

Ensuring your internal reporting policy is best practice

Use the checklist below to evaluate your internal reporting policy against best practice and to identify any areas for improvement.

Does your policy:

- Clearly outline its purpose and the objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (PID Act)?
- Include a strong statement of leadership and management opposition to serious wrongdoing and support for an ethical and accountable culture, and the reporting of wrongdoing and internal reporters?
- Include a statement of commitment by your organisation that appropriate action will be taken to deal with reports of wrongdoing?
- Provide information about the roles and responsibilities of parties such as your principal officer, disclosures coordinator, disclosures officers, managers, internal reporters and staff who are the subject of reports?
- Advise staff responsible for dealing with reports of wrongdoing that they will be properly resourced and supported?
- Adequately describe all categories of serious wrongdoing?
- Include in its explanation of maladministration that the conduct must be of a serious nature?
- Include the need for the internal reporter to honestly believe on reasonable grounds that their report shows or tends to show one of the categories of conduct covered by the PID Act?
- Identify those people within your organisation who staff can report wrongdoing to?
- Include advice on whether reports have to be made in writing and whether internal reporters need to identify themselves?
- Provide information about the external reporting pathways available to staff, such as the NSW Ombudsman, Independent Commission Against Corruption, Auditor-General, Division of Local Government, and Office of the Information Commissioner?
- Include information explaining that – for the PID Act to apply to a report made to a Member of Parliament (MP) or journalist – a staff member must have reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is substantially true and be able to prove the disclosure is in fact substantially true?
- Provide information on how internal reporters will be supported?
- Include a statement of commitment by your organisation to the importance of maintaining confidentiality, where possible and appropriate?
- Provide information on the feedback that will be given to internal reporters?
- Provide information on how any risks to internal reporters will be assessed, as well as strategies to deal with those risks?
- Provide information on preventing and dealing with reprisal action threatened or taken against an internal reporter?
- Provide information about the sanctions for making false or misleading reports?
- Provide information on how staff who are the subject of an internal report will be supported?
- Provide advice on where staff who may be thinking of reporting wrongdoing can seek further information?
- Cross reference and link all related policies, including your code of conduct and any external agency reporting, complaint-handling, investigations or grievance policies?
- Use plain language that is easy for staff to read and understand?

| Number | Guideline title | Expected/last release |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| A: Organisational commitment | | |
| A1 | <i>Management commitment to internal reporting</i> | November 2011 |
| A2 | <i>Internal reporting policy and procedures</i> | November 2011 |
| A3 | Awareness and training | First Quarter 2012 |
| A4 | Evaluation and engagement | First Quarter 2012 |
| B: Facilitating reporting | | |
| B1 | <i>Who can report wrongdoing?</i> | November 2011 |
| B2 | <i>What should be reported?</i> | November 2011 |
| B3 | <i>What's not a public interest disclosure?</i> | November 2011 |
| B4 | <i>Reporting pathways</i> | November 2011 |
| B5 | Reporting to Members of Parliament and journalists | First Quarter 2012 |
| B6 | Anonymous reporting | First Quarter 2012 |
| C: Assessing and investigating internal reports | | |
| C1 | People that are the subject of a report | First Quarter 2012 |
| C2 | Reporting to the NSW Ombudsman | First Quarter 2012 |
| C3 | <i>Assessing and streaming internal reports</i> | November 2011 |
| C4 | <i>Managing risk of reprisals and conflict</i> | December 2011 |
| C5 | <i>Investigating public interest disclosures</i> | December 2011 |
| C6 | Managing referred and external investigations | First Quarter 2012 |
| C7 | <i>Confidentiality</i> | November 2011 |
| D: Supporting and protecting internal reporters | | |
| D1 | <i>Internal reporter support strategy</i> | November 2011 |
| D2 | <i>Information, advice and feedback to internal reporters</i> | December 2011 |
| D3 | <i>Internal reporters involved in wrongdoing</i> | November 2011 |
| D4 | <i>Preventing and containing reprisals and conflict</i> | December 2011 |
| D5 | Reprisals – investigating, acknowledging, remedying | First Quarter 2012 |
| D6 | Exit and follow-up | First Quarter 2012 |
| E: Implementation (taking an integrated organisational approach) | | |
| E1 | <i>Model for internal reporter support</i> | December 2011 |
| E2 | <i>Roles and responsibilities</i> | November 2011 |

Contact us for more information

Our business hours are: Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm (*Inquiries section closes at 4pm*)

If you wish to visit us, we prefer you make an appointment. Please call us first to ensure your complaint is within our jurisdiction and our staff are available to see you.

Level 24, 580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Email pid@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Web www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

General inquiries 02 9286 1000

Facsimile 02 9283 2911

Toll free (outside Sydney metro) 1800 451 524

Tel. typewriter (TTY) 02 9264 8050

Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS): 131 450

We can arrange an interpreter through TIS or you can contact TIS yourself before speaking to us.