

Regulations for Receiving and Considering Reports of Corrupt Actions through Communication Channels of the Ministry of Mining Industry and Geology

Chapter I. General Provisions

1. These Regulations have been developed to improve the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures, identify conflicts of interest, and take appropriate response measures within the Ministry of Mining Industry and Geology (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry).

2. These Regulations establish the main principles for working with reports of corrupt actions received through the Ministry's communication channels, as well as the procedure for their reception, registration, consideration, and reporting to the Minister.

3. For the purposes of these Regulations, the following key terms are used:

Hotline – a system that ensures the centralized reception, classification, and systematization of appeals received by the Ministry via telephone, as well as monitoring their timely and quality consideration;

Whistleblower – any individual and/or legal entity, including employees, who report corruption within the Ministry through communication channels;

Conflict of interest – a situation in which a person's personal (direct or indirect) interest affects or may affect the proper performance of their official duties, resulting in or potentially creating a conflict between their personal interests and the rights, legitimate interests of citizens, organizations, the Ministry, or the state;

Corruption – the illegal use of a person's official or service position for personal gain or for the benefit of others, including the illegal provision of such gain;

Corrupt actions – actions or inactions by an employee aimed at obtaining personal material benefit, either directly or through intermediaries or third parties, in the interest of the bribe-giver, including the receipt, demand, extortion, offer, or giving of bribes, as well as the use of an official position for unlawful purposes;

Corruption-related offense – an act that exhibits characteristics of corruption for which responsibility is prescribed by law;

Anti-corruption system – a set of measures aimed at eliminating corruption-related violations, ensuring the professional and ethical conduct of Ministry employees in accordance with the legislation and internal documents;

Corruption risks – the likelihood of corrupt actions being committed by employees or third parties on behalf of the Ministry or in its interest;

Relevant report – information about corrupt actions and/or conflicts of interest within the Ministry;

Employee – a person employed by the Ministry under a labor contract;

Personal interest of an employee – the potential for an employee to gain personal benefit (money, property, services, privileges, etc.) that may influence the performance of their official duties.

4. The operation of communication channels designed for reporting corruption actions is organized by the Ministry based on the following principles:

Confidentiality and security – access to reports is granted only to authorized persons within the Ministry, who are prohibited from disclosing information to third parties. If the whistleblower voluntarily or inadvertently discloses the information to third parties, the Ministry is not responsible for any leakage;

Legality – the reception, registration, processing, and consideration of reports are carried out strictly in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan and these Regulations;

No prosecution of the whistleblower – physical and legal entities, including Ministry employees, who voluntarily report corrupt actions will not be held liable, regardless of the content of the report;

Feedback to the whistleblower – if the report is not anonymous, the Ministry is obliged to inform the whistleblower of the results of its consideration;

Mandatory response measures – if corruption is confirmed, the Ministry takes measures to hold the responsible parties accountable in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Chapter II. Communication Channels for Reporting Corrupt Actions

Reports of corruption within the Ministry can be submitted through the following communication channels:

Directly to the Minister;

Via the hotline: 71-231-05-96;

By email: anticor@mingeo.uz;

Through the official website: gov.uz/oz/mingeo;

Via the Facebook page: uzgeolcom.uz;

Through the Telegram bot: @geoantikorbot;

To the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption (Phone: 71-231-14-55, internal: 2060);

By mail: 100164, Tashkent, Mirzo-Ulugbek District, Olimlar Street, 49;

To the Chairman of the Ethics Commission of the Ministry.

Information about communication channels is posted on the Ministry's official website, on social media pages and channels, as well as included in email newsletters and training materials periodically sent to employees. Additionally, it is displayed on thematic posters within the Ministry building and in other similar sources.

Chapter III. Receiving Relevant Reports through Communication Channels

7. The Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption of the Ministry is responsible for considering relevant reports received through the Ministry's communication channels.

8. Relevant reports received through the Ministry's communication channels are registered in accordance with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan Decree No. 341 of May 7, 2018, "Model Regulation on the Procedure for Handling Appeals of Physical and Legal Entities in Government Agencies and Organizations with State Participation" and the internal "Regulation on the Procedure for Handling Appeals of Physical and Legal Entities" of the Ministry.

Appeals can be submitted via:

The virtual reception of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan;

The official Ministry website (gov.uz/oz/mingeo), email (anticor@mingeo.uz), or Telegram bot (@geoantikorbot);

The Ministry's phone numbers (including those listed in paragraph 5);

Oral (in-person) appeals to the Ministry;

Law enforcement agencies.

9. A responsible employee from the Appeals Department is assigned to process reports received through the Ministry's official channels and social media pages, as well as through the Telegram bot.

Upon receiving a relevant report, the responsible employee contacts the whistleblower by email or phone to clarify any necessary information, registers the report in the Registry, and forwards the data to the Minister.

The responsible employee of the Appeals Department analyzes incoming reports from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Reports received outside of working hours are stored for processing on the next business day.

10. If the whistleblower has additional materials, such as photos, documents, audio, or video recordings, the employee responsible for receiving the report will specify the communication channels (e.g., Telegram bot or email) through which these materials can be provided and inform them of their confidentiality. These materials are treated as attachments to the report.

11. The Minister instructs the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption to promptly analyze and consider the received report.

12. The Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption must register the report in the Ministry's Registry of Anti-Corruption Reports in the prescribed form and review it in accordance with Chapter IV of these Regulations within 1 (one) hour of receiving the report.

13. The Ministry provides whistleblowers the opportunity to submit anonymous reports of corrupt actions by employees. If an anonymous report is received, the responsible employee of the Ministry, if possible, must:

Inform the whistleblower that they cannot contact them to respond to the report;

Warn that without additional information, the report may not be fully investigated;

Suggest the whistleblower create an anonymous communication channel (e.g., anonymous email address or confidential Telegram chat).

If the whistleblower does not withdraw their appeal, the report is processed as stipulated in these Regulations.

14. During the consideration of reports, Ministry employees analyze the causes and conditions contributing to corruption offenses and develop measures to prevent them and improve the anti-corruption system.

15. All materials, documents, and data, including decisions made and responses to whistleblowers, related to the received reports, are kept by the Appeals Department for the period prescribed by the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, but for no less than 5 years.

16. Upon receiving a report, responsible employees immediately inform the head of the relevant structural division and the anti-corruption officer (if available) in writing. The report is then forwarded to the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption, which reviews it in accordance with Chapter IV.

17. The Ministry and its subordinate enterprises maintain their own Registries of reports.

Chapter IV. Consideration of Reports of Corrupt Actions

18. All relevant reports received by the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption are considered by the responsible employees of this department or, upon the Minister's instruction, by other departments.

19. It is prohibited to involve employees in the process of considering reports of corrupt actions if a report has been made about them, or in cases where conflicts of interest may arise during the consideration.

20. An employee of the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption conducts a preliminary review of the received report and analyzes its relevance, i.e., determines whether the information in the report pertains to corruption-related offenses or conflicts of interest associated with the Ministry's system.

The preliminary review must be completed within 5 (five) business days from the date the report is received by the Internal Control Department.

21. Regardless of the results of the preliminary review, the information about the report must be entered into the Registry.

22. If the employee of the Internal Control Department concludes that the report is irrelevant, it must be transferred to the Ministry's subordinate organization based on a notification within one business day.

23. If the report contains information about corrupt actions or conflicts of interest, and there are sufficient grounds for an internal investigation, the employee of the Internal Control Department will initiate the investigation in accordance with the Ministry's internal documents.

24. The consideration of relevant reports on the merits must be completed within one month from the date they are received by the Ministry. If an investigation, additional materials, or other measures are required, the review period may be extended by the Minister in exceptional cases, but not by more than one month. The whistleblower will be informed of the extension (except for anonymous reports).

25. A response to the report is prepared by the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption and signed by the Minister or their deputy.

26. Based on the results of the review, a response letter outlining the findings and the measures taken is drafted and sent to the whistleblower in the prescribed manner.

27. For reports received through channels and social media pages, as well as through the Telegram bot, a response is provided to the whistleblower electronically via the relevant communication channels.

Chapter V. Accountability

28. Access to the Registry is granted to employees of the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption, Ministry employees involved in the consideration of reports (only within their competence), and the Minister or their deputy responsible for anti-corruption matters.

29. Based on the Registry data, the Internal Control Department for Anti-Corruption submits a quarterly report to the Minister on the received reports of corrupt actions, which includes:

The number of relevant reports received and considered;

The number of confirmed cases of corrupt actions and conflicts of interest;

The number of reports considered beyond the prescribed deadlines;

The average time for reviewing relevant reports;

The most commonly used communication channels by whistleblowers, and other statistical information.

Chapter VI. Final Provisions

30. Violation of the requirements of these Regulations shall result in liability in accordance with the established procedure.

31. These Regulations are subject to revision in the event of changes in the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan regarding appeals and anti-corruption efforts.