

## **VIGIL MECHANISM & WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY**

### **PREAMBLE**

Section 177 of the Companies Act, 2013 requires every listed company and such class or classes of companies, as may be prescribed to establish a vigil mechanism for the directors and employees to report genuine concerns in such manner as may be prescribed.

The Vigil Mechanism shall provide for adequate safeguards against victimization of persons who use such mechanism and make provision for direct access to the chairperson of the Audit Committee in appropriate or exceptional cases.

Effective October 1, 2014, Clause 49 of the Listing Agreement between listed companies and the Stock Exchanges, *inter alia*, provides for a mandatory requirement for all listed companies to establish a mechanism called „Whistle Blower Policy“ for employees to report to the management instances of unethical behaviour, actual or suspected, fraud or unethical practises.

### **POLICY**

In compliance of the above requirements, Geojit BNP Paribas Financial Services Limited being a Listed Company has established a Vigil Mechanism and formulated a Whistle Blower Policy in order to provide a framework for responsible and secure whistle blowing mechanism.

### **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The Company is committed to adhere to the highest standards of ethical, moral and legal conduct of business operations and in order to maintain these standards, the Company encourages its Employees and Directors who have genuine concerns about suspected misconduct to come forward and express these concerns without fear of punishment or unfair treatment. The mechanism provides for adequate safeguards against victimization of Employees and Directors who avail the mechanism and provide for direct access to the Chairman of the Audit Committee in exceptional cases.

The Whistle Blower policy aims to provide an avenue for Employees and Directors to raise their concerns that could have grave impact on the operations, performance, value and the reputation of the Company and it also empowers the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors to investigate the concerns raised by the employees.

This neither releases employees from their duty of confidentiality in the course of their work nor can it be used as a route for raising malicious or unfounded allegations about a personal situation.

### **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This Policy covers malpractices and events which have taken place / suspected to have taken place, misuse or abuse of authority, fraud or suspected fraud, violation of company rules, manipulations, negligence causing danger to public health and safety, misappropriation of monies, and other matters or activity on account of which the interest of the Company is affected and formally reported by whistle blowers concerning its employees.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**“Audit Committee”** means a Committee constituted by the Board of Directors of the Company in accordance with the guidelines of Listing Agreement and Companies Act, 2013.

**“Director”** means a director appointed to the Board of a Company

**“Disciplinary Action”** means, any action that can be taken on the completion of /during the investigation proceedings including but not limiting to a warning, imposition of fine, suspension from official duties or any such action as is deemed to be fit considering the gravity of the matter.

**“Employee”** means, every employee of the Company.

**“Improper Practice”** includes

- a) Any actual or potential violation of the legal & regulatory requirements whether Criminal/ Civil;
- b) Theft or fraud;
- c) Abuse of authority;
- d) Breach of contract/ trust, pilferation of confidential/propriety information;
- e) Negligence causing substantial and specific danger to public health and safety;
- f) Manipulation/ theft of the Company data/records;
- g) Financial irregularities, including fraud or suspected fraud or deficiencies in Internal Control and check or deliberate error in preparations of Financial Statements or Misrepresentation of financial reports;
- h) Wastage/misappropriation of the Company funds/assets, embezzlement;
- i) Breach of Company Policy or failure to implement or comply with any approved Company Policy (ies);
- j) Any claim of retaliation for providing information to or otherwise assisting the Audit Committee;
- k) Any other action or inaction that could have significant impact on the operations, performance, value and the reputation of the Company.

**“Protected Disclosure”** means, a concern raised by a written communication made in good faith that discloses or demonstrates information that may evidence Improper Practice. Protected Disclosures should be factual and not speculative in nature.

**“Subject”** means, a person or group of persons against or in relation to whom a Protected Disclosure is made or evidence gathered during the course of an investigation under this Policy.

**“Vigilance Officer/Vigilance Committee or Committee”** is a person or Committee of persons, nominated/appointed to receive protected disclosures from whistle blowers, maintaining records thereof, placing the same before the Audit Committee for its disposal and informing the Whistle Blower the result thereof.

**“Whistleblower”** is someone who makes a Protected Disclosure under this Policy.

**“Company”** means, “Geojit BNP Paribas Financial Services Limited. And its subsidiary companies”

## **ELIGIBILITY**

All Directors and Employees of the Company are eligible to make Protected Disclosures under the Policy in relation to matters concerning the Company.

The Policy should not be used in place of the Company grievance procedures or be a route for raising malicious or unfounded allegations against colleagues. It is not a route for taking up a grievance about a personal situation.

## **PROCEDURE**

All Protected Disclosures should be reported in writing by the complainant as soon as possible, not later than 90 days after the Whistle Blower becomes aware of the same and should either be typed or written in a legible handwriting in English.

The Protected Disclosure should be submitted by way of Registered Post under a covering letter signed by the complainant in a closed and secured envelope and should be super scribed as “Protected disclosure under the Whistle Blower policy” or sent through email with the subject “Protected disclosure under the Whistle Blower policy”. If the complaint is not super scribed and closed as mentioned above, the protected disclosure will be dealt with as if a normal disclosure.

All Protected Disclosures should be addressed to the Vigilance Officer of the Company or to the Chairman of the Audit Committee in exceptional cases.

The contact details of the Vigilance Officer are as under:-

**Name and Address – Mr. Jayadevan A  
Vice President and Head – Compliance & Ethics  
Geojit Financial Services Limited**

**34/659-P Civil Line Road**  
**Padivattom Kochi -682024**  
**E Mail – [jayadevan\\_a@gmail.com](mailto:jayadevan_a@gmail.com)**

In order to protect the identity of the complainant, the Vigilance Officer will not issue any acknowledgement to the complainants and they are advised neither to write their name / address on the envelope nor enter into any further correspondence with the Vigilance Officer.

The Vigilance Officer shall not entertain Anonymous / Pseudonymous disclosure. On receipt of the protected disclosure the Vigilance Officer shall detach the covering letter bearing the identity of the Whistle Blower and process only the Protected Disclosure.

All protected disclosures made pursuant to the whistleblower policy/vigil mechanism should be brought to the attention of the Chairman of Audit Committee.

## **INVESTIGATION**

All Protected Disclosures under this policy will be recorded and thoroughly investigated. The Vigilance Officer will carry out an investigation either personally or by involving any other Officer of the Company/ Committee constituted for the same /an outside agency before referring the matter to the Audit Committee of the Company.

The Audit Committee, if deems fit, may call for further information or particulars from the complainant and at its discretion, consider involving any other/additional Officer of the Company and/or Committee and/ or an outside agency for the purpose of investigation.

The investigation by itself would not tantamount to an accusation and is to be treated as a neutral fact finding process.

The investigation shall be completed normally within 90 days of receipt of the protected disclosure and is extendable by such period as the Audit Committee deems fit.

Any member of the Audit Committee or other officer having any conflict of interest with the matter shall disclose his/her concern /interest forthwith and shall not deal with the matter.

## **DECISION AND REPORTING**

If an investigation leads to a conclusion that an improper or unethical act has been committed, the Vigilance Officer shall recommend to the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors of the Company to take such disciplinary or corrective action as it may deem fit.

Any disciplinary or corrective action initiated against the Subject as a result of the findings of an investigation pursuant to this Policy shall adhere to the applicable personnel or staff conduct and disciplinary procedures.

A report with number of complaints received under the Policy and their outcome shall be placed before the Audit Committee of Board on annual basis.

A complainant who makes false allegations of unethical & improper practices or about alleged wrongful conduct of the Subject to the Vigilance Officer or the Audit Committee shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the rules, procedures and policies of the Company.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Complainant, Vigilance Officer, Members of Audit Committee, the Subject and everybody involved in the process shall, maintain confidentiality of all matters under this Policy, discuss only to the extent or with those persons as required under this policy for completing the process of investigations and keep the papers in safe custody.

### **PROTECTION**

No unfair treatment will be meted out to a Whistle Blower by virtue of his/ her having reported a Protected Disclosure under this policy. Adequate safeguards against victimisation of complainants shall be provided. The Company will take steps to minimize difficulties, which the Whistle Blower may experience as a result of making the Protected Disclosure.

The identity of the Whistle Blower shall be kept confidential to the extent possible and permitted under law. Any other employee assisting in the said investigation shall also be protected to the same extent as the Whistle Blower.

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

While it will be ensured that genuine Whistle Blowers are accorded complete protection from any kind of unfair treatment as herein set out, any abuse of this protection will warrant disciplinary action.

Protection under this Policy would not mean protection from disciplinary action arising out of false or bogus allegations made by a Whistle Blower knowing it to be false or bogus or with a mala fide intention.

### **ACCESS TO CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Whistle Blower shall have right to access Chairman of the Audit Committee directly in exceptional cases and the Chairman of the Audit Committee is authorized to prescribe suitable directions in this regard.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Directors and Employees shall be informed of the Policy by publishing on the website of the Company.

## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS**

All Protected disclosures in writing or documented along with the results of Investigation relating thereto, shall be retained by the Company for a period of 2 (two) years or such other period as specified by any other law in force, whichever is more.

## **REVIEW**

The Audit Committee shall from time to time review the functioning of the Whistle Blower mechanism.

The Company shall annually affirm that it has not denied any personal access to the Audit Committee of the Company in respect of matters involving alleged improper practise and that it has provided protection to "Whistle Blowers" from unfair termination and other unfair or prejudicial employment practices.

## **AMENDMENT**

The Company reserves its right to amend or modify this Policy in whole or in part, at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. However, no such amendment or modification will be binding on the Directors and employees unless the same is not communicated in the manner described as above.