



Whistle Blowing

Path encourages all of its employees to feel confident in raising serious concerns about Path's work or the actions of Path's employees without fear of harassment or victimisation. Path aims to ensure that employees are protected from possible reprisals where the employee has disclosed information or raised a concern in good faith.

Path has a Grievance policy which allows staff to lodge a grievance about their own employment. This Whistle Blowing policy is intended to cover any serious concerns that employees may have which fall outside the scope of the Grievance policy and other policies.

These concerns include the following but the list is not exhaustive:

- Abuse and welfare of clients and/or staff
- A criminal offence that has been, is being or is likely to be committed
- Behaviour that brings the name of Path into disrepute
- A Health and Safety risk relating to any individual
- Actions or behaviours that fall below established standards of practice
- Inappropriate use of agency funds

Path will make every effort to protect an individual's identity when raising a concern. However the investigation process may well reveal the identity of the source. Allegations expressed anonymously are often less powerful but they will be considered at the discretion of Path. Factors to be taken into account will include:-

- The seriousness of the issue raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Raising a concern

Path employees are encouraged to raise any concern with the following persons in order of preference: Line Manager, Director (ultimately, chair of trustees). However if the employee believes that any of these persons are implicated in the concern, they should raise their concern with the next preferred person.

Concerns should put in writing, giving details as appropriate.

Path responses

Within 10 days of receipt of a concern, Path will confirm in writing that the concern has been received. Path will inform the employee whether further investigations will take place and, if not, the reasons why. Some concerns may be resolved without need for further investigation.

The initial enquiry will be carried out by the Manager with whom the concern was raised. If further formal investigation is needed, this will be led by the Director. When a meeting is arranged, employees have the right to be accompanied by a Union representative or friend who is not involved in the concern.

Path accepts that staff need to be reassured that the concern raised has been properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, the employee raising the concern will receive information about the outcomes of any investigations.

If any employee raises a concern in good faith which is subsequently not confirmed by an investigation, no action will be taken against them. However, if employees make malicious or vexatious allegations, disciplinary action may be considered and implemented.

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