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## **Raising a concern – guidance for whistleblowers**

### **What is whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is where a worker (an employee, former employee, trainee, agency worker or member of an organisation) reports a wrongdoing in the public interest.

Public interest means the wrongdoing must affect other people, for example the general public.

The concern may relate to something which has happened, is happening, or could happen in the future.

### **What protection is in place for whistleblowers?**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects workers who report wrongdoings, providing it is disclosed to a prescribed person, and:

- it is about a criminal offence, e.g. fraud;
- someone's health and safety is in danger;
- there is risk or actual damage to the environment;
- a miscarriage of justice is involved;
- the company is breaking the law; or
- the worker believes someone is covering up a wrongdoing.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is a Prescribed Person under the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014. If a worker reports a wrongdoing to us which they believe to be true and relates to our statutory functions (the education, registration, standards and fitness to practise of the professions we regulate<sup>1</sup>), they are legally protected. The law protects a whistleblower from being treated unfairly or losing their job.

Personal grievances, for example bullying and discrimination, are not covered by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, unless it is in the public interest.

### **How can I raise a concern?**

You can raise a concern in writing, or by email using the details on our website [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/professions/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/complaints/raiseaconcern/howto/>

Alternatively, you can contact the relevant department directly. Contact details for our departments can also be found on our website [here](#)<sup>3</sup>.

*What information do I need to provide?*

To help us consider the concerns properly, we will need the following information:

- the individual's name and work address;
- a clear description of the concerns, including when they happened;
- details of any action you have taken; and
- supporting information, such as notes you've made, witness details, and correspondence you've sent and received (where appropriate).

### **Can I raise concerns anonymously?**

Yes, but this may make it difficult for us to investigate the matter fully as we might not have all the information we need.

You can ask us to keep your personal details confidential and we will take all reasonable steps possible to do so.

### **Where can I access further information?**

You can get in touch with the Policy team at the HCPC on 020 7840 9815 or at [policy@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:policy@hcpc-uk.org).

[Protect](#)<sup>4</sup>, the whistleblowing charity advises individuals with whistleblowing concerns at work. They provide:

- a [confidential advice line](#);
- [case studies](#) providing examples of the types of concerns they can help with; and
- [frequently asked questions](#).

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/contactus/departments/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>