
POLICY: WHISTLEBLOWING

1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to explain how employees can make a whistleblowing disclosure and what steps Julian House will take if we receive a disclosure.

Julian House is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, transparency and accountability. We encourage employees to use this policy to disclose anything they think requires whistleblowing.

2. Who is this policy for?

This policy is for people employed by or volunteering with Julian House. For the purposes of this policy only, this is someone who is:

1. A Julian House employee
2. On secondment to Julian House
3. On a temporary contract or employed through an agency to work for Julian House
4. An independent consultant for Julian House
5. A volunteer with Julian House including Board Members
6. Contractors and suppliers of services to Julian House

3. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when an employee reports certain types of wrongdoing they've seen at work. To count as whistleblowing, the employee must have a reasonable belief that what they are disclosing is one or more of the following:

- a criminal offence
- a miscarriage of justice
- a 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

Anyone who has genuine concerns or reasonable suspicions of wrongdoing must report it according to this whistleblowing policy. You must act in good faith and reasonably believe that the information points to improper behaviour.

Personal issues like bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not covered by this policy and should be reported through the company grievance policy.

4. Protections for whistleblowers

Whistleblowers are protected by law. Julian House ensures no employee will be victimised for reporting concerns. This means your job and future opportunities will not be affected if you whistle-blow.

Reports and investigations will be kept as private as possible while ensuring a proper investigation.

Julian House will:

- Protect those who raise concerns from victimisation.
- Treat victimisation of whistleblowers as a serious issue that can lead to dismissal.
- Not hide evidence of poor practices.
- Discipline anyone who is found to have destroyed or hidden evidence of wrongdoing.
- Ensure confidentiality clauses do not prevent whistleblowing.
- Work with other organisations to address reported malpractice.

5. Whistleblowing procedure

Step 1. Disclosing a concern

Julian House encourages employees to report any illegal activities or serious rule violations, including misconduct by leaders or others working for the organisation. You can share your concerns either by talking to someone or in writing, and it's helpful to include details and evidence if you have them. When reporting, please mention that you're using the Whistleblowing Policy and let us know if you want your identity to remain confidential.

You can report something that happened in the past, is happening now, or that you think might happen in the future. Julian House will do its best to keep your identity private if you ask for confidentiality, but sometimes the investigation might reveal who provided the information. If that's the case, we'll let you know.

You can also report concerns anonymously, and we'll still investigate them. However, anonymous reports are harder to look into and might slow down any action we take. We understand that reporting concerns can be difficult, so you can bring a friend or colleague with you at any point during the process if that makes you more comfortable.

You will receive a receipt of your complaint within two working days. Anonymous concerns may not receive an acknowledgment.

5.1. Employees and Volunteers

Employees and volunteers should first report their concerns to their line manager as soon as possible. If the line manager is involved, they should contact the Head of People, or if the concern involves the Head of People, they should contact the Chief Executive. If none of these options feel appropriate, they can email the chair of the board of trustees at chair@julianhouse.org.uk.

5.2. Board Members and others

Board Members, and independent consultants as well as contractors and suppliers should submit concerns in writing directly to the chair of the board of trustees:

chair@julianhouse.org.uk

Step 2. Investigating the concern

All reports of wrongdoing will be quickly investigated by a senior manager. They will review the details, decide what actions are needed, and, if necessary, recommend corrective steps to the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees, with progress tracked in meeting minutes.

The manager investigating will keep the whistleblower updated on the progress of an investigation.

Unless they're involved in the wrongdoing, the Head of People, Chief Executive, and Chair of the Board of Trustees will be informed of the report and the actions being taken as soon as possible. They may also assist the person handling the concern to ensure the process is thorough.

The person who raised the concern will be informed of the investigation's outcome as soon as possible.

6. Further Consideration

If an individual is not satisfied with the response received and any subsequent action taken, they should put their concerns in writing to the Chief Executive and/ or Chair of the Board of Trustees who will arrange any further investigation as they think appropriate. The Chief Executive and/or Chair of the Board of Trustees will send a written response to the individual concerned.

If an employee makes an allegation with reasonable belief but it is not confirmed by investigation, no action will be taken against them.

However, if it appears that there are clear grounds to suggest that they may have acted frivolously or maliciously, Julian House will undertake disciplinary investigation which in the case of a serious malicious or deliberately false allegation might result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

7. Independent Advice, Support and Further Reading

Julian House invests in the Employee Assistance Programme with Simply Health, where confidential counselling and support can be sought. The name of the person contacting the service will not be disclosed to Julian House.

Employees who feel unsure about whether or how to raise a concern or want confidential advice can contact the independent charity Protect (<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>). Their lawyers can give free confidential advice on how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work.

Free information and advice can also be obtained from;

- Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) [Whistleblowing at work | Acas](#)

You may feel that it is more appropriate to report a matter to another organisation. Other organisations concerned with standards in the voluntary sector include:

- The Charity Commission; [online form](#)
- Health & Safety Executive – contact on-line;
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm>