

Whistleblower Policy

POLICY INTRODUCTION

Christian Venues Association (“CVA”) is committed to providing a safe, enjoyable and productive work environment where resources are stewarded appropriately and where individuals are encouraged to speak up and report serious wrongdoing.

POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all employees, directors, volunteers, and contractors engaged by CVA, as well as any other person who has knowledge of any suspected wrongdoing or unethical behaviour concerning CVA’s business affairs or its Workers.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and protection to Whistleblowers by establishing mechanisms by which matters can be raised confidentially and investigated without fear of reprisal, repercussion, victimisation or other detriment.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy.

Detriment includes (without limitation) any actual or threatened:

- dismissal of an employee;
- injury of an employee in his or her employment;
- alteration of an employee’s position or duties to his or her disadvantage;
- discrimination between an employee and other employees of the same employer;
- harassment or intimidation of a person;
- harm or injury to a person, including psychological harm;
- damage to a person’s property;
- damage to a person’s reputation;
- damage to a person’s business or financial position;
- any other damage to a person.

Disclosure means when a Whistleblower notifies a relevant person of Reportable Conduct on reasonable grounds.

Whistleblower means a person who makes a Disclosure of Reportable Conduct under this policy.

Worker means any employee, director, volunteer or contractor engaged by CVA.

Reportable Conduct means information that the Whistleblower has reasonable grounds to suspect or have concerns regarding serious misconduct, or an improper state of affairs that includes:

- A contravention of legislation or other unlawful behaviour (including theft, drug sale/use, violence or threatened violence and criminal damage against property);
- Fraud;
- Theft;
- Corrupt conduct, such as bribery;
- Accounting irregularities;

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- Malpractice;
- Undeclared conflict of interest (i.e. no proper disclosure of the conflict);
- Unethical behaviour;
- Unsafe work practices;
- Conduct representative of gross mismanagement, serious and substantial waste and/or a repeated breach of administrative procedures;
- Any other serious misconduct which may cause financial or non-financial loss to CVA or be otherwise detrimental to CVA's interests or reputation;
- Any unethical breach of the CVA Code of Conduct.

Any other serious misconduct that risks bringing CVA into disrepute or that the Whistleblower reasonably believes should be reported to management.

Reporting Procedure

A Whistleblower is to report any Reportable Conduct to the Chief Executive Officer or The Whistleblower Governance Officers. The CVA Whistleblower representatives can be found in Appendix 1.

In circumstances where these normal reporting channels are considered inappropriate, the Whistleblower may report to a person or entity who is eligible to receive disclosure under the *Corporations Act 2001*.

A Whistleblower who becomes aware of Reportable Conduct is encouraged to report their concerns to a CVA Whistleblower representative as soon as practicable.

A Whistleblower may make a Disclosure anonymously, although an anonymous report may impair CVA's ability to investigate the matter.

On receipt of a complaint, CVA will contact the Whistleblower (if their identity is disclosed) to notify the Whistleblower that the Disclosure has been received and to confirm details of the concern.

CVA will then promptly review the Disclosure and commence an investigation where the Disclosure contains allegations of Reportable Conduct.

Depending on the nature and severity of the allegations, CVA may commence an investigation into the reported conduct themselves or, where considered appropriate, appoint a suitable third party to investigate the matter.

A person named in the Disclosure will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations.

All individuals must co-operate fully with any investigation conducted under this policy.

CVA will keep the Whistleblower informed regarding the progress of the investigation as far as is reasonably possible.

In certain cases, for example suspected fraud, it may be necessary to keep details of the complaint confidential until evidence has been gathered or the investigation is finalised.

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When an investigation is finalised, the Whistleblower will be advised (if their identity is disclosed). It may be appropriate to inform the Whistleblower of the findings or outcome, subject to any issue of confidentiality, privacy, privilege or ongoing investigation.

For confidentiality reasons, it may not be appropriate to include details of the precise nature of any formal action that CVA has taken in response to the complaint.

Confidentiality

CVA will endeavour to protect a Whistleblower's identity from disclosure to the extent that it is appropriate and possible in the circumstances.

Generally, CVA will not disclose the Whistleblower's identity unless:

- The Whistleblower consents to the disclosure; and/or
- The disclosure is required or authorised by law; and/or
- It is necessary to protect or enforce CVA's legal rights or interests to defend any claim; and/or
- It is necessary to further an investigation.

Even when confidentiality is maintained, in some circumstances, the source of the reported issue may be obvious to the person who is the subject of a report.

CVA will take reasonable precautions to store any records of the investigation securely and restrict access to authorised persons only.

Obligations

CVA will:

- be supportive and protective of any Whistleblower who, acting in good faith, reports a breach or wrongdoing to CVA under this policy;
- treat the identity, if disclosed, of the Whistleblower as confidential unless the Whistleblower indicates (or the law requires) otherwise;
- keep investigations confidential so far as is practicable;
- treat all Disclosures seriously;
- investigate Disclosures promptly, thoroughly and consistently with applicable law;
- not tolerate any act of reprisal, repercussion, victimisation or other Detriment against anyone who makes a Disclosure, or who participates in an investigation relating to possible wrongdoing.

Any vexatious or frivolous complaint will be treated seriously. Such misconduct is viewed as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination without notice, or equivalent sanction.

Non-Reportable Conduct

If an individual has a concern about conduct involving a Worker engaged by CVA that is not Reportable Conduct, it should still be reported. If the concern does not amount to Reportable Conduct, CVA will review the complaint and decide on any subsequent steps.

This policy does not apply to any grievance about a workplace matter, or about employment arrangements (such as pay or rosters). If an individual has a grievance about this type of matter the individual should follow CVA's Complaints Policy.

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Breach of Policy

Any employee who is found to have breached this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Related Policies

Other organisational policies should be read in conjunction with the policy including (but not limited to):

1. CVA Child Protection Policy
2. CVA Code of Conduct

Variation

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. CVA may vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

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APPENDIX 1

CVA Whistleblower Representatives:

Option 1: Chief Executive Officer

Graeme Janes
0418 228 537
gjanes@christianvenues.org.au

Option 2: Whistleblower Governance Officers

Chair of CVA Board – Marcel Edwards
chair@christianvenues.org.au

Deputy Chair of CVA Board – Steve Williams
deputychair@christianvenues.org.au

Emails to whistleblower@christianvenues.org.au will be forwarded to the Whistleblower Governance Officers.

Created: Oct 2020

Approved by National Board: **October 2020**

Review Date: Oct 2022