



Black Country Women's Aid

We listen, we support, we care

Policy Name	Whistleblowing Policy Statement
Policy last updated	April 2022
Policy Owner	Executive Officer
Policy applies to	All staff, students and volunteers
Policy Purpose	To publicise the whistleblowing procedures held at BCWA, which apply to all staff, students and volunteers.
Related Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding Children policy• Safeguarding Adults policy• Protection from Abuse policy• Safe Working with Children Practice• Case management policies and procedures
Date Policy review	April 2023

Protection from Abuse

POLICY STATEMENT ON WHISTLEBLOWING

BCWA aims to maintain the highest level of integrity in everything we do. Should anyone have concerns that our conduct has been dangerous, against the law or we have breached ethical or professional codes, these concerns should be reported. All concerns raised will be taken seriously, acted upon promptly and investigated thoroughly, with every attempt made to resolve through internal procedures. Whistleblowers may be internal (BCWA) or external (service users, local authorities, external agencies etc.).

Purpose: To set out the approach of Black Country Women's Aid with regard to situations where persons need to raise a serious matters confidentially, in relation to abuse, theft, fraud or malpractice within the organisation.

- ✓ Black Country Women's Aid is committed to ensuring a culture of openness and accountability in which abuse, fraud or other misconduct within the organisation is recognised and reported.
- ✓ Black Country Women's Aid encourages staff and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the organisation or its workforce to express their concerns. Black Country Women's Aid will respect their confidentiality if requested to do this.
- ✓ Black Country Women's Aid will support concerned staff members and will protect them from reprisal or victimization. Black Country Women's Aid will support employees to ensure that raising a serious concern does not affect their career or their enjoyment of their job.
- ✓ Black Country Women's Aid will respond to whistleblowing with immediate action and thorough investigation.

Please note; BCWA has a separate policy for facilitating and dealing with allegations of abuse against employees/volunteers/students and against clients.

You're protected by law if you report any of the following:

- a criminal offence, e.g. fraud
- someone's health and safety is in danger
- risk or actual damage to the environment
- a miscarriage of justice
- the company is breaking the law or there may be a failure to comply with legal or regulatory obligations, e.g. company doesn't have the right insurance
- you believe someone is covering up wrongdoing or attempting to conceal one or more of these activities
- breaches our policy on bribery and corruption
- a failure to meet professional requirements
- relates to 'serious complaints', e.g. including safeguarding or child protection

Protection from Abuse

Complaints that do not count as whistleblowing

- Personal grievances (e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination) aren't covered by whistleblowing law, unless your particular case is in the public interest. Report these under the Grievance policy (found in the Employee Handbook).

PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE FOR WHISTLEBLOWING

For External persons, such as clients, agencies or professionals;

1. Any external persons who has concerns about possible abuse, theft, fraud or other misconduct must bring the matter to the attention of the Executive Officer via telephone, post or email. The BCWA Whistleblowing email can also be used to report concerns.
2. The CEO and Deputy CEO can also be contacted via telephone, post or email regarding whist.
3. Any person making a complaint about abuse, theft, fraud or other misconduct must be acting in good faith and must reasonably believe that the information they are disclosing is true.
4. The Executive Officer, Head of Service or CEO will investigate the complaint. They will draw in outside agencies where this is appropriate (for example, in cases where there is a suspicion of criminal activity).
5. The results of the investigation will be relayed to the person making the complaint, whilst protecting the confidentiality of those involved

For BCWA Employees, Volunteers and Students;

1. Any member of staff, volunteer or Management Committee Member who has concerns about possible abuse, theft, fraud or other misconduct must bring the matter to the attention of their line manager/Head of Service. The BCWA Whistleblowing email can also be used to report concerns.
2. If the concern is related to your line manager then you should raise the concern with the CEO/Deputy CEO or via the BCWA Whistleblowing email.
3. Any member of staff with knowledge of abuse, theft or fraud who does not report this will be subject to disciplinary action.
4. Any person making a complaint about abuse, theft, fraud or other misconduct must be acting in good faith and must reasonably believe that the information they are disclosing is true. Anyone who makes a malicious complaint or abuses this policy and procedure will be subject to disciplinary action.
5. Anyone attempting to stop or discourage another staff member from coming forward to express a serious concern will be subject to disciplinary action. Likewise, anyone who criticizes or victimizes a staff member after a concern has been expressed may be subject to disciplinary action.
6. The Executive Officer, Head of Service or CEO will investigate the complaint. They will draw in outside agencies where this is appropriate (for example, in cases where there is a suspicion of criminal activity).

Protection from Abuse

7. The results of the investigation will be relayed to the person making the complaint, whilst protecting the confidentiality of those involved.

BCWA WHISTLEBLOWING CONTACT INFORMATION:

Telephone	Email	Post
0121 553 0090	Tracey.alexander@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk whistleblowing@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk	Black Country Women's Aid, 1st Floor Landchard House Victoria Street West Bromwich B70 8HY

VERSION CONTROL AND SIGN OFF

Version	Date Amended	What has changed	Policy updated by
V1	April 2022	Whistleblowing policy extracted from "Protection from Abuse Policy" for BCWA Website.	Project Officer