to speak up if they witness or suspect wrongdoing. You are protected when reporting concerns in **good faith**, including but not limited to:

- Fraud, embezzlement, or financial mismanagement
- Conflicts of interest or unethical conduct
- Violation of any federal, state, or local law
- Workplace safety hazards or OSHA violations
- Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation
- Abuse or neglect of a vulnerable person(s)
- Misuse of nonprofit funds or resources

Reports may be made directly and confidentially to your supervisor/manager, Human Resources, the Executive Director, or the Board Chair. Reports may also be made anonymously where possible. Bastion will carefully review, respond to, and address all concerns in a timely and confidential manner (unless made anonymously). Inquiries will be prompt, impartial, and as confidential as possible. The designated inquirer(s) may include HR representatives, board member(s), or third-party consultant(s). A summary of findings and any corrective actions will be documented and, where appropriate, shared with the reporter. Knowingly reporting false or malicious claims *are not* protected and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Retaliation is strictly prohibited against any individual who, in good faith, reports on a concern under this policy, participates in any part of the reporting and inquiry process, and/or declines to engage in suspected wrongdoing. Examples of retaliation include but are not limited to demotion, termination of employment, reduced pay/hours, reassignment, or harassment. Violators of this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

To maintain protection, employees must first notify their employer via the channels stated above of the violation before reporting it to external authorities, except in specific cases such as sexual abuse of a minor. However, if an individual feels internal reporting has not addressed the issue, they may report to:

- **IRS Whistleblower Office** (financial fraud): [www.irs.gov/compliance/whistleblower-office]
- **OSHA** (safety): [www.osha.gov]
- **State agencies**: Louisiana Attorney General, Texas Workforce Commission, or TWOC

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