**ACRC cracks down on corruption and acts detrimental to the public interest by strengthening functions by stages of “corruption & public interest report → protection & reward →confiscation & punishment”**

*- Prompt and fair responses to corruption & public interest reports and corruption issues, reform of protection and reward system centered on reporters, and enactment of a single unified law -*

*- ACRC released the 2022 plan for corruption & public interest report and protection & reward -*

The ACRC is planning to unify provisions on reporter protection and reward, scattered in the five laws related to corruption and public interest report into a single law, to enhance the unity and fairness of the standards regarding protection and reward.

\* Act on the Prevention of Corruption and the Establishment and Management of the Anti-corruption and Civil Rights Commission, Protection of Public Interest Reporters Act, Improper Solicitation and Graft Act, Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits, Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest Related to Duties of Public Servants

For cases that are a social issue, the ACRC strengthens the preemptive protection of the reporter by recognizing and publicly announcing the position as a reporter even before the ACRC’s decision on protective measures and expands the level of rewards for reports on corruption & public interest so that practical compensation and support can be provided to reporters.

In addition, the effectiveness of handling reports will be improved and the reported person’s rights to statement and defense also guaranteed by providing the reported person with the opportunity to submit materials and state opinions,

On January 6, the ACRC published the 2022 plan for corruption & public interest report and protection & reward that includes the above contents.

**The level of protection and reward for corruption and public interest reporters will be significantly raised.**

The ACRC unifies provisions on reporter protection and reward, scattered in the five laws related to corruption and public interest report, into a single law. Based on the current “Protection of Public Interest Reporters Act,” the ACRC will secure the unity and fairness of the protection & reward standards and prevent any confusion regarding the application of the law.

\* Act on the Prevention of Corruption and the Establishment and Management of the Anti-corruption and Civil Rights Commission, Protection of Public Interest Reporters Act, Improper Solicitation and Graft Act, Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits, Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest Related to Duties of Public Servants

Also, to nurture an environment where people can freely make a report without fear, the ACRC will protect reporters in a preemptive manner, such as recognizing the position of the reporter and providing provisional protective measures if the necessary conditions for report are met even before the ACRC’s final decision on protective measures. To strengthen the confidentiality of reporters, starting in July, it will introduce the system for non-real name proxy representation even for corruption reports.

Following the criticism that the level of monetary rewards and awards falls short of the international standard, the ACRC will significantly enhance the reward for reports by shifting the payment rate of monetary rewards from section rate system (4%~30% for corruption reports, 4%~20% for public interest reports) to fixed rate system (30%), and by adjusting or abolishing the maximum limit of monetary rewards (3 billion Korean won).

**The ACRC responds to corruption issues such as corruption and public interest reports in a prompt and fair manner.**

The ACRC promptly analyzes corruption & public interest reports and corruption cases that are a social issue and pushes forward fact-finding inspections and institutional improvements. For the key corruption issues revealed by fact-finding inspections, the Commission discloses them to the media to induce the self-purification efforts of public institutions.

Twenty years after the implementation of the former anti-corruption act, it will now be possible to confirm facts about reported persons with the introduction of the system to “confirm facts about reported persons of corruption reports” (on February 18, 2022). The ACRC will utilize this function to substantially handle reported cases and prevent the infringement of the rights of reported persons due to fake reports.

The Commission will include fraudulent claims based on a “contract relationship” between a public institution and a private person that is currently excluded from the Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits into the scope of the application of the Act. It will also push forward the revision of the “acts that have different levels of sanction on the same kind of fraudulent claim” to close the blind spots in the management of public funds while reinforcing the inspection on whether public institutions confiscate fraudulently received public funds.

The ACRC will strengthen the management of the areas in the blind spots regarding the system\* to restrict re-employment of persons dismissed for corruption. It will also reinforce the inspection of elected officials, high-ranking officials, local assemblymen, and public officials related to the areas of national defense and construction. The Commission will also make it mandatory for public institutions to give prior notice of the system to restrict the re-employment to their public officials dismissed for corruption.

\* The system bans any public official who mandatorily retires or is dismissed or discharged from office or a former public official who is sentenced a fine of more than 3 million Korean won for committing an act of corruption in connection with his or her duties while in office, from being employed by public institutions or for-profit private enterprises related to the public duties of the institution to which he or she belonged, for five years from the date he or she retires.

The ACRC has led the improvement of national integrity through continuous responses to corruption issues and enhancement of the reporter protection and support system over the last four and a half years.

It has significantly expanded the range of protection of reporters by consistently adding relevant laws to the scope of the application of the Protection of Public Interest Reporters Act and complemented the system to fundamentally prevent the exposure of the reporters’ identity, by introducing the system of non-real name proxy representation for public interest reports and toughening the criminal punishments against the violators of the duty to maintain the confidentiality of reporters.

In addition, the ACRC enacted and has implemented the Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits since January 2020, to confiscate the whole amount of the fraudulent profit and impose a penalty up to five times the amount, if a false claim is made on the payment from the public fund, such as subsidies and monetary rewards.

As a result, the number of laws applied to public interest reports has risen by 192, from 279 to 471 since the launch of the Moon Jae-in Administration. Up to November last year, reporter protection has been provided in 248 cases and monetary rewards and awards of 23.2 billion Korean won has been paid.

Kim Ki-sun, the ACRC Director General for Inspection & Protection Bureau revealed, “In 2022, the ACRC will make efforts to meet the increased expectations of the people by handling corruption and public interest reports in a more prompt and fairer manner and effectively responding to corruption in the public and private sectors through the overall reform of protection and reward system from the reporters’ perspective.”