



MISSION44

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

APRIL 2022





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Last review: N/A

Next review due: April 2022



1. ABOUT THIS POLICY

1.i

Mission 44 ("the Charity") is committed to conducting our business and carrying out our charitable objectives with honesty and integrity, and we expect all staff to maintain high standards of conduct.

1.ii

Mission 44 acknowledges that all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring and to address them when they do occur.

1.iii

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.

1.iv

This policy covers all employees, trustees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers (referred to as staff throughout this policy).

1.v

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY?

2i

The Board has overall responsibility for this policy, including reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken in response to concerns raised under this policy, and approving any updates made to the policy.

2ii

The Whistleblowing Officer (currently the Operations Manager) has day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, and must ensure that all managers and other staff who may deal with concerns or investigations under this policy receive regular and appropriate training.

2iii

The Whistleblowing Officer, in conjunction with the Board should review this policy from a legal and operational perspective at least once a year.

2iv

All staff are responsible for the successful implementation of this policy and should ensure that they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the Whistleblowing Officer.

3. WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?

3.I

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

The may include:

Criminal activity;

Failure to comply with any legal obligation or regulatory requirements;

Miscarriages of justice;

Danger to health and safety;

Damage to the environment;

Bribery;

Financial fraud or mismanagement;

Breach of our internal policies and procedures;

Conduct likely to damage our reputation or financial wellbeing;

Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;

Negligence;

Bullying, harassment or discrimination of another person;

The deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

This list is intended as a guide and is not exhaustive.

3.II

A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of our activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

3.III

This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance Procedure or Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate.

3.IV

Matters relating to any kind of safeguarding concern must be reported in accordance with the Foundation's Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy, by escalating the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

3.V

If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Whistleblowing Officer.

4. PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERNS

4A. REPORTING WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERNS

4A.I

Where possible, the first point of contact should be your line manager. You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer. They may be able to agree a way of resolving your concern quickly and effectively. In some cases they may refer the matter to the Whistleblowing Officer.

4A.II

However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your line manager has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact one of the following:

The Whistleblowing Officer;

Or in the event that the Whistleblowing Officer is unavailable or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, the Chair of Trustees.

Contact details are set out at the end of this policy.

4A.III.

The Whistleblowing Officer will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

4A.Iv

The Whistleblowing Officer will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter, though in some circumstances this may not be possible.

4B. INVESTIGATION AND OUTCOME

4B.I

Once you have raised a concern, the Whistleblowing Officer and the Chair of Trustees where required will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. We will inform you of the outcome of our assessment. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.

4B.II

In some cases we may appoint an investigator or team of investigators including staff with relevant experience of investigations or specialist knowledge of the subject matter. The investigator(s) may make recommendations for change to enable us to minimise the risk of future wrongdoing.

4B.III

We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You must treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

4B.Iv

If the investigators conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Mission44's Disciplinary Policy.

4B.v

If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with one of the other key contacts outlined in this policy.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

5.I

Mission 44 does not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to the Whistleblowing Officer or one of the other contact points listed in this policy and appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality.

5.II

If you are in any doubt about reporting whistleblowing concerns you can seek advice from Protect, the independent whistleblowing charity, who offer a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

6. EXTERNAL DISCLOSURES

6.I

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

6.II

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator or the police. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. The independent whistleblowing charity, Protect, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

6.111

Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of our staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a customer, supplier or service provider. In some circumstances the law will protect you if you raise the matter with the third party directly. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first. You should contact your line manager or one of the other individuals set out in this policy for guidance.

7. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

7.1

It is understandable that whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. Mission44 aims to uphold a culture of openness and integrity and therefore will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

7.11

Whistleblowers 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. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Whistleblowing Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

7.111

You 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 accordance with our Disciplinary Policy. In some cases the whistleblower could have a right to sue you personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.