

# On Call Africa (OCA) Whistleblowing Policy

## Introduction

At OCA, it is vital that everyone who works for us maintains the highest standards of conduct, integrity, and ethics, and complies with local legislation. If an employee, volunteer, partner, consultant, or contractor has any genuine concerns about malpractice in the workplace, we wish to encourage them to communicate these without fear of reprisals and in the knowledge that they will be **protected from victimisation and dismissal**.

Please note this procedure is not intended to replace OCA's Grievance Procedures, which continues to be the appropriate way to raise personal issues relating to the specific job or employment.

This policy does not form part of an employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management.

## What to Whistle Blow

Malpractice includes (but is not limited to) the issues listed below:

- Financial wrongdoing including theft, bribery, fraud, money laundering and aid diversion
- A failure to comply with any legal obligations
- Sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse, harassment, or exploitation (see OCA Safeguarding Policy)
- Abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults, or beneficiaries (see OCA Safeguarding Policy as above)
- Breach of OCA policy
- Abuse of position
- Danger to the health and safety of individuals or damage to the environment
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Activity which would bring the organisation into serious disrepute

- The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the matters listed above

Malpractice is not a complaint about the performance and behaviour of a manager or other work colleague towards you. Such complaints will be directed for action to OCA's HR policies and procedures.

## When to Whistle Blow

If you have a genuine concern and have a reasonable belief it is in the public interest to raise it, even if it is later discovered that you are mistaken, under this policy you will not be at risk of losing your job or from suffering any form of retribution as a result. This assurance will not be extended to an individual who maliciously raises a matter they know to be untrue or who is involved in any way in the malpractice. Those found to be making false allegations maliciously will have disciplinary action taken against them.

## Enabling Reports

OCA will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of whistleblowing are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

As an employee you can raise any concerns with your line manager. If you feel that you are unable to raise the matter with your line manager, and you can, raise it with a more senior manager and or trustee.

As a manager you should report all incidents of malpractice to the OCA director immediately.

As a volunteer you should report all incidents of malpractice to the OCA director immediately.

OCA will also accept reports from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

## How to Whistle Blow

If you genuinely believe that the actions of someone who works for OCA could lead to or has resulted in malpractice, you can use a Case Report Form Template to provide as much information as possible and submit this via email to the OCA Director, or where the case relates to OCA's Director this should be escalated to the Board of Trustees Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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- OCA Director, Ben Margetts  
Email: [ben@oncallafrica.org](mailto:ben@oncallafrica.org)
- OCA Trustee and Safeguarding Lead, Gavin McColl  
Email: [gavin@oncallafrica.org](mailto:gavin@oncallafrica.org)

Or by post by completing a paper copy of OCA's case report form and posting this for the attention of OCA's Director or Board of Trustees at:

- On Call Africa, PO Box 373, Hartlepool, TS24 4GG, or
- On Call Africa, PO Box 60932, Livingstone, Zambia

## What Happens Next

On submission of this information the OCA Director or Trustee Safeguarding Lead will be notified for action in line with the dealing with a case report procedure.

OCA has a Dealing with Case Reports Procedure for dealing with reports that breach OCA's Policies. A decision will be made on whether it is appropriate to handle such complaints under this policy. If it is deemed not appropriate the complainant will be informed and their permission sought to divert the issue to the appropriate procedure.

- When matters are Fraud and Corruption, OCA's Fraud and Corruption procedures will be followed.
- When matters are Safeguarding, OCA's Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns will be followed.

OCA will take appropriate action, the outcome may involve taking disciplinary action if misconduct has been proved, which may include dismissal in accordance with the relevant procedure against any employee, volunteer, or consultant who:

- Has been found to be victimising another individual for using this procedure or deterring them from reporting genuine concerns under it.
- Made a disclosure maliciously that is known to be untrue or without reasonable grounds for believing that the information supplied was accurate.

You will be notified once the matter has been resolved, but outcomes are subject to confidentiality and may not be communicated.

## Frequently asked questions

### **What if the line manager is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way?**

If the line manager is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way, the matter should be raised with the next senior manager in the management line.

Concerns regarding financial wrongdoing may be raised directly with the Director and concerns relating to sexual abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults, beneficiaries, or any OCA representative to the Director. If the allegation relates to the Director, these concerns should be raised with the designated Safeguarding lead on the board of trustees.

### **Can the disclosure be made anonymously?**

You are strongly encouraged not to make anonymous disclosures as details and further concerns cannot then be checked with you and this may seriously limit the ability of investigators to pursue your concerns. Nonetheless, all disclosures, made anonymously or otherwise, will be reviewed but lack of information may limit the nature, extent, and outcome of the investigation.

### **Who will conduct the investigation?**

Normally an independent person from within OCA will be appointed. On rare occasions, or for complex cases such as safeguarding, external investigation support may be sought.

### **What if the matter involves a criminal offence?**

The issue may also be reported to the police if a criminal offence, such as fraud or theft, or sexual assault has been committed.

### **What if the matter is a complaint about the performance or behaviour of a manager or colleague against me?**

Such complaints will be directed for action to the Director and or trustee unless the concerns relate to concerns of sexual misconduct or other forms of malpractice listed in this policy.