

## **Middle Georgia Justice – Code of Ethics and Whistleblower Policy**

### ***Code of Ethics***

As an integral part of carrying out its mission, Middle Georgia Justice (“MGJ”) has adopted a code of ethics to guide its board members, contractors, volunteers, incubator participants, and staff in their conduct when acting on behalf of MGJ. The Code contains broad principles reflecting the types of behavior MGJ expects towards constituents, employees, peers and the public. The Code is intended to provide a framework for ethical decision-making, as no Code can provide specific guidance for all situations. This policy is not intended as a stand-alone policy. It does not embody the totality of MGJ’s ethical standards, nor does it answer every ethical question or issue that might arise. Rather, it is one element of a broader effort to create and maintain a high quality organization that makes ethical conduct the highest priority. The MGJ Board will periodically review this Code and update it as necessary. Board members, contractors, volunteers, and staff of MGJ will:

1. Exercise care, good faith and due diligence in organizational affairs.
2. Strive for excellence and transparency in all of our work, manage our resources effectively, and demonstrate professional respect and responsiveness to constituents and others.
3. Contribute to an organizational culture that respects the diverse, individual contributions of staff and leadership.
4. Respect the confidentiality of sensitive information about MGJ, its donors, grantees, board members, contractors, employees, and volunteers.
5. Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and fiduciary responsibilities.
6. For the Board of Directors, provide credible and effective oversight to the organization’s work.
7. Abide by the governing documents and policies of MGJ.
8. Be accountable for adhering to this Code of Ethics and Whistleblower Policy.
9. Act at all times in accordance with the highest ethical standards and in the best interest of MGJ, its constituents, and reputation.

### ***Compliance, Monitoring, and Reporting***

MGJ management is responsible for communicating this Code of Ethics to all employees, contractors, board members, and volunteers and for ensuring its contents are understood and followed. Alleged breaches of this Code, should be reported in accordance with the following Reporting of Unethical or Illegal Conduct Policy.

## **Reporting of Unethical or Illegal Conduct Policy (“Whistleblower Policy”)**

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this policy is to provide all employees, contractors, board members, incubator participants, and volunteers with guidelines for the reporting of unethical or illegal behavior by MGJ staff, board members, contractors, or volunteers.

### ***Policy***

MGJ is committed to lawful and ethical behavior in all of its activities and requires its employees, contractors, board members, incubator participants, and volunteers to conduct themselves in a manner that complies with all applicable laws and regulations and the highest ethical standards. If at any time an employee, contractor, board member, incubator participant, or volunteer has a concern regarding the propriety or legality of any action contemplated to be taken or that has been taken by MGJ or any other employee, contractor, board member, incubator participant, or volunteer, or believes that an action needs to be taken for MGJ to be in compliance with legal or ethical standards, that person should immediately contact the Executive Director or the President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer of MGJ.

### ***Handling of Reported Violations***

The Executive Committee shall address all reports of alleged illegal or unethical conduct. The Executive Director or any other MGJ Officer who receives a report alleging illegal or unethical conduct by an MGJ employee, representative, or incubator participant shall notify the Executive Committee of the MGJ Board whenever such a report is received.

All reports will be promptly investigated by the Executive Committee, but any member of the Executive Committee who is the subject of such a report shall not participate in any way in the investigation except to answer questions or requests for information from the Executive Committee. Every effort will be made to investigate a report of alleged misconduct as quickly and discretely as possible. Because of the need to investigate the report, correct a problem or prevent future problems, MGJ cannot promise complete confidentiality. The Executive Committee has the authority to retain outside legal counsel, accountants, private investigators or any other resource deemed necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations. If warranted by the investigation, the Executive Committee shall recommend appropriate corrective action to the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall reply to the complainant as appropriate. No employee, board member, contractor, incubator participant, or volunteer will be retaliated against, discriminated against, threatened or discharged or otherwise disciplined for reporting in good faith what he/she believes to be unethical or illegal conduct.