



Yenaa Housing

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Policy Checklist	
Date of Implementation	Feb 22
Date of Last Review	Feb 26
Date of Next Review	Feb 28

Whistleblowing Introduction

This policy is about whistleblowing. It explains what staff must do if they have any concerns about the conduct of their colleagues or visitors, specifically regarding the protection of children. This policy is linked to our Safeguarding Policy.

This Whistleblowing Policy ensures that staff have direct access to direction and guidance around whistleblowing, centred upon the unequivocal need for an open and transparent working environment. Whistleblowing provides a means to address potential situation(s) where staff have concerns for the welfare for anyone associated with the organisation.

What is Whistleblowing?

In May 1996, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, the Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Public Spending Bodies was published. The Nolan Committee used the term 'whistle blowing' to mean the confidential raising of problems or concerns within an organisation or within an "independent review structure" associated with that organisation and not in the pejorative sense of leaking information or telling tales.'

It is important to draw distinction at this stage between matters of impropriety that follow the whistleblowing provisions (for example some sort of breach of law, procedures or ethics), as distinct from matters of more general grievance.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 added legal backing to the Nolan proposals, stating that it is:

"An Act to protect individuals who make certain disclosures in the public interest; to allow such individuals to bring action in respect of victimisation; and for connected purposes."

Any concerns regarding the conduct of staff/colleagues/visitors/etc. must be referred to the Operations manager. If the allegation is against the Operations Manager then you should speak to the Directors. If you cant do this you can share your concerns with our Registered Providers

Whistleblowing Staff Procedures

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the company. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice. This is not acceptable, and we expect staff who have serious concerns about any aspect of the organisation come forward and voice those concerns immediately. Staff with genuine concerns have nothing to fear.

- There should never be a reason to not report information immediately to the appropriate people.
- Withholding information may carry with it consequences.
- We are clear that staff can and should voice concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. Whistleblowing is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the workplace environment, rather than overlooking a problem;
- This applies to all employees and applies equally to those designated as casual, temporary, agency, authorised volunteers or work experience, as well as those contractors working for the company or on the premises (for example: agency staff, builders, drivers, etc.).

Staff Will Be:

- Encouraged to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice, particularly if it relates to a welfare or safeguarding concern;
- Provided with a procedure to raise those concerns and will receive feedback (where appropriate) on any action taken;
- Provided with a response to any concerns and the means to pursue them;
- Reassured that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if any disclosure was made in good faith;
- Made to feel safe.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- General guidance can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing/what-is-a-whistleblower>

The same attitude and diligence you would use when passing on safeguarding information should be the same for whistleblowing issues. There must be no delay and information must be passed to the relevant people. If you hold onto information or discuss issues with others that could have a significant impact on a young person, staff or the organisation. You may find yourself:

- ☐ Being investigated for withholding important information

Clarification on Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff

This part refers to managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including volunteers) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a service user, or may have harmed a service user.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a service user.

An allegation of inappropriate conduct should result in a referral to Birmingham adult safeguarding board.

NOTE: Allegations against a former staff member should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.

All Staff Must:

- Consistently assess whether each individual is at risk of harm, taking account of information in the service users support plans;
- Understand their obligations in relation to protecting vulnerable adults of which Whistleblowing is fundamental.
- Be familiar with, and act in accordance with, the organisational safeguarding policy
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Confidentiality

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, all staff involved make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.