



Whistleblowing Policy

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AUTHOR:	DIRECTOR
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Signed by Director	<i>Holly Lathbury-Wilson</i>

Overview

ENCIC is committed to operating openly, ethically and responsibly. This policy provides a safe route for employees, volunteers, Directors, associates and others connected with ENCIC to raise serious concerns about wrongdoing without fear of retaliation.

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by Directors, staff, volunteers or others working on behalf of ENCIC is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore require all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in ENCIC or the way in which the organisation is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one made by an employee who has a reasonable belief that

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed.

It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is ENCIC's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure, you have the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because you have made a disclosure. We encourage you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Directors, staff, volunteers and others working on behalf of ENCIC should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature of which they become aware.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- No employee, volunteer or other person working on behalf of the organisation will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future volunteering opportunities, access to services, working relationships or any other involvement with ENCIC will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Manager, a Director or the Board of Directors.

Procedure

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of your own contract of employment, which should be raised via the Grievance Procedure. ENCIC will acknowledge concerns as soon as reasonably practicable and will provide updates where investigations take longer than expected.

Stage 1

In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with the appropriate Director, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. Your statement will be taken into account, and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The Director will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to the Board of Directors and any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The Director will also invoke any disciplinary action required. On conclusion of any investigation, you will be told the outcome and what ENCIC has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

Stage 2

If you are concerned that the Director is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the relevant person, you should escalate the matter to the Board of Directors via another Director. The Board will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make their own report. The Director involved will not take part in investigating or deciding the outcome.

Stage 3

If on conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:

HM Revenue & Customs

The Health and Safety Executive

The Environment Agency

The Serious Fraud Office

Companies House

Office of the Regulator of CICs

The Pensions Regulator

The Information Commissioner

The Financial Conduct Authority

The Competition and Markets Authority

The Independent Office for Police Conduct

You can find the full list in The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496899/BI-S-16-79-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person.pdf

Anonymous reporting

Concerns may be raised anonymously. However, where the person raising the concern does not provide contact details, ENCIC may be unable to request further information or provide feedback on the outcome.

Data protection

When an individual makes a disclosure, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with the [data protection policy](#). Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure. Personal data will be processed in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and ENCIC's Data Protection Policy.

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