



Whistleblowing within the Workplace

Policy Statement

Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within the workplace.

Our members, staff and volunteers have a right to be treated with respect and to enjoy our services in a safe, trusting and positive environment.

This policy is to enable staff, trustees and volunteers the right to make a complaint should they witness any behaviour or concerns, in particular those surrounding the protection of vulnerable adults.

Bringing a complaint or concern to the Charity Manager or Chair of Trustees or another professional body is the responsibility of everyone. It requires strength and bravery to stand up for a vulnerable person's rights and this policy will help you should the need ever arise.

Procedures

This policy provides individuals in the workplace protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998*, which encourages people to raise concerns to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest.

The Act covers behaviour which relates to:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to the health and safety of another adult, child or the environment
- Deliberate concealment of information of any of the above

This policy is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency which makes it safe and acceptable for an employee, trustee or volunteer to raise a concern in good faith. It is not an alternative to the grievance regulations and should be read alongside the policies on; Safeguarding and Confidentiality.

Our commitment

We are committed to providing staff, trustees and volunteers with an effective mechanism for dealing with situations that arise from concerns within the workplace.

An employee, trustee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise a concern should normally report the matter to the Charity Manager, who should advise the individual of the action they will take in response to the concerns expressed. This could include consulting other professional bodies such as East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board or the RSM Board of Trustees. Concerns will be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible. The individual who has raised the concern will be notified in writing of the result of the concern, within 28 days. Other professional bodies will also be notified in writing, when required to do so by law, within the stated legal timeframes.

If the individual feels they cannot discuss the matter with the Charity Manager, or if they still have concerns after informing the Charity Manager, the concern should be reported to the Chair of Trustees. The Chair will decide in consultation, if necessary, with the other professional bodies, what action is to be taken. Alternatively, individuals can seek independent advice via prescribed whistleblowing helplines. A full list of prescribed whistleblowing people and bodies can be found at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing. If the concern is regarding a safeguarding matter, please call Adult Social care on 0345 60 80 191 or call [Hourglass 0808 8088141](tel:08088088141) for confidential advice and support.

A disclosure in good faith, to the Charity Manager or Chair of Trustees will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible. The individual raising the concern will not suffer any detrimental treatment and will be supported as much as possible, as we recognise how stressful it can be to report a colleague.

NB: There are no restrictions in Employment law relating to length of service or age of individual. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, employees are protected from detrimental treatment or victimisation from their employer if, in the public interest, they blow the whistle on wrongdoing. This Act does not at present cover volunteers.

This policy was written/reviewed by	Vicky Cheeseman – Safeguard Lead
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