



AUBURN
UNIVERSITY™

Higher Education Hotline System

About Auburn University

The Auburn University creed states, "I believe in honesty and truthfulness. I believe in obedience to law because it protects the rights of all." In the spirit of that creed, the 10,000 employees of Auburn University and its campuses have rededicated themselves to modeling ethical behavior.

Auburn was established in 1856 and is now one of the largest universities in the South with more than 29,000 students. The university partnered with NAVEX Global to provide employees an anonymous method for reporting any suspected financial or human resources issues.

The Challenge: Transparency and Trust

When an external auditor advised Auburn University to outsource its employee hotline system, Kevin Robinson, Executive Director of Internal Audit, was in complete agreement. It was essential for his department to provide employees an incident reporting system that can guarantee anonymity, Robinson explained.

"We want our institution to operate in a financially and ethically responsible way. To ensure that outcome, we need to give employees confidence to report issues." The effectiveness of a whistleblower program depends in large part upon employee confidence in the system and Auburn understood that confidence rises when the system is managed outside of the institution.

Before the recommendation, Robinson's department made do with an internally-operated phone number and recording device. When the audit department found the system unsuccessful, Robinson assembled an advisory board of campus stakeholders. After considering several options, the board unanimously selected NAVEX Global to provide a solution.

The Solution: Listening and Responding with EthicsPoint

During the implementation, Robinson and the advisory board at Auburn worked with NAVEX Global to customize the system according to the university's needs.

While employees can report any issue of concern, the audit department keeps a narrow focus on financial reports. Any other reports – including issues involving human resources and athletic compliance – are routed to the appropriate campus office.

When an employee makes a report, the audit department receives a notification and decides the appropriate steps to take in resolving the issue. Nearly every report is submitted online, Robinson says.



“As an audit department we need to know what is happening at our institution. EthicsPoint helps us listen to the people who know the most about what’s going on: Our employees.”



Kevin Robinson
Executive Director of Internal Audit
Auburn University

NAVEX Global's case management software allows the audit department to request more information or evidence from the reporter, who can provide answers while remaining anonymous. This feature makes sure Robinson's team has complete, accurate information before proceeding with an investigation.

The Results: Insights and Visibility

The reporting system gave the audit department an additional source of information about potential issues on campus. While Robinson hopes to eventually progress to a fully integrated governance, risk and compliance program at Auburn, he has noted important benefits since implementing the NAVEX Global system, including improved employee confidence, more accurate and timely information, and better visibility into potential risk areas before they become a problem.

ABOUT NAVEX GLOBAL

NAVEX Global's comprehensive suite of ethics and compliance software, content and services helps organizations protect their people, reputation and bottom line. Trusted by 95 of the FORTUNE 100 and more than 12,500 clients, our solutions are informed by the largest ethics and compliance community in the world.

