



Royal Association for Deaf people

Whistleblowing Policy

Please click here for a BSL version of this policy
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nH_COadzjTA

Purpose and Scope

The aims of this policy are:

- To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- To provide staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
- To reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Please note that:

- This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.
- This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work by the employer or a colleague. In those cases you should use the Grievance Procedure.

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- Criminal activity
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Danger to health and safety;
- Damage to the environment;
- Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- Bribery (also see Bribery Policy);
- Financial fraud or mismanagement;
- Breach of our internal policies and procedures including our Code of Conduct;
- Conduct likely to damage our reputation;
- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- Breach of Safeguarding regulations
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

If you are unclear about what can be raised under this policy, speak to the Whistleblowing Officer¹, the Chief Executive/ Director/ Senior Manager.

Raising a Whistleblowing Concern

- In many cases, you will be able to raise your concerns with your line manager. This can be done orally or in writing. This may be resolved by the line manager.
- If you, or your manager feels it is sufficiently serious, the Whistleblowing Officer may be informed.
- Once the concern is raised, the Whistleblowing Officer (or someone they have delegated to) will invite you to a meeting to discuss your concerns. During the meeting, notes will usually be taken.
- You should not discuss your concerns with anyone other than the Whistleblowing Officer (or their delegate) in order to maintain confidentiality. You must also fully cooperate with any investigations.
- You may be accompanied by a colleague or a representative from a trade union (if they are certified by their union as competent to accompany you). No other person may accompany you, for example, friend, partner etc.
- If you want to bring a companion to the meeting, you must make a request to the employer for confirmation that this person can attend. It is paramount that the companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.
- The employer may refuse if the person requested is deemed unreasonable (for example their presence is prejudicial to this or another process).
- Following the meeting, the employer will keep you updated with the progress of the investigations provided that by doing so it does not breach any other obligations the employer has, such as confidentiality.
- If you are unhappy with the outcome of the investigations, then you should raise your concerns with the Chair of Trustees or the CEO.

Protection for Whistleblowers

- We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- Staff must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern.
- Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct you may be subject to disciplinary action. In some cases the whistleblower could have a right to sue you personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.

¹ The Quality Manager is the RAD Whistleblowing Officer

- However, if the employer concludes that you have made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, or you have made a disclosure in breach of the employer's confidentiality obligations or the confidentiality obligations in the contract of employment on confidentiality, then you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Disclosures Outside of the Employer

- The policy is an internal mechanism for dealing with issues covered by this policy and therefore, you should, in most cases only need to report your concerns internally via the process above.
- If you feel you need to make the disclosure externally, we strongly advise that you take advice from the Whistleblowing Charity, Public Concern at Work before taking any steps. Their contact details can be found on line as follows <http://www.pcaw.org.uk/about/contact-us>. They operate a confidential helpline on **020 7404 6609**.