



## Code of Ethics Policy (All Associates)

Effective date: April 2021

Revised: November 2022

### I. Introduction and Purpose

At Chico's FAS, Inc. (the "Company" or "Chico's"), we strive for high productivity within a workplace culture that has a deep commitment to honesty, trust, and respect for all. Every associate and director of Chico's has a responsibility to conduct themselves lawfully and ethically, with integrity and honesty, and proactively to promote ethical behavior throughout the Company. The purpose of this Code of Ethics (the "Code") is to reaffirm and strengthen that commitment to ethical business conduct and to provide a guide to making smart, ethical business decisions in every situation. Abiding by and understanding the Code – and applicable laws – is not optional. The Company also expects our Vendors to conduct business with us in a manner consistent with the Code.

For the purposes of the Code, the term "Associate" means any Company employee or executive officer and, unless the context requires otherwise, member ("Director") of the Company's Board of Directors ("Board").

### II. Conflicts of Interest and Business Ethics

Associates are expected to advance the Company's interests and to make decisions that affect the Company based on the Company's best interests, independent of outside influences. Associates may not place themselves in a position that would be, or have the appearance of being, in conflict with the interests of Chico's.

A conflict of interest occurs when an Associate's private interests interfere, or even appear to interfere, with the interests of Chico's. A conflict situation can arise when Associates take actions or have financial, familial, or other interests that make it difficult for them to perform their Company work objectively and effectively. An Associate's obligation to conduct the Company's business in an honest and ethical manner includes the ethical handling of actual, apparent and potential conflicts of interest between personal and business relationships. This includes full disclosure of any actual, apparent or potential conflicts of interest as set forth below.

Special rules apply to Associates who engage in conduct that creates an actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest, such as holding a significant financial interest or investment in a Vendor or potential Vendor (as defined below) or competitor of the Company (including any "side business" owned, managed and/or operated by such Associate). Before engaging in any such conduct, executive officers and Directors must make full disclosure of all facts and circumstances to the Corporate Governance and Nominating Committee of the Board (the "Governance Committee"). Other Associates must make full disclosure to the Chief Human Resources Officer ("CHRO") and, if an actual conflict exists, may not continue the situation

without obtaining a waiver from the CHRO. In addition, Associates and Directors should understand and follow the Company's Related Party Transactions Policy.

While it is not possible to illustrate all of the situations that could result in an actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest, the following are a few examples meant to provide guidelines for the ethical, legal, and socially responsible behavior we expect. If a situation occurs where there may be the potential for a conflict of interest, please speak with Human Resources ("HR"), the General Counsel or the Chief Legal and Compliance Officer ("CLCO") to determine if a conflict exists.

#### **A. Acceptance of Gifts or Entertainment**

Associates must avoid the reality or the appearance of improper relations with current or prospective vendors, agents, suppliers, customers or business partners (collectively, "Vendors"). It may be appropriate in certain circumstances to receive common courtesies, such as sales promotional items or holiday or special occasion gifts of nominal value, occasional meals or modest entertainment from Vendors with whom you have a direct relationship. Appropriate business gifts and entertainment can build relationships and understanding among business partners. However, gifts and entertainment should never compromise, or appear to compromise, an Associate's ability to make objective and fair business decisions.

It is the responsibility of Associates to use good judgment in this area. Except as noted below under "Examples of Acceptable Gifts or Entertainment," Associates may give or receive gifts or entertainment to or from Vendors only if the gift or entertainment is:

- in compliance with applicable law,
- valued at \$100 or less,
- not solicited by the Associate, and
- not given in consideration or expectation of any action by the recipient.

All gifts and entertainment expenses made on behalf of the Company must be properly accounted for on expense reports.

#### *Examples of Acceptable Gifts or Entertainment:*

- Gifts valued at \$100 or less;
- Typical business entertainment, such as lunch, dinner, theater, or a sporting event, even if valued above \$100, if reasonable and in the course of a meeting or another business occasion, the purpose of which is to hold *bona fide* business discussions or to foster better business relations;
- Perishable gifts (such as gift baskets, cookies, chocolates, flowers, etc.) valued above \$100, provided such gifts are still reasonable in value or are shared with others in the Associate's department.

These examples are acceptable unless the gift or entertainment influences (or appears to influence) the Associate's business decisions, was solicited by the Associate, or does not comply with applicable law.

Non-acceptable gifts should be returned if possible.

If a non-acceptable gift is unable to be returned, then such gift must be immediately given to the General Counsel or CLCO so that Chico's may donate the gift to charity or retain it for internal use or distribution (such as through a company raffle).

No gift of cash or cash equivalents (such as gift cards or securities) may ever be accepted or solicited. Associates who receive such gifts should report such gifts to the CHRO, General Counsel or CLCO and return them to the giver with a brief explanatory note.

To guard against a current or prospective Vendor's efforts to influence business decisions by giving multiple small gifts or extending multiple invitations to an Associate – conduct which may not violate the Code were each gift or invitation taken singly, Associates should track all invitations and small gifts received and ensure that the aggregate value received does not exceed \$100 within one fiscal year. Once the \$100 limit is reached during the fiscal year, any further gifts must be handled in the manner described above for non-acceptable gifts.

A conflict of interest may arise when a current or potential Vendor offers to pay some or all of your travel expenses. For this reason, you may never accept airfare or lodging from a Vendor for a personal trip and you may not accept airfare or lodging for a business-related trip without first obtaining approval from the highest ranking executive in your business unit. The highest ranking executive of a business unit must receive CEO approval. The CEO and Directors must receive approval of the Governance Committee Chair.

Chico's recognizes that in some foreign countries it is customary and lawful for business leaders in a host country to give gifts to a company's associates. Returning the gifts or paying for them may be an affront to the giver. In such a situation, and in all other instances where gifts cannot be returned and offering to pay for them would adversely affect continuing business relationships, the General Counsel or CLCO must be notified. In such cases, Chico's may retain the gift or donate it to charity.

## **B. Outside Activities with Vendors and Competitors**

Associates may not have another position with or engage in any outside employment activities for any Vendor, or potential Vendor, or competitor of Chico's except with the prior written approval of HR. Further, Associates should not direct business to third parties who they know are owned or managed by their Immediate Family Members or close personal friends, unless they fully disclose the relationship to their supervisor and obtain the CHRO's, General Counsel's or CLCO's prior approval. If an Immediate Family Member of an Associate is employed by a Vendor, or potential Vendor, that fact should be disclosed, for awareness, to the CHRO, General Counsel or CLCO. An Immediate Family Member for these purposes is a spouse, domestic partner, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, grandchild, in-law, legal guardian, first cousin, aunt or uncle.

Special rules apply to executive officers and Directors who engage in conduct that creates an actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest, such as when they or an immediate family member holds a significant financial interest or investment in a Vendor or potential Vendor. Please refer to the Company's Related Party Transactions Policy for more information on this topic.

### **C. Interests in Other Businesses**

Unless approved in advance by HR, the General Counsel or CLCO neither an Associate nor his or her spouse or domestic partner may have any interest or investment in a Vendor or competitor of Chico's. An executive officer, Director or his or her spouse or domestic partner must receive such advance approval from the Governance Committee. However, it is typically not considered a conflict of interest to own less than 1% of the outstanding shares of a publicly traded company.

### **D. Corporate Opportunities**

Associates owe a duty to Chico's to advance its legitimate interests when the opportunity to do so arises. An Associate who learns of a business or investment opportunity through the use of corporate property, information or position, may not participate in the opportunity or make the investment without the prior written approval of HR, the General Counsel or CLCO. Such an opportunity should be considered a business or investment opportunity for Chico's, and Associates may not compete with the Company.

Directors' duties with respect to corporate business opportunities are somewhat different. A corporate business opportunity in this context is defined as (1) an opportunity in Chico's line of business or proposed expansion or diversification, (2) which Chico's is financially able to undertake and (3) which may be of interest to Chico's. A Director who learns of such a corporate business opportunity and who wishes to participate in it should disclose the opportunity to the Governance Committee. If the Governance Committee determines that Chico's does not have an actual or expected interest in the opportunity, then the Director may participate in the opportunity, provided that the Director has not wrongfully utilized Chico's resources in order to acquire the opportunity.

### **E. Use of Company Property and Information**

All Associates are responsible for the proper use of our physical resources and property, as well as our proprietary and other confidential information.

#### **1. Company Property, Facilities, Systems and Network**

Dishonest behavior is against our values. All Associates have a duty to protect the Company's assets and to ensure their safe and efficient use. Theft, carelessness and waste have a direct impact on the Company's profitability. All Associates should take measures to prevent damage to or theft or misuse of Company property, including any activity that may lead to loss of our merchandise or cash. Any Associate engaging in, or attempting, theft of any Company property or the personal property of others may be terminated and/or subject to criminal proceedings. Associates should also take measures to ensure the proper and secure use of the Company's computer information systems, related equipment and network. Please refer to the Company's Acceptable Use Policy, Remote Access Policy and Mobile Device Policy for more information on this topic, including disciplinary action that may be taken for violations of such policy.

#### **2. Company Proprietary and Other Confidential Information**

Associates may learn, acquire, use and/or create information of a sensitive nature and value which is not generally known and provides the Company with a competitive advantage, may be harmful to the Company, its customers, suppliers or Vendors if disclosed, or which must be protected from disclosure as a matter of law ("Confidential Information"). Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to,

information and materials pertaining to (a) customers' and Associates' data, (b) the terms offered or prices charged by or to particular Vendors, (c) marketing or strategic plans, (d) product designs and specifications and production techniques, artwork, fabric prints, fashion and color trends, (e) business strategies or processes, (f) sales, revenue, profits, margin, expenses and other financial information, (g) sourcing, manufacturing, merchandising, licensing and supply chain processes, techniques and plans, (h) plans for opening, closing, expanding or relocating retail stores, (i) store operations' policies and procedures, (j) acquisitions, mergers, divestitures and franchise, license and/or distribution arrangements, and (k) intellectual property and trade secrets. Confidential Information includes all non-public information that might be of use to competitors, or harmful to the Company or its Vendors, customers, associates, or shareholders, if disclosed.

During the course of performing their responsibilities, Associates may obtain information concerning possible transactions with other companies or receive Confidential Information concerning other companies, such as our Vendors, which Chico's may be under an obligation to maintain as confidential. All Associates must maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to them by Chico's or its Vendors, except when disclosure is authorized or legally mandated.

The Company is committed to respecting the privacy rights of our customers and Associates. We have implemented a variety of security measures to maintain the security of this information. Access to and use of this personal information about Associates or customers is restricted, based upon the particular Associate's "need to know" to perform his or her job functions, and such information should not be disclosed or used for any other reason. It is every Associate's responsibility to respect the privacy of customers and fellow workers.

Associates who possess or have access to Confidential Information must:

- Not use the information for his or her own benefit or the benefit of persons inside or outside the Company.
- Carefully guard against disclosure of that information to others outside the Company. For example, an Associate should not discuss such matters with family members or business or social acquaintances or in places where the information may be overheard, such as taxis, airplanes, public transportation, elevators or restaurants.
- Not disclose Confidential Information to another Associate unless the Associate needs the information to carry out business responsibilities.
- Exercise caution when discarding documents containing Confidential Information.

All files, records, reports, designs, programs and work product acquired or created in the course of employment are the property of Chico's. Originals or copies of such documents may be removed from the Company's offices for the sole purpose of performing the Associate's duties and must be returned promptly upon completion of those duties or immediately upon request, whichever first occurs.

An Associate's obligation to treat information as confidential does not end when he or she leaves the Company. Upon the termination of employment, Associates must return everything that belongs to Chico's, including all documents and other materials containing Chico's Confidential Information. Associates must not disclose Confidential Information to a new employer or to others after ceasing to be a Chico's Associate.

#### **F. Pre-existing Confidentiality Obligations**

Associates must comply with any legal obligations to a prior employer or other person or entity prohibiting use or disclosure of its/their trade secrets or other confidential and proprietary information. Use or disclosure of any such protected information in the course of the Associate's performance of his or her duties for Chico's is strictly prohibited.

#### **G. Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships at Work**

Chico's recognizes that our highly talented Associates are often related to other highly talented individuals. Although the Company generally allows the employment of family members, there are certain situations in which the employment of family members must be avoided to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Please refer to the Company's Employment of Relatives Policy for more information on this topic.

Intimate relationships between an Associate with managerial authority and any subordinate may compromise the Company's ability to enforce its policy against sexual harassment and may lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest. The Company will carefully consider such relationships and take appropriate action. Such action may include a change in the responsibilities of the individuals involved in such relationships or transfer of location to diminish or eliminate the managerial relationship and workplace contact that may exist. Any managerial Associate involved in such a relationship is required to report the relationship to his or her manager and HR. Please refer to our HR Policy & Procedure Manual for more information on this topic.

#### **H. Board Service**

Associates may not serve as a director or officer of any other for-profit company without the advance approval of the CHRO, General Counsel or CLCO. Associates may not serve as a director or officer of any such company that is a competitor or potential competitor of Chico's.

Associates who serve as a director or officer of non-profit organizations do so in their individual capacity (and not as a representative of the Company, unless HR expressly agrees to such representation).

Special rules apply to executive officers and Directors who serve as a director or officer of other companies. Before engaging in any such conduct, executive officers and Directors must make full disclosure of all facts and circumstances to the Governance Committee and in the case of Directors must receive approval from the Governance Committee. Please refer to the Company's Corporate Governance Guidelines for more information on this topic.

### **III. Insider Trading**

Because Chico's stock is publicly traded, it is both illegal and a breach of the Code for Associates to profit in the securities markets from the improper use of material non-public information learned during employment with Chico's. If you are unsure whether information is material or has been released to the public, contact the Company's Chief Financial Officer, General Counsel or CLCO before trading. Please refer to the Chico's Insider Trading Policy for more information on this important topic.

#### **IV. Employment Laws and Health and Safety**

At Chico's, we value diversity, and we recognize that building an inclusive company where Associates of many backgrounds work together benefits our business, our community, and our society. Chico's is also dedicated to providing all Associates with a work environment that is free of all types of discrimination, including that based on race, ethnicity, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin/ancestry, citizenship, religion, creed, marital status, medical condition, disability, military or veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth and related medical condition, genetic information, or any other classification protected by federal, state, and local laws and ordinances or identified in our HR Policy & Procedure Manual. Discrimination in any terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, recruiting and hiring, opportunities for advancement, participation in training programs, wages, salaries or benefits, or harassment of any kind is contrary to our values, is illegal, and is unacceptable behavior at Chico's.

It is also our policy to comply with all applicable wage and hour laws and other statutes regulating the employer-associate relationship and the workplace environment. Chico's Associates may not interfere with or retaliate against another Associate who seeks to invoke his or her rights under the employment laws. Please refer to our HR Policy & Procedure Manual for more information on our equal employment opportunity, anti-harassment and non-retaliation policies and how to report a concern.

Chico's is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for Associates and Vendors. Chico's has no tolerance for workplace violence. We ensure our workplaces are clean and safe by following all safety related signs and instructions and by taking steps to prevent accidents. We also provide clean and safe stores that are accessible to all customers and Associates, including those with disabilities. The Company also prohibits Associates from reporting to work or being on Company property under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol. Please refer to our HR Policy & Procedure Manual for more information on our Drug and Alcohol Policies and Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and how to report a concern.

#### **V. Document Retention**

The Company generates large volumes of electronic and paper records and information. The records Associates work with must be managed in accordance with the Company's Records Retention and Disposal Policy and retained for the time periods specified in the Records Retention Guidelines. Associates should consult the Records Retention and Disposal Policy and the Records Retention Guidelines. If an Associate receives a hold notice from the Legal Department, then the applicable records must be retained until further notice (even if the retention period has passed). Questions about the need to keep particular documents should be directed to the Legal Department.

#### **VI. Antitrust Laws**

Strict compliance with antitrust and competition laws around the world is essential. These laws are very complex. Generally speaking, Associates should avoid any plans, agreements, or understandings with competitors that restrict competition including, without limitation, price fixing and allocation of contracts. Associates and other representatives of Chico's must be alert to avoid even the appearance of such conduct and, therefore, avoid discussions with competitors regarding pricing, marketing practices, other

competitors, real estate plans, vendors, etc. If any Associate has questions concerning a specific situation, he or she should contact the General Counsel or CLCO before taking action.

## **VII. Bribery, Kickback and Fraud**

No funds, gifts or assets shall be paid, loaned, given or otherwise disbursed as bribes, "kickbacks", or other payments designed to influence or compromise the conduct of the recipient. No Associate shall accept or provide any funds, gifts or other assets of any kind for assisting in obtaining business or for securing special concessions for Chico's.

The U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and similar international anti-bribery laws make it illegal for anyone at the Company to offer, promise, or pay money or anything of value, directly or indirectly, to any governmental official or employee, political party, candidate for political office or anyone else for the purpose of obtaining or maintaining business or any other business advantage. The fact that bribery may appear to be an accepted local practice in a country does not relieve an Associate from the restrictions of the Code or the Company from complying with the FCPA and similar laws. Consult the General Counsel or CLCO as to questions about compliance with the FCPA. Any Associate found to be offering, receiving, accepting or condoning a bribe, kickback, or other unlawful payment or transfer, attempting to initiate such activities, or engaging in or attempting fraud shall be subject to immediate dismissal and possible criminal proceedings. All Associates have a responsibility to report any such conduct to the General Counsel or CLCO.

## **VIII. Fair Dealing**

Our reputation starts and ends with you. The Company depends on our reputation for quality, service and integrity. The way we deal with our Vendors, customers and competitors molds our reputation, builds long-term trust and ultimately determines our success. Associates should always deal fairly with the Company's customers, Vendors, competitors and other Associates. Associates must never take unfair advantage of others through manipulation, concealment, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts or any other unfair dealing practice.

Associates should also respect the intellectual property rights of others and never make unauthorized copies of material from books, magazines, newspapers, films, videotapes, music recordings, websites, products, designs or computer programs. If you have questions about what you can or cannot use or if you discover that associates are using the intellectual property of others without permission, contact the Legal Department. Further, if you discover that others are using Chico's intellectual property without permission, then you should also contact the Legal Department.

## **IX. Ethical Sourcing, Security and Protecting Our Environment**

Chico's believes that every person has a right to safe, decent and humane working conditions. Chico's commitment to social responsibility and security in our supply chain is an integral part of the Company's culture and we expect our suppliers to understand and comply with our requirements and all applicable laws. For more information, please refer to our Global Code of Vendor Conduct on our website [www.chicosfas.com](http://www.chicosfas.com). Chico's is committed to minimizing the impact of our business on the environment. All Associates are responsible for complying with applicable environmental laws and Company policies.



## **X. Financial Books and Records**

All financial managers should establish and implement appropriate internal accounting controls over all areas of their responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of the assets of Chico's and the full, fair, accurate, timely, and understandable disclosure of its financial records and reports disclosed to the Securities and Exchange Commission and in other communications to the public.

Chico's has adopted controls in accordance with governing laws, regulations, and internal needs. These established accounting practices and procedures must be followed to assure the complete and accurate recording of all transactions. Associates must complete all Company documents accurately, truthfully, and in a timely manner, including all travel and expense reports.

All of the Company's financial activities must be recorded in compliance with all applicable laws and accounting practices. The making of false or misleading entries, records or documentation is strictly prohibited. Associates must never create a false or misleading report or make payment or establish an account on behalf of Chico's with the understanding that any part of the payment or account is to be used for a purpose other than as described by the supporting documents.

All Associates must fully cooperate with our internal and external auditors and not take any action to coerce, manipulate, mislead or fraudulently influence any public accountant engaged in an audit review of Chico's financial statements. If you have any concerns about the Company's internal accounting controls, accounting, financial reporting or auditing, you may report these concerns anonymously through the third-party hotline that has been established by the Company by calling (1-888-361-5813) or submitting through [www.chicosfasopendoor.ethicspoint.com](http://www.chicosfasopendoor.ethicspoint.com). You may also report your concerns directly to the Company's Audit Committee by mailing a written complaint to: Chico's FAS, Inc., Audit Committee, 11215 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers, FL 33966. Associates may also report their concerns on these matters internally to the HR, Internal Audit or Legal Departments. These reports will be handled in accordance with procedures established by the Audit Committee. Please refer to the Complaint Procedures For Accounting Matters at <https://chicosfas.com/about-us/governance-documents-and-charters/default.aspx> for further information on the topic.

## **XI. Governmental, Investor and Media Inquiries**

Our Legal Department handles all governmental investigations of the Company. Associates should not respond to investigation requests on behalf of Chico's, unless specifically authorized. All governmental inquiries should be directed to the Legal Department.

Our Investor Relations Department handles all inquiries from investors, shareholders and market analysts about the Company. Any such inquiries should be directed to our Investor Relations Department.

Our Public Relations Department handles all media inquiries for the Company. Per our Corporate Media Policy, Associates may not speak to the press on behalf of or about Chico's, unless specifically authorized. All media inquiries should be directed to the Public Relations Department.

## **XII. Compliance with the Code of Ethics and Applicable Law**

All Associates have a responsibility to understand and follow the Code and all applicable laws, rules and regulations and are expected to perform their work with honesty and integrity in any areas not specifically

addressed by the Code. A violation of the Code will result in appropriate disciplinary action including the possible termination from employment, without additional warning. Associates at our corporate offices and selected field and distribution center Associates must complete training on the Code. Associates will be asked to certify receipt of the Code and an understanding of his or her responsibility for reading the contents and for complying with the standards, guidelines, procedures and obligations set forth in the Code.

The Code reflects general principles to guide Associates in making ethical decisions and is not intended to address every specific situation. As such, nothing in the Code prohibits or restricts Chico's from taking any disciplinary action on any matters pertaining to Associate conduct, whether or not they are expressly discussed in the Code. The Code is not intended to and does not create any employment contract between Chico's and any of its Associates, or any other obligation to or right in any Associate, Vendor, competitor, shareholder or any other person or entity. The Code cannot provide definitive answers to all questions. Please be aware that the Company reserves the right to monitor, audit and investigate the activities of our Associates and Vendors, or to appoint third-parties to do so on its behalf in order to monitor and assess the efficacy of and compliance with the Code, subject to the Code and applicable law. Our Associates and Vendors are required to cooperate in good faith with any such actions. If there are any questions regarding any of the guidelines discussed in the Code or if there is any doubt about the best course of action in a particular situation, seek guidance from a supervisor, HR, the Legal Department or any other resource identified in the Code.

The Board has the exclusive responsibility for the final interpretation of the Code. Only the Board or an appointed Board committee can approve a waiver of the Code for an executive officer or Director. Any such waiver will promptly be disclosed to appropriate parties. The Code may be revised, changed or amended at any time by the Board.

### **XIII. Reporting Suspected Non-Compliance**

Please be aware that the Company maintains an open door policy and is available to address and discuss your concerns regarding the Code and other Company policies. If something is not right, the Company encourages you to speak with your supervisor, HR or the Legal Department regarding your concerns. If you are not comfortable using the open door process, the Company has established an independent, third party Open Door and Ethics Hotline at 1-888-361-5813 or online at [www.chicosfasopendoor.ethicspoint.com](http://www.chicosfasopendoor.ethicspoint.com) ("the Hotline"). This Hotline is available 24/7 and reports to it may be made anonymously. Anyone with information about known or suspected violations of the Code, other Company policies or any law must report the violation promptly to the Hotline, their supervisor, HR, or the Legal Department. Associates are required to come forward with any such information, without regard to the identity or position of the suspected offender and are expected to cooperate in any investigation of reported violations.

Chico's will treat reports of violations confidentially, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with a complete and appropriate investigation, and will evaluate and investigate these reports in an appropriate manner. Chico's will not, to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances, disclose the identity of anyone who reports a violation or suspected violation or who participates in the investigation. Associates should be aware that persons investigating reported violations are obligated to act in the best interests of Chico's and cannot act as personal representatives or lawyers for Associates.

Retaliation in any form against an individual who in good faith reports a suspected violation of the Code, Company policies or law or who assists in the investigation of a reported violation is itself a serious violation of the Code. The Company will not discharge, demote, suspend, threaten, harass, change terms and conditions of employment, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against any associate based upon his or her good faith reporting of a suspected violation of the Code, Company policies or law or who assists in the investigation of a reported violation. Acts of retaliation must be reported to your supervisor, HR, the Legal Department or the Hotline immediately and will be investigated and, if appropriate, acted upon promptly.

#### **XIV. Whistleblower and Other Protections**

Nothing in the Code is intended to or will be used in any way to limit an Associate's rights to voluntarily communicate with, file a claim or report with, or otherwise participate in an investigation with, any federal, state or local government agency, as provided for, protected under or warranted by applicable law. An Associate does not need prior approval of anyone at Chico's before making any such communication, report, claim, disclosure, or participation and is not required to notify anyone at Chico's that such communication, report, claim or participation has been made.

Any Associate, Vendor or other person who wrongfully misappropriates a trade secret may be liable for damages, exemplary damages and attorneys' fees. Federal law provides certain protections to individuals who disclose a trade secret to their attorney, a court, or a government official in certain confidential circumstances. Specifically, an individual shall not be held criminally or civilly liable under any federal or state trade secret law for the disclosure of a trade secret that is made in (1) confidence to a federal, state, or local government official, either directly or indirectly, or to an attorney, in each case solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law or (2) a complaint or other document filed under seal in a lawsuit or other proceeding. If an individual files a lawsuit for retaliation by Chico's for reporting a suspected violation of law, the individual may disclose the trade secret to his or her attorney and use the trade secret information in the court proceeding, but only if the individual files any document containing the trade secret under seal and does not disclose the trade secret, except pursuant to court order.