

Whistle Blowing Policy

Introduction

This document outlines our commitment to work more effectively together to create a culture which is open and transparent. A culture in which individuals are supported to report concerns and safety issues, and are treated fairly, with empathy and consideration.

This document provides information on how members of Healthwatch Darlington staff and volunteers are able to raise concerns about dangerous, illegal or improper activity (whistle blowing).

Whistle Blowing

Whistle blowing occurs when an employee of Healthwatch Darlington raises a concern about a dangerous, illegal or improper activity that they become aware of and which relates to the internal operation of the organisation.

Where the concern relates to an external organisation this should be raised directly with the CEO of Healthwatch Darlington. If you do not feel comfortable doing so then the concern should be raised with the Chair of the Board.

Staff

A member of staff is someone who is engaged on a permanent, temporary, fixed term, part time or casual contract. This policy does not include volunteers but if any volunteer has any concern then they should raise it either with the CEO of Healthwatch Darlington or the Chair of the Board who will ensure that the matter is properly investigated.

Who to contact

Wherever possible, concerns should be raised with the CEO of Healthwatch Darlington. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, then with the Chair of the Board. The member of staff can also contact Healthwatch England Audit Committee directly.

Where this matter relates to the internal operation of the organisation then Healthwatch England and Darlington Borough Council will oversee the operation.

Investigating the concern

The investigating officer will contact the member of staff to confirm that they are handling the matter, providing their contact details and confirming whether any further assistance will be required. The member of staff will also be provided with a written summary of their concerns and how they will be handled.

Usually within 10 working days of a concern being raised, the person investigating the concern will write to the member of staff:

- Acknowledging that the concern has been received
- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a full response
- Saying whether any initial enquiries have been made
- Supplying information on support available to you; and
- Saying whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not

All relevant parties in the disclosure of alleged wrongdoing will be notified of the outcome of the investigation in writing.

Volunteer Expenses Policy	
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healthwatch

Healthwatch Darlington
Morton Park Business Training Centre
Morton Park
Yarm Road
Darlington
DL1 4PJ
www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk
t: 01325 380145
e: info@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk
🐦 @healthwatchdton
📘 @healthwatchdarlington @youthwatchdarlo