



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY OF
THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS ENGLAND
AND WALES

Whistleblowing Policy of Conference of Religious England & Wales

CoR is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in its dealings between the Trustees and those working in for CoR in whatever capacity.

This policy aims to help the Trustees and employees or volunteers to raise any serious concerns they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

It is written in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects employees who 'blow the whistle' on malpractices within their organisation.

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following:

- a criminal offence
- a failure to comply with any legal obligation
- a health and safety risk
- or concealment of the above.

It is not necessary for individuals who raise the concern to prove the wrongdoing that is alleged to have occurred or is likely to occur.

However, if an individual knowingly or maliciously makes an untrue allegation (eg: in order to cause disruption to CoR), CoR will take appropriate disciplinary action against them. It may constitute gross misconduct.

Individuals should note that they will not be protected from the consequences of making a disclosure if, by doing so, they commit a criminal offence.

This policy does not deal with any complaints staff may have about their employment. This should be dealt with through CoR's Grievance Procedure.

Volunteers should make complaints or raise concerns through the Volunteer Complaints Procedure.

How to raise a concern

The person designated to handle whistleblowing concerns is the General Secretary.

Individuals should report their concern to the General Secretary who is expected to respond to that matter within six weeks.

If the matter concerns the General Secretary, it should be raised with the President / Vice-President.

Individuals are encouraged to raise their concerns in writing where possible, setting out the background and history of their concerns (giving names, dates and places where possible) and indicating the reasons for their concerns.

If any individual is unsure whether to use this procedure or they want independent advice at any stage, they should contact: the independent charity, Public Concern at Work's legal helpline on 020 7404 6609, or email: helpline@pcaw.co.uk

If the individual reasonably believes that the matter relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person or body other than CoR the disclosure should be made to that other person or body.

Protecting the individual raising the concern

If an individual raises a concern which they believe to be true, CoR will take appropriate action to protect the individual from any harassment, victimisation or bullying. Employees who raise a genuine concern under this policy will not be at risk of losing their job, nor will it influence any unrelated disciplinary action or redundancy procedures.

How CoR will deal with the concern

How the concern will be dealt with, will depend on what it involves. It is likely that further enquiries and/or investigation will be necessary. The concern may be investigated by the General Secretary, the President/Vice President or it may be referred to the police or other authority such as an external auditor or an independent investigator.

If the suspicions are not confirmed by an investigation, the matter will be closed.

Staff will not be treated or regarded any differently for raising the concern.

Policy approved on January 2020

Policy review date January 2023