



Whistleblowing Policy

Dance Co-operative Birmingham CIC

Key Points

The whistleblowing policy sets out the framework for dealing with allegations of illegal and improper conduct.

Dance Co-operative Birmingham CIC (DCB) is committed to the highest standards of transparency, integrity and accountability.

This policy is intended to provide a means of making serious allegations about standards, conduct, financial irregularity or possible unlawful action in a way that will ensure confidentiality and protect those making such allegations in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so from being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged.

This policy does not replace any other policies and procedures and is intended to ensure that DCB complies with its duty under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by contracted team members or others working on behalf of DCB is reported and properly dealt with. DCB therefore requires all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the organisation or the way in which the organisation is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'. A qualifying disclosure is one made by an employee who has a reasonable belief that any of the following is being, has been or is likely to be committed:

- A criminal offence
- A miscarriage of justice
- An act creating risk to health and safety
- An act causing damage to the environment
- A breach of any other legal obligation
- Concealment of any of the above

It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be committed – a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter – it is DCB's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure you have the right not to be dismissed or have your freelance contract terminated or otherwise changed, and not to be subjected to any other detriment or victimisation because you have made a disclosure. DCB encourages you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Contracted team members and others working on behalf of the organisation should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- No employee or other person working on behalf of DCB will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this policy, DCB's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures. Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to a fellow DCB director.

Procedure

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of your own contract of employment, which should be raised via the grievance procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with a DCB director, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. Your statement will be taken into account and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The director will take any necessary action and any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The director will also invoke any disciplinary action required. At the conclusion of any investigation, you will be told the outcome and what the organisation has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained. The outcome of the investigation will not be made public in line with GDPR Privacy Policy.

Stage 2

If you are concerned that the director/s is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigation to the relevant person, you should escalate the matter to an alternative co-director. The co-operative directors will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make a report.

Stage 3

If at the conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:

- HM Revenue & Customs
- the Health and Safety Executive
- the Environment Agency
- the Serious Fraud Office
- the Charity Commission
- the Pensions Regulator
- the Information Commissioner
- the Financial Conduct Authority

You can find the full list in The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014:

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2418/pdfs/ukxi_20142418_en.pdf

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