

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Age UK Waltham Forest has a whistleblowing policy and provides staff and volunteers with protection from victimisation or detriment when genuine concerns have been raised about malpractice. A whistleblower is someone who discovers something that is wrong and alerts their employer or the relevant authorities to what is going on. The law recognises that whistleblowing occurs and protects employees who are whistleblowers from detrimental treatment such as dismissal. To be protected by the law a whistleblower must fall within the stringent legal rules. To be protected by the law, the act of whistleblowing must fall within the legal rules and the whistleblower must reasonably believe that their disclosure of wrongdoing is made in the public interest.

Our Policy

1. We encourage staff and or volunteers to raise in good faith concerns they may have regarding any procedure or practice within the organisation.
2. Age UK Waltham Forest will ensure that any member of staff or a volunteer who makes a disclosure along the lines listed above will not be penalised or suffer any adverse treatment for doing so.
3. However, if a member of staff/volunteer who does not act in good faith or makes an allegation without having reasonable grounds for believing it be true or makes it for purposes of personal gain, maliciously or vexatiously may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
4. This policy only applies to issues which fall outside the scope of AUKWF's other policies and procedures.
5. The policy will not apply to personal grievances concerning an individual's terms and conditions of employment or other aspects of the working relationship such as complaints of bullying or harassment or disciplinary matters. Such complaints will be investigated under the applicable procedure.
6. Should it become apparent to the investigator, during the course of any investigation into a Public Disclosure complaint, that the concern relates more appropriately to another procedure, that procedure will be invoked.

PROCEDURE

1. If you have a concern about malpractice, it is hoped that you will be able to raise it first with your line manager. This will obviously depend upon the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice.
2. If you believe that your immediate line management is involved or you feel for whatever reason unable to raise it with your line manager, you should then raise the issue with the Chief Executive. If you have concerns about raising the issue with the Chief Executive then you should contact the Chair of Trustees. If your

concern involves a Trustee then you should go to the Chief Executive.

3. You should put your name on the complaint. Your identity will be kept confidential, if so requested, for as long as possible provided that this does not prejudice the enquiry.

4. Anonymous complaints are not covered by this procedure, but may be investigated or acted upon as the person receiving the complaint believes to be appropriate, having taken into account the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the complaint, the prospects of being able to investigate an anonymous complaint and fairness to any individual mentioned in the complaint.

Any concerns raised will always receive a response. This will entail either an investigation by management or a person independent of management (the Investigating Officer).

1. Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the Investigating Officer will write to you:
2. acknowledging the concern has been received
3. indicating how it is proposed to deal with the matter
4. giving an estimate of how long it will take to complete the investigations
5. telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made
6. supplying you with information on how AUKWF will support you if you think this is necessary.
7. The amount of contact between you and the person considering the matter will depend on both the nature of the matter raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided.
8. Steps will be taken to minimise any difficulties which you might experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, arrangements will be made for you to receive advice about the procedure.
9. If you feel that AUKWF has not responded correctly at any stage, remember that you can go to the other levels and bodies mentioned above. You can also call the independent whistleblowing charity [Protect](#) for free and confidential advice on 020 3117 2520.
10. While it cannot be guaranteed that all matters will be addressed in the way that you might wish, it will always be our intention to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using the policy, you will help achieve this.
11. If you do take the matter outside AUKWF, you must ensure absolutely that you do not disclose confidential information.
12. In the event of your concern not being substantiated you should not take any subsequent action or make any disclosure to anyone other than those referred to in this policy.