



## **WHISTLEBLOWING**

Name: Achieving Aspirations CIC

### **Policy Statement**

Whistleblowing is the term used when someone who works for an employer raises a concern about malpractice, or risk, for example to a person's safety, wrongdoing which harms, or creates risk to harm, to people who use the service, colleagues or the wider public.

This organisation's policy on whistleblowing sets out to comply, in every aspect, with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998* in protecting and not victimising staff who seek to report, and who have investigated genuine and reasonable concerns about any form of malpractice that they encounter in their work.

At the same time, the company aims to create an atmosphere of open communication and commitment to high standards of work, within which criticisms can be frankly made and thoroughly investigated.

This organisation also recommends that its staff make arrangements to have access to independent legal advice in the event of any involvement in allegations as whistleblowers or as people against whom allegations are made. They are encouraged to do this through membership of a trade union or professional organisation that includes legal advice as part of its services.

### **The Policy**

This document outlines the organisation's policy for responding to allegations or reports of abuse of service users, and other forms of misconduct, made by one or more members of staff against other staff. These actions are known as whistleblowing.

The requirement for such a policy arises because it was previously the case that management considered individuals involved in whistleblowing as trouble-makers. It is now legally recognised that staff who are in a position to observe and report bad practice should be enabled to do so without fear of repercussions on their conduct and career prospects. Indeed, failure to report malpractice could lead to accusations of colluding in it, and therefore of being guilty of misconduct.

### **Obligations on Staff to Report Abuse**

The organisation requires its entire staff to observe the organisation's work carefully and report diligently on anything that causes them concern. We believe that

teamwork and loyalty to colleagues should not be allowed to deter staff from reporting suspected abuse, criminal acts, and neglect of service users or bad practice, and follows the guidelines issued by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or



Ofsted as appropriate. Any member of staff who witnesses or suspects abuse by another member of staff should report it as soon as possible to their line manager. The manager will accept responsibility for the actions that follow and will assure the whistleblower that they have acted correctly by reporting the matter and that they will not be victimised.

Despite the assurances given by our organisation, we accept that there may be incidents that a staff member does not feel confident enough or able to report in the first instance to the manager. Where this is not appropriate or considered too sensitive the worker should report to a director or other service manager/advisor. Where this is not considered appropriate the organisation accepts the right and obligation of the staff member to report their concerns to an outside authority such as the police, the local authority safeguarding team, Ofsted or to the CQC to initiate an investigation. The company provides every staff member with the contact details—which are also included in this policy—of these agencies in the staff handbook. The company will not penalise or victimise any staff member who responsibly reports their concerns in these ways.

### **Investigating and Dealing with Allegations**

The manager to whom abuse by a staff member is reported should take the necessary steps under the Safeguarding Policy. In addition, they should also protect the source of the information, if possible. If a manager fails to act promptly, suppresses evidence, or is involved in any action to discourage whistleblowing, they may render themselves liable to disciplinary action.

### **Dealing with Interference with or Victimisation of Staff who have Reported Abuse**

Any member of staff who attempts to prevent a staff member from reporting their concerns to a manager, or who bullies, attempts to intimidate or discriminates against a colleague in these circumstances will be dealt with under disciplinary proceedings. A whistleblower who feels themselves to be subject to hostile action from colleagues should inform their manager, who should, if necessary, take steps to alter the staff member's duties so as to protect them from the hostile action. The company includes in its staff handbook information on how to make contact with the Public Concern at Work organisation that has been established to protect whistleblowers from victimisation and bullying as a result of their actions.

### **Unjustified Reporting**

This organisation's managers take reports from whistleblowers seriously and investigate all allegations thoroughly. Any allegations against colleagues that are found to be merely flippant or malicious may render the accuser liable to disciplinary action and criminal proceedings.

## **Related Policies**

Safeguarding

Duty of Candour

Recruitment and Selection

## **Training Statement**

All new staff receive training in this policy on whistle blowing as part of the induction training. Staff receive updated training as needed due to policy changes.

- In addition, the government has set up a whistle blowing helpline for NHS and Social care. This is available to both managers for advice and staff for reporting purposes. 08000 724725

Additional advice can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

[www.wbhelpline.org.uk](http://www.wbhelpline.org.uk)

CQC whistleblowing “Guidance for providers who are registered with CQC (issued November 2013)

[www.cqc.org.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.cqc.org.uk/whistleblowing)

Contact Details

## **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA

Suffolk (Local) Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) website

<http://suffolksafeguardingchildrenboard.onesuffolk.net/>

Children Services Contact numbers

Customer First 08456 023023

Out of Hours 01473 299699

## **Local Authority Safeguarding Unit Adults**

**0808 800 4005**

<http://www.suffolkas.org>

## **Local Police**



Portal Avenue  
Martlesham Heath, Ipswich  
01473 613500

**Ofsted:**

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

About concerns

0300 123 4666

<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-form>