

Whistleblowing Policy for VOCAWAVES

Whistleblowing encourages and enables volunteers/staff to raise serious concerns within the organisation rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle” outside. Staff are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong within the organisation. However, they may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the organisation.

VOCAWAVES is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect volunteers, and other staff that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of VOCAWAVES’ work to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy applies to all volunteers and staff, and those working with us at venues. It also covers those supplying services to VOCAWAVES.

This document outlines VOCAWAVES’ commitment to openness. These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- Provide avenues for you to raise concerns in confidence and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made a disclosure in good faith.

Concerns Covered

This document covers the following concerns:

- All low cases at start, conduct which is an offence or a breach of law
- Disclosure related to miscarriage of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- Damage to the environment
- The unauthorised use of funds
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Sexual or physical abuse of those outside the organisation
- Other unethical conduct

Safeguards

VOCAWAVES recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to us and for those you provide services to. VOCAWAVES will not tolerate any harassment of victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note that you:

- Must disclose the information in good faith
- Must believe it to be substantially true
- Must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- Must not seek any personal gain

How To Raise Your Concern

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns either verbally or in writing with the staff member immediately higher than your position. This may depend, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that the committee is involved you should approach a member of them or an outside trustee.

Financial allegations require that the committee shall be notified of all financial or accounting irregularities or suspected irregularities.

Independent Advice

For independent advice, please contact Public Concern at Work (PCAW):

www.pcaw.co.uk

020 7404 6609

whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on whistleblowing or following any changes within VOCAWAVES.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the ethics within VOCAWAVES
- In all other circumstances, at least every Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Document updated and effective as of 14/09/2023