

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing is when a concern is raised about malpractice within an organisation. This is generally a breach of legal, statutory or regulatory requirements or unethical, immoral behaviour.

The aims of this policy are to:

- provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any malpractice in the work place,
- encourage staff to report suspected malpractice as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate and that their confidentiality will be respected,
- provide staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns
- to reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns.

This policy applies to all staff, at every level.

We are committed to a culture of openness and accountability, and to conducting our business with honesty and integrity. We therefore take any form of malpractice very seriously and encourage employees to raise such concerns internally, with either their manager or a Director. The company will treat the employee as a witness and not as a complainant and they will be supported and protected by the manager or Director they have notified.

The person notified will listen to all concerns raised and will respect and heed legitimate concerns. The onus will be on the person notified to alert someone in senior management to the problem. Senior management will then decide on the nature of the action, including further investigation, to be taken.

If an employee has raised their issue internally and they are concerned by the response or lack of response, or if they feel unable to talk to anyone internally for whatever reason, they should raise their concerns outside the company with an independent regulatory authority, or indeed the police. However, the company stresses that its internal procedures have been implemented to create a culture of openness amongst employees and to efficiently manage any issues highlighted in the most appropriate way. Therefore, raising the issue externally should be seen as a last resort.

We understand that whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support any employee who raises a genuine concern under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. However, whistleblowing must not be confused with a grievance and if unsure employees should speak with their manager or a Director.

Making or raising a false or untrue allegation maliciously is a disciplinary offence. In most cases it should not be necessary to alert anyone externally and we strongly advise anyone to seek advice before reporting a concern to an external organisation. If an employee is unsure whether or how to raise a concern they may obtain free and confidential advice from the independent charity Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) on 020 3117 2520.

Signed



Dr Lawrence Mockett BSc PhD PGDip FGS
Joint Managing Director
Southern Testing Laboratories
January 2020