

# TAO Digital Whistle Blowing Policy

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**1. What does your policy cover?**

- 1. This anti-bribery policy exists to set out the responsibilities of TAO Digital and those who work for us in regard to observing and upholding our zero-tolerance position on bribery and corruption.
- 2. This Policy also exists to act as a source of information and guidance for all the affiliates, subsidiaries and their respective agents, employees, contractors, interns and volunteers. It helps employees recognize and deal with bribery and corruption issues, as well as understand their responsibilities.

## **2. Policy statement**

2.1 TAO Digitalis committed to conducting business in an ethical and honest manner and is committed to implementing and enforcing systems that ensure bribery is prevented. TAO Digital has zero-tolerance for bribery and corrupt activities. We are committed to acting professionally, fairly, and with integrity in all business dealings and relationships, wherever we operate.

2.2 TAO Digital will constantly uphold all laws relating to anti-bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which we operate including but not limited to the FCPA (Foreign Corrupt Practices Act) and the UK Bribery Act. In addition to this, TAO Digital will also follow all the third-party specific bribery and corruption issues.

2.3 TAO Digital recognizes that bribery and corruption are both illegal and unethical, either of these activities could cause serious damage to our reputation. It is that we commit to prevent bribery and corruption in our business and take our legal responsibilities seriously.

## **3. Who is covered by the policy?**

3.1 This anti-bribery policy applies to all employees (whether temporary or full time), consultants, contractors, trainees, interns, agents, sponsors, or any other person or persons associated with us (including third parties), or any of our subsidiaries or their employees, no matter where they are located. The policy also applies to Officers, Trustees, Board, at any level.

3.2 In the context of this policy, third-party refers to any individual or organization our company meets and works with. It refers to actual and potential clients, customers, suppliers, distributors, business contacts, agents, advisers, and government and public bodies – this includes their advisors, representatives and officials, politicians, and public parties. Any arrangements our company makes with a third party is subject to clear contractual terms, including specific provisions that require the third party to comply with at minimum.

## **4. Definition of bribery**

4.1 Bribery refers to the act of offering, giving, promising, asking, agreeing, receiving, accepting, or soliciting something of value or of an advantage so to induce or influence an action or decision.

4.2 A bribe refers to any inducement, reward, or object/item of value offered to another individual in order to gain commercial, contractual, regulatory, or personal advantage.

4.3 Bribery is not limited to the act of offering a bribe. If an individual is on the receiving end of a bribe and they accept it, they are also in breach of this policy.

4.4 Employees must not engage in any form of bribery, whether it be directly, passively (as described above), or through a third party (such as an agent or distributor). They must not accept bribes in any degree and if they are uncertain about whether something is a bribe or a gift or act of hospitality, they must seek further advice from the company's Human Resources manager.

## 5. What is and what is NOT acceptable

5.1 This section of the policy refers to 4 areas:

- Gifts and hospitality.
- Facilitation payments.
- Political contributions.
- Charitable contributions.

### (1) Gifts and hospitality

It is acceptable to receive normal and appropriate gestures of hospitality and goodwill (whether given to/received from third parties) so long as the giving or receiving of gifts meets the following requirements:

- It is not made with the intention of influencing the party to whom it is being given, to obtain or reward the retention of a business or a business advantage, or as an explicit or implicit exchange for favors or benefits.
- It is not made with the suggestion that a return favor is expected.
- It is in compliance with local law.
- It is given in the name of the company, not in an individual's name.
- It does not include cash.
- It is appropriate for the circumstances (e.g. giving small gifts around Christmas or as a small thank you to a company for helping with a large project upon completion).
- It is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time, taking into account the reason for the gift.
- It is given/received openly, not secretly.
- It is not selectively given to a key, influential person, clearly with the intention of directly influencing them.

Where it is inappropriate to decline the offer of a gift (i.e. when meeting with an individual of a certain religion/culture who may take offence), the gift may be accepted so long as it is declared to the Human Resources manager, who will assess the circumstances.

TAO Digital recognizes that the practice of giving and receiving business gifts varies between countries, regions, cultures, and religions, so definitions of what is acceptable and not acceptable will inevitably differ for each.

As good practice, gifts given and received should always be disclosed to the Human Resources manager. Any gifts from suppliers should always be disclosed.

The intention behind a gift being given/received should always be considered. If there is any uncertainty, the advice of the Human Resources manager should be sought.

## **(2) Facilitation Payments and Kickbacks**

TAO Digital does not accept and will not make any form of facilitation payments of any nature. We recognize that facilitation payments are a form of bribery that involves expediting or facilitating the performance of a public official for a routine governmental action. We recognize that they tend to be made by low level officials with the intention of securing or speeding up the performance of a certain duty or action.

TAO Digital does not allow kickbacks to be made or accepted. We recognize that kickbacks are typically made in exchange for a business favor or advantage.

## **(3) Political Contributions**

TAO Digital will not make donations, whether in cash, kind, or by any other means, to support any political parties or candidates. We recognize this may be perceived as an attempt to gain an improper business advantage.

## **(4) Charitable Contributions**

TAO Digital accepts (and indeed encourages) the act of donating to charities whether through services, knowledge, time, or direct financial contributions (cash or otherwise) – and agrees to disclose all charitable contributions it makes.

Employees must be careful to ensure that charitable contributions are not used to facilitate and conceal acts of bribery.

We ensure that all charitable donations made are legal and ethical under local laws and practices, and that donations are not offered/made without the approval of the Human Resources manager.

# **6. Employee Responsibilities**

6.1 As an employee of TAO Digital you must ensure that you read, understand, and comply with the information contained within this policy, and with any training or other anti-bribery and corruption information you are given.

6.2 All employees and those under our control are equally responsible for the prevention, detection, and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption. They are required to avoid any activities that could lead to, or imply, a breach of this anti-bribery policy.

6.3 If you have reason to believe or suspect that an instance of bribery or corruption has occurred or will occur in the future that breaches this policy, you must notify the Human Resources manager.

6.4 If any employee breaches this policy, they will face disciplinary action and could face termination for gross misconduct. TAO Digital has the right to terminate any employee if they breach this anti-bribery policy.

## **7. What happens if I need to raise a concern?**

7.1 This section of the policy covers 3 areas:

- How to raise a concern.
- What to do if you are a victim of bribery or corruption.
- Protection.

### **(1) How to raise a concern – Whistleblowing Procedure**

If you suspect that there is an instance of bribery or corrupt activities occurring in relation to TAO Digital you are encouraged to raise your concerns at as early a stage as possible. If you're uncertain about whether a certain action or behavior can be considered bribery or corruption, you should speak to your Reporting manager, the Human Resources manager, Legal Department or the Leadership team.

TAO Digital will familiarize all employees with its whistleblowing procedures so employees can vocalize their concerns swiftly and confidentially.

### **(2) What to do if you are a victim of bribery or corruption**

You must tell your Reporting manager and Human Resources manager as soon as possible if you are offered a bribe by anyone, if you are asked to make one, if you suspect that you may be bribed or asked to make a bribe in the near future, or if you have reason to believe that you are a victim of another corrupt activity.

### **(3) Protection**

If you refuse to accept or offer a bribe or you report a concern relating to potential act(s) of bribery or corruption, TAO Digital understands that you may feel worried about potential repercussions. TAO Digital will support anyone who raises concerns in good faith under this policy, even if investigation finds that they were mistaken.

TAO Digital will ensure that no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of refusing to accept or offer a bribe or other corrupt activities or because they reported a concern relating to potential act(s) of bribery or corruption.

Detrimental treatment refers to dismissal, disciplinary action, or unfavorable treatment in relation to the concern the individual raised.

If you have reason to believe you've been subjected to unjust treatment as a result of a concern or refusal to accept a bribe, you should inform the Human Resources manager immediately.

## **8. Training and communication**

8.1 TAO Digital will provide training on this policy as part of the onboarding process for all new employees.

8.2 TAO Digital's anti-bribery and corruption policy and zero-tolerance attitude will be clearly communicated to all suppliers, contractors, business partners, and any third-parties at the outset of business relations, and as appropriate thereafter.

## **9. Record keeping**

9.1 TAO Digital will keep detailed and accurate financial records and will have appropriate internal controls in place to act as evidence for all payments made. We will declare and keep a written record of the amount and reason for hospitality or gifts accepted and given and understand that gifts and acts of hospitality are subject to managerial review.

## **10. Monitoring and reviewing**

10.1 Internal control systems and procedures designed to prevent bribery and corruption are subject to regular audits to ensure that they are effective in practice.

10.2 Any need for improvements will be applied as soon as possible. Employees are encouraged to offer their feedback on this policy if they have any suggestions for how it may be improved. Feedback of this nature should be addressed to the Human Resources manager.

This policy does not form part of an employee's condition of employment and TAO Digital may amend it at any time so to improve its effectiveness at combatting bribery and corruption.