

CHRE

Whistleblowing Policy – Raising Serious Concerns

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1 Introduction

Raising concerns at or about work can be one of the most difficult and challenging things to do in a work environment. All of us, at one time or another has concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns can be easily resolved. Sometimes they may be about the performance or behaviour of colleagues, occasionally they may be about unlawful conduct, financial malpractice or dangers to the public, the staff or the environment and it can be difficult to know what to do.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998 provides protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. These matters should be issues that are of public interest, for example;

- A criminal offence that has, is being, or is likely to be committed
- Suspected fraud or misuse of funds
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Unauthorised or inappropriate disclosure, misuse or loss of confidential, personal and / or sensitive information
- A miscarriage of justice
- An act causing damage to the environment
- A risk to the health and safety of an individual/s
- Attempts to suppress or hide information relating to the above

Issues that are NOT covered are personal grievances concerning an individuals terms and conditions of employment or related matters.

All employees have a right and a moral responsibility to report improper actions and omissions. Indeed, there are some circumstances in which you may be breaching your contract and/or breaking the law if you do not raise your concern with management or an appropriate body.

You may be worried about raising these issues of concern. You may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or the organisation or you may want to



keep the concerns to yourself. If something is troubling you, which you think should be looked into, use this policy to deal with the matter.

The Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) is committed to this policy. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy you will not risk losing your job or suffering any form of retribution as a result. If you are acting in good faith and believe the matter to be substantially true it does not matter if you are mistaken. However, if a matter is maliciously raised when known to be untrue, or maliciously discussed with other staff, we do not extend the same assurance and the matter may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

1.1 Confidentiality

CHRE will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone. However, we do recognise that you may want to raise a concern in confidence under this policy. If you ask for protection of your identity by keeping your confidence it will not be disclosed without your consent unless we are required to do so by law. If the situation arises where CHRE is not able to resolve the concern without revealing your identity this will be discussed with you and a decision made about whether or not you wish to proceed.

1.2 Concerns raised anonymously

As CHRE has such a small number of staff the anonymous raising of concerns is not encouraged, identification may prove easy. Therefore we hope that the assurances given in the clause above will give you the confidence to identify yourself at the outset when raising a concern.



2 Raising Concerns

2.1 Raising concerns internally

Step 1

Where possible you should raise any matter of concern, serious or otherwise with your line manager. This may be done either verbally or in writing.

Step 2

If you feel unable, for whatever reason, to raise the matter with your line manager in the first instance, you may go to one of the management team – the Director of Policy, Research and External Relations or the Director of Scrutiny and Quality or the Director of Governance and Operations. They will then act under the direction of this policy.

Step 3

If these steps have been followed and you still feel you have concerns, or that they have not been addressed, or that you cannot discuss the matter with any of the above please contact – the Chief Executive, the Chair or the designated Council Member (the name and contact details are available on the H drive, in the Human Resources folder, under Raising Concerns at Work).

2.2 Raising concerns externally

Where attempts to raise matters internally have been unsuccessful or, exceptionally, if staff feel they cannot raise their concerns internally, you may consider raising the matter with:

- The relevant regulatory authority, for example the Health and Safety Executive or the Financial Services Authority.
- The police.
- The independent charity **Public Concern at Work** on **0207 404 6609**. Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work. They will also provide advice on the circumstances in which it may be appropriate for you to contact an outside body.



3 Additional information

3.1 Training

Training and regular updating will be provided for the management team and Council Member/s with whom concerns may be raised.

3.2 Evaluation and review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed annually by the Audit and Risk Committee.

3.3 Conclusion

This policy is intended to give staff the means and confidence to raise genuine concerns. Raising concerns promotes good management and accountability. CHRE is committed to act appropriately and without delay on information received from any member of staff who is acting in good faith.

Document Control

Version Control

Printed documents are uncontrolled. This document is only valid on the day it was printed.

Version	Status	Primary Author(s)	Description of Version	Date Completed
1.0			Whistleblowing Policy	18/09/08
1.1			Updating of job titles Reapproved by Audit Committee	December 2010

Associated Documentation

Version	Description of Documentation

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