

Understanding Whistleblowing and How to Make a Report



Whistleblowing is critical for maintaining ethical standards and accountability in your workplace. And there are quite a few protections for whistleblowers, such as Sarbanes-Oxley in the U.S., the EU Whistleblower Protection Directive, and UK Whistleblowing Act just to name a few. These protections for reporters underscore the importance of raising these concerns about unethical behavior and misconduct, and are designed to empower employees like you to speak up without fear of retaliation.

Why does whistleblowing matter?

- **Prevents wrongdoing:** It might feel uncomfortable to report instances of wrongdoing, but whistleblowing is crucial in uncovering and preventing corporate fraud and malpractice. As the eyes and ears of how the company is operating, whistleblowers provide critical information that is needed to stop unethical and criminal behavior. Bringing this behavior to light ensures your company can address immediate issues and acts as a deterrent to others who might consider engaging in unethical behavior.
- **Improve your company culture:** A transparent, ethical and accountable workplace fosters a positive work environment. When you feel safe reporting wrongdoing without fear of retaliation, trust and commitment are cultivated. This, in turn, leads to a happier, more productive workplace that makes your workplace one you can be proud of.
- **Provides detailed insights:** Whistleblowers often have insider knowledge and can provide detailed insights into issues that may otherwise go unnoticed – you’re the eyes and ears in your company. Information brought forward is invaluable for effectively addressing and correcting problems.
- **It’s the right thing to do:** Whistleblowing is both an ethical and moral action. It promotes justice and transparency, encouraging a culture of openness and accountability – somewhere everyone wants to, and feels safe working. This empowers employees and helps create a safe, ethical working environment for everyone.
- **Minimizes risks and costs:** Unreported misconduct can lead to significant legal, financial, and reputational risks for a company. Reporting misconduct and unethical behavior helps expose these issues before they escalate, minimizing potential damage.

How do I make reports of wrongdoing?

If you witness wrongdoing in the workplace, there are a few steps to take to get the information to the right place:

- **Gather information:** Collect all relevant information and evidence about the misconduct. For best results, ensure your information is accurate and detailed for follow up.
- **Review company policies:** Familiarize yourself with your company’s whistleblowing policy. This will guide you on the appropriate channels and protections available. Also, if you’re not sure or can’t find the information, you can always call your hotline with an inquiry!
- **Use internal reporting channels:** Report the issue through the designated internal channels. This could be a whistleblowing hotline, an online portal, or directly to a designated compliance leader or your manager.
- **Seek confidentiality:** If you fear retaliation, request that your report be treated confidentially. Many companies offer anonymous reporting options.
- **Follow-up:** After reporting, follow up to ensure the issue is addressed. While you may not be privy to all details due to confidentiality, you should be informed about the general progress.



You play a crucial role in promoting a safe, ethical and productive workplace by understanding the importance of whistleblowing and correctly reporting wrongdoing. Remember, it’s your right and duty to report unethical or illegal behavior and contribute to a positive and safe culture.