
WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1.0 General Philosophy

This policy applies to all employees of the Company. Other individuals performing functions in relation to the Company, such as agency workers and contractors, are also encouraged to use it.

It is important to the business that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by workers is reported and properly dealt with. The Company therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the business or the way in which the business is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

2.0 Aim and Scope

The public interest disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'. A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for the worker to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. The worker has no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

A worker who makes such a protected disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, or subjected to victimisation, because he/she has made the disclosure.

The Company encourages workers to raise their concerns under this procedure in the first instance. If a worker is not sure whether to raise a concern, he/she should discuss the issue with his/her line manager or the human resources department.

2.1 Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Workers should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the worker who raised the issue.
- No worker will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because he/she has raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of a worker for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the Company's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, workers should not agree to remain silent. They should report the matter to a director.

3.0 Policy Framework

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of an employee's own contract of employment. If an employee is concerned that his/her own contract has been, or is likely to be, broken, he/she should use the Company's grievance procedure.

- (1) In the first instance, and unless the worker reasonably believes his/her line manager to be involved in the wrongdoing, or if for any other reason the worker does not wish to approach his/her line manager, any concerns should be raised with the worker's line manager. If he/she believes the line manager to be involved, or for any reason does not wish to approach the line manager, then the worker should proceed straight to stage 3.
- (2) The line manager will arrange an investigation of the matter (either by investigating the matter him/herself or immediately passing the issue to someone in a more senior position). The line manager must also inform or

immediately pass the details to someone in a more senior position to inform the Chair of the Audit Committee. The investigation ([investigation procedure](#)) may involve the worker and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. The worker's statement will be taken into account, and he/she will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will then report to the board, which will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. If disciplinary action is required, the line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will report the matter to the human resources department and start the disciplinary procedure. On conclusion of any investigation, the worker will be told the outcome of the investigation and what the board has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

- (3) If the worker is concerned that his/her line manager is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the board, he/she should inform a director of the subsidiary, who will arrange for another manager to review the investigation carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make his/her own report to the board as in stage 2 above. The senior manager must also inform or immediately pass the details to someone in a more senior position to inform the Chair of the Audit Committee.

If for any other reason the worker does not wish to approach his/her line manager he/she should also in the first instance contact Human Resources. Any approach to the director / HR will be treated with the strictest confidence and the worker's identity will not be disclosed without his/her prior consent.

- If on conclusion of stages 1, 2 and 3 the worker reasonably believes that the appropriate action has not been taken, he/she **could** report the matter to the proper authority.

4.0 Cross Reference

[Investigation procedure](#)

[Disciplinary procedure](#)

[Grievance procedure](#)