

Policy – Whistleblowing

Resource Group encourages a free and open culture in dealings between its offices, employees and all people with whom it engages in business and legal relations. In particular, Resource Group recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if concerns about breaches or failures are to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.

This policy is designed to provide guidance to all those who work with or within the organisation who may from time to time feel that they need to raise certain issues relating to the organisation with someone in confidence.

Workers who in good faith raise genuine concerns under this policy will not under any circumstances be subjected to any form of detriment or disadvantage as a result of having raised their concerns.

Procedure

1. This policy will apply in cases where employees genuinely believe that one of the following sets of circumstances is occurring, has occurred or may occur within the organisation that:
 - a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
 - a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject
 - a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
 - the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
 - the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
 - information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.
2. There is no need for an employee to prove that the breach or failure that they are alleging has occurred or is likely to occur; a reasonable suspicion will suffice, ie where the employee reasonably believes that the information disclosed is substantially true. Employees should, however, note that they are not entitled to make a disclosure if in so doing they commit a criminal offence.
3. If employees wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into one of the categories listed in clause (1), they should contact their line manager, or, in his/her absence a Director of Resource Group Limited or the HR Manager. This person will, insofar as is possible, treat the matter in confidence. It is likely that an investigation will be necessary and the employee who has made the disclosure may be required to attend an investigatory hearing and/or a disciplinary hearing (as a witness). Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the employee's working relationships are not prejudiced by the fact of the disclosure.
4. If employees reasonably believe that the relevant failure (ie one of the set of circumstances listed above under clause (1)) relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person other than their employer or any other matter for which a person other than the organisation has legal responsibility, then they should make that disclosure to that other person.

Also, employees may make such a disclosure to Public Concern at Work, the leading authority on public interest whistleblowing, if they consider that it has an interest in the matter and, despite the best efforts of the organisation, employees believe that disclosure within the organisation is inappropriate or has been unsuccessful.

Disclosures made to employees' legal advisors in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected.

5. Employees should be aware that the policy will apply where they reasonably believe that the information disclosed and any allegation contained in it are substantially true. If any disclosure is made in bad faith (for instance, in order to cause disruption within the organisation), or concerns information which employees do not substantially believe is true, or indeed if the disclosure is made for personal gain, then such a disclosure will constitute a disciplinary offence for the purposes of Resource Group's disciplinary policy and procedures and may constitute gross misconduct for which summary dismissal is the sanction.
6. While Resource Group hopes that such disclosures will never be necessary, it also recognises that it may find itself in circumstances which are new to it. Each case will be treated on its own facts.