

# Whistleblowing Policy

## Policy statement

At Reform Judaism we protect our staff, layleaders, trustees and those who use our services or attend events, who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters from being dismissed or from being subjected to detrimental treatment or victimised, provided certain criteria are met. This process, known as whistleblowing, is officially called 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and as such it refers to a worker reporting suspected wrongdoing in the workplace

We expect those working for us or those who use our services to discuss any concerns that they may have either with a line manager, department head or one of our Trustees, as soon as practically possible.

## Qualifying disclosures

Certain kinds of disclosure qualify for protection. These are disclosures of information which are made in good faith and which you reasonably believe is a failing that is currently happening, has taken place in the past, or is likely to happen in the future.

Examples of qualifying disclosures

- A criminal offence: in particular fraud, theft or acts of bribery
- The breach of a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of information (covering up wrongdoing)

Only disclosures of information that fall within one or more of these six categories qualify for protection.

Your belief must be reasonable, but it need not be correct. It might be discovered subsequently that you were, in fact, wrong or mistaken. However, you must be able to show that you held the belief in good faith and that it was reasonable to hold in the circumstances at the time.

It is always the responsibility of the organisation to investigate when a disclosure has been made, it is not up to the whistleblower themselves.

## The Disclosure Procedure

This procedure applies to staff whether permanent or temporary, and in addition third parties such as agency workers, consultants, contractors, trustees, volunteers, service users and any others who perform functions in relation to Reform Judaism.

1. Report the disclosure in writing to a Line Manager, Senior Manager or Trustee promptly so that an investigation may proceed and any action taken expeditiously.
2. All qualifying disclosures will be treated seriously. The disclosure will be investigated and as part of this process you will be interviewed and may be asked to provide a written statement setting out the details of your disclosure and the basis for it. Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation to the extent that it is practical and appropriate given the circumstances. However, depending on the nature of the disclosure, Reform Judaism may need to interview other individuals during the process.
3. Once the investigation has been completed you will be informed in writing of the outcome and Reform Judaism's conclusions and decision as soon as possible. Any appropriate action will then be taken if necessary.
4. You will not be penalised for raising a qualifying disclosure even if it not upheld, unless the complaint was both untrue and in bad faith.
5. If you believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you may report the matter externally to a relevant authority in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The Act sets out a number of external bodies which qualifying disclosures may be made.

## Key points

- Report anything that you believe is illegal or unlawful within this organisation.
- You will not be victimised, treated detrimentally or dismissed for raising a protected disclosure under this policy. Subsequent victimisation will be a disciplinary offence and if appropriate, will be dealt with under the Reform Judaism's disciplinary procedure.
- Covering up someone else's wrongdoing is also a disciplinary offence. Never agree to remain silent, even if told to do so by a person in authority, such a Line Manager, Senior Manager or Trustee.
- Your right to make a protected disclosure when following the correct procedure overrides any confidentiality provisions that are in the contract of employment.
- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.