



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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THE WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1. Introduction to the Whistleblowing Policy

This Whistleblowing Policy outlines the procedure for board members and employees to raise concerns about wrongdoing within the organisation. The policy aims to create a safe and supportive environment where individuals can report concerns without fear of reprisal and to ensure that concerns are investigated and addressed promptly and appropriately.

This policy applies to all employees, members and contractors of Assured Food Standards.

2. Definitions

- A **Whistleblower** is defined as an individual who reports wrongdoing in good faith.
- **Wrongdoing** is defined as any illegal, unethical, or improper activity that is detrimental to the organisation, its beneficiaries, or the public interest. Examples include fraud, corruption, mismanagement, breaches of health and safety, or environmental damage.

3. The Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Encourage individuals to report wrongdoing without fear of reprisal.
- Provide clear procedures for reporting and investigating concerns.
- Protect the interests of the organisation, its beneficiaries, and the public.

4. Protection for Whistleblowers

Assured Food Standards is committed to protecting whistleblowers from retaliation. Any individual who makes a good faith report of wrongdoing will be protected from disciplinary action, dismissal, or other adverse treatment.

5. Reporting Wrongdoing

Individuals who believe they have witnessed or have knowledge of wrongdoing should report their concerns as soon as possible. They can do so by:

- Speaking to their line manager or supervisor.
- Contacting the designated whistleblowing officer.  (Please add the contact name and contact details)
- Submitting a written report to:  (Please add email address or details of how to submit the report in cases of anonymous reporting)

All reports will be treated confidentially and investigated promptly. Individuals can choose to remain anonymous, but providing contact details may facilitate the investigation.

6. Investigation and Response Time

All reports will be acknowledged within (please add number) days and investigated promptly and confidentially. The investigation will be conducted by (Please add the name of the designated whistleblowing officer).

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the whistleblower, unless doing so would compromise the investigation or the safety of the whistleblower.

7. Confidentiality

The organisation will treat all whistleblowing reports and investigations with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

8. Training

The organisation will provide the necessary training to employees on the whistleblowing policy and procedures.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with legal requirements.

10. Additional Information

Individuals can obtain further information about whistleblowing by contacting the designated Whistleblowing Officer.