

AGE UK HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE
Whistleblowing policy.

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Consulted with	Board of Trustees.
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Policy written by	Alison Weaver – HR Manager

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to give any employee, volunteer or individual who has genuine concerns about a 'situation' or malpractice, the opportunity to voice those concerns without fear of reprimand, victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage.

An employee, volunteer or individual have both a right and a duty to raise concerns about possible instances of: -

- Dishonesty
- Abuse of Power
- Neglect
- Harassment and Bullying
- Endangering the Health and Safety of an individual
- Committing a criminal offence
- Failing to complete with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Environmental damage
- Concealing any information relating to the above.

Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire is keen to accept its duty to ensure that any member of staff, Volunteers or Individuals, who raises a concern in good faith, under the terms of this Confidential Reporting policy, will be properly listened to, provided with a thoughtful and constructive response, and protected from any reprimands.

This policy is quite distinct from and is not intended as an alternative to other policies and procedures, such as those covering complaints and grievance or staff discipline and performance.

It is distinctive in its intention to address issues relating to proper standards of behaviour in a publicly funded and accountable organisation such as Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

2. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 2.1 If an employee, volunteer or individual, has a genuine and serious concern relating to issues covered by this Policy they should raise the concern with the person specified in Section 3 below. In doing this, employees should be aware of the following: -
- In raising a concern a member of employee, volunteer or individual must be sure that they are clear about what the specific issue is (it would help to write down the facts rather than rely on memory and to talk it through discreetly before raising the issue if this is possible, in order to clarify what the real issue is.)
 - Consider if pursuing the matter through this policy is the best possible route. For example, would it be more appropriate for a user of the organisation to use the Age UK H&W External Complaints Procedure or would the concern be more appropriately raised through the Internal Complaint, Grievance or other policy/procedure.
- 2.2 Every effort must be made by all parties to maintain confidentiality wherever possible. This may not however, prove possible in all cases for the extent of the matters raised, such as when the police or other public agencies need to be informed, or when another member of staff is alleged to be responsible for committing a criminal or disciplinary offence.
- 2.3 The person hearing the concern must ensure that issues brought to their attention under this policy are dealt with quickly and as sympathetically as possible/appropriate. In particular they must be sensitive to issues involving any type of discriminatory behaviour.
- 2.4 Employees, volunteers or individuals, who take action under this policy must be informed within 5 working days as how the concern is being dealt with, and they should receive ongoing information as appropriate.
- 2.5 Employees, volunteers or individuals, who raise a concern in good faith must be able to do so on the understanding that they have nothing to fear and will not suffer reprisals. Managers however retain the right to invoke the staff discipline and performance procedure, if it is established that the issue raised was not genuine or was raised with casual, frivolous or malicious intent.

3.0 PERSONS WHO SHOULD HEAR THE CONCERNS.

- 3.1 All concerns should normally be raised firstly with your Line Manager or Chief Executive who will treat the matter with complete confidence. If following the concern you feel that the matter is not being dealt with appropriately, then any member of staff can raise the issue with the nominated member of the Board of Trustees, through the email, Whistleblowing@ageukhw.org.uk. The concern will then be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive, if it is concerning the Chief Executive please see 3.2.
- 3.2 If the concern relates to the Chief Executive, The nominated member of the Board of Trustees would need to be informed through the email, whistleblowing@ageukhw.org.uk. It will then be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Board and dealt with as soon as possible.
- 3.3 It is expected that issues of concern will normally, be handled in the manner outlined above and to be dealt with, wholly within Age UK H&W. If, however, the concern relates to the Chief Executive or to the Chair, or it is considered that for some other reason it cannot properly be dealt with internally, there is an exceptional procedure which can be invoked, whereby the concerned member of staff can raise the matter with the Charity commission, www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission, or with the appropriate official organisation or regulatory body.
- 3.4 The Chief Executive shall retain details of all whistle blowing concerns, unless they relate to him or her, in which case they will be retained by the Chair on behalf of the Trustees. The Chief Executive will circulate all recorded whistle blowing to the trustees.
- 3.5 Third parties outside the organisation may also raise concerns and these may be reported to the Charity in the same way as the above procedure for employees, volunteers and individuals, or they may be made direct to another organisation such as one of our governing bodies, e.g. The Charity Commission. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>.

Where they are raised within the Charity they will be recorded and dealt with in exactly the same way as detailed in these procedures. Where they are made external and we are only made aware of them when the organisation to who the concern was made makes contact with us, we will co-operate fully and record both the concern and the outcome in the same way as above. As before, the Chief Executive will keep a record of such concerns and circulate them to the board.

4. REVIEW

The Board will review the Whistleblowing Policy every three years or as required by any change in legislation.

Policy reviewed and changed 28/01/2020