



Whistle-Blowing Policy

Approved: August 2024

Review Due: 2027

THIS WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY HAS BEEN INTRODUCED IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT 1998 AND PROVIDES A PROCEDURE WHICH ENABLES EMPLOYEES TO RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING AT WORK, PARTICULARLY WHERE THOSE CONCERNS RELATE TO UNLAWFUL CONDUCT, FINANCIAL MALPRACTICE OR DANGERS TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT. THE OBJECT OF THIS POLICY IS TO ENSURE THAT CONCERNS ARE RAISED AND DEALT WITH AT AN EARLY STAGE AND IN AN APPROPRIATE MANNER.

1. Introduction

Weightlifting Wales is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and accountability. This Whistle-Blowing policy provides a disclosure framework for individuals to raise concerns about suspected wrongdoing within the organisation, ensuring that such concerns are addressed promptly and fairly. The purpose of the policy is to provide a clear procedure for raising concerns, protecting whistle-blowers from retaliation, and reinforcing that all concerns are investigated thoroughly and appropriately.

The Whistle-Blowing policy applies to all employees, members, volunteers, contractors/suppliers, and any other stakeholders associated with Weightlifting Wales.

2. Reporting Concerns

Weightlifting Wales encourages you to bring to its attention alleged wrong-doing and ethical or legal concerns which may impact on the work that we do, and anyone involved.

You have a duty to be vigilant and to keep Weightlifting Wales informed of any such matters. This policy is to provide you with a formal channel through which employees and workers of Weightlifting Wales can raise matters of a serious nature relating to Weightlifting Wales. Such

matters cannot be raised informally.

We encourage you to disclose information which tends to show one or more of the following where such disclosure relates in some way to Weightlifting Wales:

- that a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- that a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject;
- that a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- that the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered;
- that the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged;
- that information tending to show any of the above has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

Such disclosures are referred to in this policy as “disclosures”.

When considering whether a matter falls into any of the above categories, you should bear in mind the rules and regulations to which Weightlifting Wales and its staff are subject. If you make a disclosure, you must have a reasonable belief that the information you are disclosing is true and you must make the disclosure in good faith.

How the Whistle-Blowing Policy Differs from the Grievance Procedure

This policy does not apply to raising grievances about an employee’s personal situation. These types of concerns are covered by Weightlifting Wales Grievance Procedures. The Whistle-

Blowing policy is primarily concerned with where the interests of others or Weightlifting Wales itself are at risk. It may be difficult to decide whether a particular concern should be raised under the Whistle-Blowing policy or under the Grievance Procedure, or under both. If you have any doubt as to the correct route to follow, please seek advice from the Chief Operating Officer/Governance and Compliance Officer, who will be able to advise you accordingly.

3. Method of Disclosure

Disclosures cannot be made informally or anonymously, and you should not discuss or raise such matters with your colleagues or your line manager. If you wish to make a disclosure you must make it through the formal channel set out in this policy.

Weightlifting Wales has a specified individual to whom disclosures should be made (the “Appointed Person”). The current Appointed Person is Simon Roach, the Weightlifting Wales **Chief Operating Officer**. The Appointed Person will act as a co-ordinator to ensure that any disclosure is referred to an appropriate party for investigation.

As stated above, if you wish to make a disclosure, you must make it in writing to the Appointed Person unless:-

- The Appointed Person is absent and you reasonably consider that the disclosure cannot wait until his/her return. In this instance you should make the disclosure in writing to the **Chair and/or Governance and Compliance Officer** instead;
- The disclosure relates to or involves the Appointed Person in any way, in which case you should make the disclosure in writing to the **Chair of the Board/Governance and Compliance Officer** instead.

4. Procedure following Disclosure

After you have made a written disclosure, the Appointed Person will write to you acknowledging receipt of the disclosure and to arrange a meeting with you. The written acknowledgement will normally be sent to you within 2 working days of the disclosure and the meeting will usually take place within 10 working days of the disclosure.

The purpose of the meeting will be to enable the Appointed Person to obtain full details of the matter to enable them to conduct a preliminary investigation to establish whether the disclosure is well founded and, if so, to whom the disclosure should be referred for investigation. At this meeting you will be asked to identify any other individuals with knowledge of the matter, who may also need to be interviewed.

Your role is to raise a matter which may be of concern to Weightlifting Wales. The scope of the preliminary investigation carried out by the Appointed Person is to be determined by the Appointed Person themselves.

At the end of the preliminary investigation, the Appointed Person will have a further meeting with you to inform you of the outcome and whether any further investigations are to be undertaken and by whom.

If the Appointed Person concludes that your disclosure is not well founded, no further investigation will be carried out under this procedure. This decision will be final and will not be reviewed unless further evidence is produced in relation to the disclosure.

If the Appointed Person considers that your disclosure is well founded, they will assess who is best placed to carry out further investigations and will refer the matter accordingly.

5. Further Investigations

If the Appointed Person considers that further investigations are required, the matter will be referred to the most appropriate and relevant person to conduct the investigations (the “Investigator”). The Investigator person will be formed from one of the Weightlifting Wales Board of Directors, depending on the specifics of the Whistleblowing case. Once again, the Investigator will not be investigating the disclosure on your behalf, but on behalf of Weightlifting Wales. The Investigator will determine the method and scope of the investigations. The Investigator may need to meet with you in order to obtain further information.

The Investigator will prepare a written report outlining the extent of the investigations and setting out their conclusions and/or any recommendations. A copy of this report will be provided to the Appointed Person.

The Appointed Person and the Investigator will have a meeting with you, after the report has been finalised, to inform you of the outcome of the further investigations. You will not be entitled to keep a copy of the report.

The conclusion of the Investigator is final. You have no right of appeal. The Investigator, with assistance from the Appointed Person, will be responsible for ensuring that any recommendations in the report are referred to the correct channels for implementation.

6. Time Periods

All or any of the time periods set out in this policy may need to be varied in certain circumstances. If this is the case, the Appointed Person will inform you of this during the course of the procedure and advise you of the revised timescale.

7. Confidentiality

Weightlifting Wales will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the whistleblower. The Appointed Person and the Investigator will keep your disclosure, and the fact that you are the source of the disclosure, as confidential as possible and will only inform individuals that need to know. These individuals may include, but will not necessarily be limited to, the alleged wrongdoer(s), others named by you when making the disclosure and any witnesses or other individuals who can provide further information in relation to the disclosure.

You must treat the disclosure with the utmost confidence. You must not discuss the disclosure with any third party other than the Appointed Person, the Investigator and, if you have one and consider it appropriate to consult them, your legal advisor. You must not attempt to carry out your own investigation.

8. Victimisation and/or Malicious disclosures

Weightlifting Wales will make every effort to ensure that you suffer no adverse repercussions as a result of making a disclosure. Any allegation of victimisation of an individual who has made a disclosure will be taken very seriously, and anyone found to be victimising such a person will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal of their job role or banned from performing any duties for Weightlifting Wales.

Any individual who is found to be making a disclosure in bad faith or maliciously however will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including of their job role or banned from performing any duties for Weightlifting Wales.

Weightlifting Wales is also committed to protecting whistleblowers from retaliation. Any form of retaliation against an individual who has reported a concern in good faith will be considered

a serious disciplinary offence.

9. Records

The Appointed Person will maintain notes of meetings, reports, recommendations and all other documents relating to disclosures made under this policy. Such documents will be kept confidentially.

10. Revision of Policy

This policy is not intended to be contractually binding. Weightlifting Wales reserves the right to amend and/or withdraw this policy from time to time for any reason, including without limitation, to take account of changes in the law, best practice and/or operational requirements. The document will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness, and Weightlifting Wales is committed to continuous improvement of its whistle-blowing procedures.