

Whistleblowing Policy

Definition

Whistleblowing is the name given to the act of the disclosure of information to the employer or the relevant authority by an individual who knows, or suspects, that the Company is responsible for or taken part in some wrongdoing.

Those making qualifying disclosures are protected against dismissal or detriment by The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Qualifying disclosures

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as “qualifying disclosures”. A “qualifying disclosure” means a disclosure of information that the employee genuinely and reasonably believes is in the public interest and shows that the Company has committed a “relevant failure” by:

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- environmental damage or
- concealing any information relating to the above.

These acts can be in the past, present or future, so that, for example, a disclosure qualifies if it relates to environmental damage that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen. The Company will take any concerns that you may raise relating to the above matters very seriously.

Employees must reasonably believe that the disclosure is “in the public interest”. We encourage you to use the procedure to raise any such concerns.

Should the concern not meet the requirement to be a qualifying disclosure, you should raise this under the Company’s grievance policy. Where a concern is raised under the whistleblowing policy where it is not appropriate to do so, i.e., it relates to a personal grievance, the receiving manager will confirm that the matter will be addressed under the grievance policy.

The procedure

In the first instance you should report any concerns you may have to your line manager or the relevant person from the table below, where the concern relates to your line manager, or it is not appropriate to make the report to your line manager. All concerns reported will be treated in the utmost confidence.

Branches	Branch Manager	Contact
Warrington	Paula Wilkinson	paulawilkinson@soshomecare.co.uk
Crewe	Tina Malam	tinamalam@soshomecare.co.uk
St Helens	Angela Davies	angeladavies@soshomecare.co.uk

Where the concern relates to your line manager, or it is not appropriate to make the report to your line manager please refer to the contact below.

Group	Director	Contact
Operations Director	Jayne Voss	jaynevoss@soshomecare.co.uk
HR Director	Charlotte Taylor	charlottetaylor@soshomecare.co.uk
Business Development Director	Gareth Rogerson	garethrogerson@soshomecare.co.uk
Managing Director	Richard Jackson	richardjackson@soshomecare.co.uk

Following receipt of a disclosure made under this policy, an investigation meeting will be held with the employee. The purpose of this meeting is to gather as much information as possible from the employee regarding their concerns, including whether they have any supporting evidence or can identify any witnesses. This meeting will be held within 5 working days following receipt of the disclosure.

After this meeting, the investigating manager will commence a full investigation into the concerns raised. The investigation will aim to gather all relevant information including relevant documentary evidence or witness statements.

Once the investigation is complete, the investigation manager will write to the employee confirming the outcome.

If the employee is not satisfied with the explanation or outcome, they may raise the matter with the appropriate official organisation or regulatory body. Alternatively, employees may raise a formal complaint under the Company's grievance policy.

Formal action

Should formal action be required because of any disclosure made under this policy, this action will be carried out in accordance with the applicable internal policy. Any potential sanctions imposed will be fair and reasonable in line with the relevant policy.

Protection against detrimental treatment

All employees who raise matters of concern under this policy are protected against detrimental treatment, up to and including dismissal, because they have made a disclosure.

Bullying, harassment or any other detrimental treatment afforded to a colleague who has made a qualifying disclosure is unacceptable. Anyone found to have acted in such a manner will be subject to disciplinary action.

External Contact

While we hope this policy gives you the reassurance you need to raise your concern internally with us, we recognise that there may be circumstances where you can properly report a concern to an outside body. In fact, we would rather you raised a matter with the appropriate regulator – such as those listed in the table below – than not at all.

Regulator	Contact Details
Care Quality Commission Regulates adult social and health care in England	☎ 03000 616161 enquires@cqc.org.uk CQC National Correspondence Citygate Gallowgate Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA www.cqc.org.uk
Health and Safety Executive Protects people against risks to health or safety arising out of work activities	☎ 08453 009923 riddor@connaught.plc.uk Incident Contact Centre Caerphilly Business Park Caerphilly CF83 3GG www.hse.gov.uk
Cheshire East Council Commissions the services we provide in Cheshire East	☎ 0300 123 5010 (Monday to Thursday 9:00 – 17:00 and Friday 9:00 – 16:30) ☎ 0300 123 5022 (out of hours including bank holidays) Addresses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delamere House, Delamere Street, Crewe, CW1 2JZ • Town Hall, Macclesfield, SK10 1EA • 1st Floor Dean Row Centre, Ringstead Drive, Wilmslow, SK9 2HA
St Helens Borough Council Commissions the services we provide in St Helens	01744 676600 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm) Out of hours: 0345 0500 148
Warrington Borough Council Commissions the services we provide in Warrington	01925 443322

Non-Whistleblowing Issues

As noted above, whistleblowing is the raising of a concern where others, or the organisation itself, are at risk. However, should you wish to raise an issue that concerns yourself there are a number of ways that you can do this.

HR Policies

SOS Homecare has the following policies that you should refer to:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Grievance Policy

These policies are available to access from your manager or from the Human Resources department.

Monitoring/Oversight

The Care Governance Team is responsible for this policy and will review it annually. The Branch / Scheme Manager will monitor the daily operation of the policy and if you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to let them know.

Support for victims and witnesses (Vulnerable Adults & Employees)

Victims of abuse, and witnesses of abuse should contact Victim Support 0808 1689293 (www.victimsupport.org.uk) or IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) the relevant numbers are; Warrington – 01925 401720, St Helens – 0800 1830206, Cheshire – 01625 508511. Employees will also be offered support through supervision sessions.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.