

## **Confidentiality**

The IG is responsible for protecting the best interests of USCYBERCOM, each one of its members, and the services, while protecting the confidentiality of the personnel and information involved in IG investigations. In all investigative activities, the IG will be sensitive to actual and potential concerns people have about keeping both the fact and extent of their involvement confidential. Personnel who ask the IG for help, make a complaint, give evidence, contact or assist an IG during an investigation, or otherwise interact with an IG, often have an expectation of confidentiality. This expectation encompasses safeguarding their identity and the nature of their contact with the IG, and protection against reprisal. The IG has a duty to protect confidentiality to the maximum extent possible, particularly when it is specifically requested. While the need for confidentiality and the measures necessary to protect it vary with the circumstances, the IG always gives this issue priority attention.

When a person complains or provides information about impropriety or wrongdoing, the IG will not disclose the complainant's identity outside IG channels or to the directing authority without the complainant's consent, unless the IG determines such disclosure is unavoidable during the course of an inquiry or investigation. If the IG determines disclosure is unavoidable, the IG will try to inform the person before disclosure. Efforts to notify the person and the circumstances of any disclosure of the person's name will be made part of the record.

When a person seeks assistance from the IG, it is often necessary to reveal the person's identity to obtain the help needed. The IG will inform the person of that necessity. The IG file will reflect the person was informed.

While protecting confidentiality is a priority concern for the IG, it cannot be absolutely guaranteed. The IG will not unconditionally promise confidentiality. It may be breached if required by law or regulation. Personnel who request anonymity or who express concern about confidentiality will be told this.

The intent behind the emphasis on confidentiality is to protect individual privacy, maintain confidence in the IG system, and minimize the risk of reprisal. It is a key component of the IG system because it encourages voluntary cooperation and willingness to ask for help or to present a complaint for resolution.