

Whistleblowing Policy

1 PURPOSE AND AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

- 1.1 At Baptist World Aid Australia (BWAA), we are committed to conducting our activities professionally, honestly and with integrity. We encourage the disclosure of suspected wrongdoing and are committed to providing a safe environment for disclosures to be made without fear of retaliation or reprisal. We will respond in a timely manner to all disclosures of actual or suspected wrongful acts, act confidentially within relevant laws and take steps to protect persons who make such disclosures (Whistleblowers) from detrimental treatment.
- 1.2 This policy is available on our websites <https://baptistworldaid.org.au/> and www.transformaid.org and to all BWAA staff on our internal Policies and Procedures Portal on SharePoint.

2 APPLICATION

- 2.1 This policy applies to any current or former:
 - 2.1.1 officer of BWAA (including board members and others who are officers of BWAA);
 - 2.1.2 employee of BWAA;
 - 2.1.3 volunteer of BWAA;
 - 2.1.4 supplier of goods or services (whether paid or unpaid) to BWAA or an employee of such a supplier (which would include contractors and consultants);
 - 2.1.5 associate of BWAA;
 - 2.1.6 Implementing Partner staff or representative of BWAA;
 - 2.1.7 relative of any of the above persons; and
 - 2.1.8 a dependant of any of the above persons or of their spouse.
- 2.2 The persons described above (to which this policy applies) are referred to as “Eligible Persons” for the purposes of this policy.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 3.1 encourage disclosures of wrongdoing
- 3.2 help deter wrongdoing
- 3.3 ensure individuals who disclose wrongdoing can do so safely, securely and with confidence that they will be protected and supported
- 3.4 ensure disclosures are appropriately dealt with in a timely manner
- 3.5 provide transparency about receiving, handling, and investigating disclosures



BOLD



CALLED



COLLABORATIVE



LEARNING

- 3.6 support our values and code of conduct policy
- 3.7 support our sustainability and reputation
- 3.8 meet our legal and regulatory obligations.

4 POLICY

- 4.1 Whistleblower protection
 - 4.1.1 This policy is designed to give guidance so that honesty and integrity are maintained at all times at BWAA.
 - 4.1.2 Subject to clause 4.1.2 to the maximum extent practicable, a person who genuinely discloses an allegation or concern about compliance with laws or other standards of behaviour (a **Whistleblower**) will be protected from any detrimental conduct (e.g. dismissal, demotion, suspension, harassment, discrimination, damage to reputation or other form of damage), and from any civil, criminal or administrative liability because they have raised such allegations. Subject to this policy, a Whistleblower is protected, even if the allegations prove to be incorrect or unsubstantiated (although a person who maliciously or vexatiously makes disclosures or makes false disclosures may be subject to disciplinary action including dismissal).
 - 4.1.3 A Whistleblower may not be protected from detrimental conduct, and civil, criminal or administrative liability if they themselves were directly or indirectly involved in the disclosed conduct.
 - 4.1.4 Employees who participate, or assist in, an investigation involving reportable conduct will also be protected. Every effort will be made to protect the anonymity of the Whistleblower, however, there may be situations where anonymity cannot be guaranteed. In such situations, the Whistleblower will be informed.
 - 4.1.5 A whistleblower is entitled to seek remedies, including compensation, from the courts if:
 - a They suffer loss, damage or another form of injury due to their disclosure of a disclosable matter; and
 - b The entity failed to exercise due diligence to prevent the loss, damage or other form injury, resulting from the disclosure.
 - 4.1.6 Whistleblowers are entitled to seek legal advice in relation to their rights, including those outlined in clause 4.1.5.
- 4.2 Disclosable Matters
 - 4.2.1 Staff and volunteers **are expected to**, and all other eligible persons **are encouraged** to, disclose misconduct or an improper state of affair or circumstances, if they know about or have reasonable grounds to suspect wrongdoing with respect to BWAA, its related entities (including Baptist World Aid Australia Ltd ABN 86 164 099 736) or any other eligible persons.
 - 4.2.2 Some examples that may be considered misconduct or an improper state of affair or circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - a breaches of legislation, including the Corporations Act, the Taxation Administration Act, or the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission Act;
 - b criminal offences or misconduct including fraud, negligence, default, harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying, breach of trust and

- breach of duty, corruption, money laundering, terrorism financing or any other conduct which contravenes our Financial Wrongdoing or Anti-Bribery and Corruption policies;
 - c improper state of affairs or circumstances (i.e. serious/systemic breaches of BWAA's Code of Conduct, unethical conduct, mismanagement or unauthorised use of organisational funds, abuse of authority, health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other eligible persons);
 - d conduct which may cause financial loss or damage to our reputation or be otherwise detrimental to our interests; and
 - e sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or physical abuse of other BWAA Representatives, children or vulnerable adults. These matters should also be managed in accordance with either our Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) policy or Child Safe policy.
- 4.2.3 Breaches of BWAA's policies and procedures are also considered disclosable matters for the purposes of this policy.
- 4.2.4 There may be circumstances where a problem or issue should be dealt with using a different policy or reporting mechanism. [See Appendix 1](#) to determine the suitable policy or reporting mechanism.
- 4.3 What is not a disclosable matter
- Disclosures that are not about disclosable matters do not qualify for protection under the Corporations Act (RG 270.49). This policy does not apply to:
- 4.3.1 personal work-related grievances unless the circumstances in clause 4.4.3 apply;
 - 4.3.2 health and safety hazards; or
 - 4.3.3 general employment grievances and complaints by a person about their own employment or situation.
- 4.4 Personal work-related grievances
- 4.4.1 As stipulated in clause 4.3.1, this policy does not apply to personal work-related grievances. Personal work-related grievances are those that relate to the Whistleblower's current or former employment and have, or tend to have, implications for the Whistleblower personally, but do not:
- a have any other significant implications for BWAA (or another entity); or
 - b relate to any conduct, or reportable/disclosable conduct within the meaning of clause 4.2.2
- 4.4.2 Examples of work-related grievances include the following (but is not limited to the following):
- a interpersonal conflict between the Whistleblower and a fellow employee;
 - b a decision about the engagement, promotion or transfer of the Whistleblower within a workplace;
 - c a decision not involving a breach of workplace laws;
 - d a decision to lawfully suspend or terminate the Whistleblower's employment.
- 4.4.3 A personal work-related grievance may still be reportable conduct if:
- a it includes or relates to information about misconduct or an improper state of affair or circumstances;

- b it relates to a breach of employment or other laws punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more; or
- c the Whistleblower experiences detrimental conduct due to making the disclosure or is threatened with detrimental conduct.

5 HOW TO SPEAK UP ABOUT DISCLOSABLE MATTERS

5.1 Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that reportable/disclosable conduct as defined in clause **Error! Reference source not found.** or a breach of a law or other standard of behaviour has occurred, is encouraged to report that suspicion to an eligible recipient. An eligible recipient meaning any of the following:

- 5.1.1 The whistleblower's senior manager;
- 5.1.2 A **protected disclosure officer** who is specially trained to receive reports, arrange for timely investigation and protect your rights. The protected disclosure officers are currently:

Jessica Barry, Director Governance, Risk and Business Optimisation

Email: jessica.barry@baptistworldaid.org.au

Rebecca Addario, HR Manager

Email: Rebecca.addario@baptistworldaid.org.au

- 5.1.3 an **officer of BWAA or a related entity** (for example, the Chair of the Board or the Finance and Risk Committee, Company Secretary or the CEO)
 - 5.1.4 an actuary of BWAA or a related entity;
 - 5.1.5 an **auditor or member of an audit team** conducting an audit of BWAA or a related body corporate (for example, the auditor of our annual financial statements or an internal audit)
 - 5.1.6 the **Whispli Speak Up System**, which is an anonymous, secure communication system accessible via this link: <https://tai.whispli.com/report>
- 5.2 Each of the persons described in clause 5.1 are eligible recipients within the meaning of section 1317AAC of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) (Corporations Act) and qualify for protection under Part 9.4AA of the Corporations Act.
- 5.3 A whistleblower must make a disclosure to an eligible recipient to be able to qualify for protection as a Whistleblower under legislation.
- 5.4 All disclosures should provide specific, adequate and pertinent information with respect to, among other things, dates, places, persons, witnesses, amounts, and other relevant information, in order to allow for a reasonable investigation to be conducted.
- 5.5 All disclosures received will be dealt with on a confidential basis. When reporting a protected disclosure, the Whistleblower may provide their name or remain anonymous. We encourage Whistleblowers to identify themselves to enhance our ability to provide protection. We may not be able to arrange for a report to be investigated if we are not able to contact the Whistleblower.
- 5.6 Disclosures made to a legal practitioner for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or legal representation in relation to a Whistleblower disclosure or potential Whistleblower disclosure are protected and the Whistleblower will not experience any legal or non-legal detriment in any form whatsoever.
- 5.7 This protection will apply even where the matter disclosed does not amount to a 'disclosable matter' within the meaning of clause 4.2.**Error! Reference source not found.**

6 DISCLOSURE TO REGULATORY BODIES

Whistleblowers have the right to disclose reportable conduct to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) or another Commonwealth authority prescribed by regulation. For further information about making a disclosure and Whistleblower protections, ASIC's Infoline is available on 1300 300 630.

7 PUBLIC INTEREST OR EMERGENCY DISCLOSURES

- 7.1 In certain circumstances where the requirements outlined in section 1317AAD of the Corporations Act are met, eligible persons can make a disclosure to a member of parliament or journalist and qualify for protection.
- 7.2 Before making a public interest disclosure or emergency disclosure, a person considering making such a disclosure should seek independent legal advice and understand the requirements of section 1317AAD of the Corporations Act.
- 7.3 A public interest disclosure is the disclosure of information to a member of parliament or a journalist, in circumstances where:
- 7.3.1 At least 90 days have passed since the discloser made a disclosure to APRA, ASIC or another Commonwealth entity prescribed by regulation; and
 - 7.3.2 The discloser does not have reasonable grounds for believing that action is being or has been taken to address the matters to which the previous disclosures related; and
 - 7.3.3 There are reasonable grounds to believe that making a further disclosure of the information would be in the public interest; and
 - 7.3.4 Prior to making the public interest disclosure, the discloser has provided notice in writing to the entity described in clause 7.2.1 that:
 - a Includes enough information to identify the previous disclosure; and
 - b States that the discloser intends to make a public interest disclosure.
- 7.4 An emergency disclosure is a disclosure of information to a member of parliament or a journalist, in circumstances where:
- 7.4.1 The discloser has previously made a disclosure to APRA, ASIC or another Commonwealth entity prescribed by regulation; and
 - 7.4.2 The discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that the [information](#) concerns a substantial and imminent danger to the health or safety of one or more [persons](#) or to the natural environment; and
 - 7.4.3 Prior to making the emergency disclosure, the discloser has provided notice in writing to the entity described in clause 7.4.1 that:
 - a includes sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure; and
 - b states that the discloser intends to make an emergency disclosure; and
- 7.5 The information contained in the emergency disclosure is no greater than is necessary to inform the entity described in clause 7.4.1 of the imminent and substantial danger.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

- 8.1 BWAA recognises that maintaining appropriate confidentiality is crucial in ensuring that potential Whistleblowers come forward and make disclosures in an open and timely manner and without fear of reprisals being made against them.
- 8.2 A Whistleblower has the right to remain anonymous when making a disclosure, over the course of an investigation and after the investigation is finalised. A Whistleblower has the right to refuse to answer questions at any time if they believe this could reveal their identity, this includes during follow-up conversations. Whistleblowers who remain anonymous are still protected under legislation.
- 8.3 Whistleblowers wishing to remain anonymous are encouraged to maintain ongoing two-way communication with BWAA, for example, by way of email (using an anonymous email address) to allow for follow-up questions to be asked.
- 8.4 BWAA will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the Whistleblower. To enhance confidentiality, BWAA will inform the Whistleblower that they have the option to:
- 8.4.1 Communicate with BWAA via telephone calls from an anonymous/no ID number; and
 - 8.4.2 Communicate with BWAA using an anonymous email address; and
 - 8.4.3 Adopt a pseudonym for the purpose of their disclosure. This may be appropriate in circumstances where an eligible recipient or eligible recipients are aware of the whistleblower's identity, however, the whistleblower wishes to remain anonymous to others.
- 8.5 BWAA will adhere to any statutory requirements in respect of the confidentiality of disclosures made.
- 8.6 BWAA notes that in appropriate cases, disclosure of the identity of the Whistleblower, or the allegation made by them, may be unavoidable, such as if court proceedings result from a disclosure pursuant to this policy or there is a threat to life or property or if BWAA has an obligation to do so.

9 HOW BWAA ACTIONS WHISTLEBLOWER DISCLOSURES

- 9.1 BWAA will respond in a timely manner to all disclosures by:
- 9.1.1 ensuring that any investigation begins, proceeds in, and is concluded as quickly as possible considering all the circumstances (such as the subject matter of the report, the Eligible Person/s and other persons involved, etc);
 - 9.1.2 providing updates on the progress of an investigation to relevant Eligible Person/s including to the Whistleblower; and
 - 9.1.3 providing the reports or outcomes from investigations to the appropriate Eligible Person/s, including the Whistleblower without delay as per clause 9.1.1.
- 9.2 To assess whether the disclosure requires an investigation, the eligible recipient (that is not otherwise involved in the disclosable matter or has a conflict of interest) will work with BWAA's independent whistleblowing service provider Whisplii to quickly assess if the disclosed information falls under this Policy. If the disclosure does fall under this Policy, then the Investigator will either be Whisplii or an individual or entity independent of all involved parties or approved by all involved parties.
- 9.3 The objective of the investigation will be to determine whether there is enough evidence to substantiate or refute the matters reported.

- 9.4 BWAA will investigate every report fairly, objectively, and confidentially, with due regard for the nature of the allegation and the rights of the persons involved in the investigation.
- 9.5 All involved parties must commit to keep information confidential and take necessary steps to maintain confidentiality, such as redacting sensitive information from documents and securely storing and using information.
- 9.6 Access to confidential information will be limited to eligible persons and other persons on a needs basis only and as the law permits. The directors, officers, employees and agents of BWAA must cooperate fully with the investigator.
- 9.7 BWAA will only involve those eligible persons or other persons as are necessary in the investigation;
- 9.8 BWAA will maintain confidential records and store them securely;
- 9.9 BWAA will provide the report or outcomes from any investigation to the most senior appropriate eligible person or body of BWAA. This may be the BWAA CEO and/or Board (or a sub-committee of the Board).
- 9.10 BWAA will not require the Whistleblower to disclose their identity.

10 NO REPRISALS

- 10.1 BWAA will not take any adverse action against a Whistleblower because they have made a disclosure, which meet the above-mentioned conditions, unless the Whistleblower is a participant in the prohibited activities with respect to which the complaint is made.
- 10.2 If the Whistleblower was involved in the conduct, which was the subject of the disclosure, the fact that the Whistleblower has made the disclosure may be taken into account in determining the severity of the disciplinary measures, if any, that may eventually be taken against such Whistleblower.
 - 10.2.1 Any reprisals against a Whistleblower are a serious breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. This protection applies to anyone providing information related to an investigation pursuant to this policy.
 - 10.2.2 BWAA will allow all those involved reasonable time of leave to enable them to participate in the investigation.
 - 10.2.3 The BWAA Employee Assistance Program will be available to all those involved as needed – for details, please speak with our People and Culture Manager, or access the service by calling 1300 796 640 or visiting www.workhappy.com.au

11 COMMUNICATIONS TO THE WHISTLEBLOWER

- BWAA will ensure that, provided the disclosure was not made anonymously, the Whistleblower will receive regular updates and will be informed of the outcomes of the investigation of the allegations.
- 11.1 The provision of this information to the Whistleblower is subject to the considerations of privacy of those against whom allegations are made.
 - 11.2 The frequency of the updates received by the Whistleblower in relation to the investigation may vary depending upon the nature of the disclosure and the complexity of the allegations.

12 REPORTING

- 12.1 The BWAA Finance and Risk Committee will review protected disclosure handling and outcomes to ensure that the process followed is effective, compliant with this policy, and to capture learnings.
- 12.2 The BWAA Board will receive reports of disclosures made under this policy from the Finance and Risk Committee, including status of current investigations, outcomes of investigations and resulting actions taken.

13 NON-COMPLIANCE

- 13.1 Any breach of this policy will be treated seriously, and relevant BWAA Representatives may be investigated and subject to disciplinary action.
- 13.2 The laws regulating whistleblowing in Australia may also impose penalties for breaches of legal requirements relating to disclosures of misconduct.

14 TRAINING

- 14.1 Training and familiarisation of this policy will be provided for our BWAA Representatives during induction.

15 RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
Position/ Delegated Body	Responsibilities
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic oversight of policy
Director of Risk, Governance and Business Optimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational management of policy
Protected Disclosure Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage investigation and reporting processes

16 REVIEW

- 16.1 This policy will be reviewed triennially or sooner as required.
- 16.2 This policy may only be amended with our Board's approval, except in the case of minor amendments (such as updating the names of Protected Disclosure Officers, or the independent whistleblowing service provider).

17 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- BWAA Code of Conduct
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Financial Wrongdoing Policy
- Antibribery and Corruption Policy
- Purchasing Policy

18 EXTERNAL REFERENCES

- [Whistleblower Rights and Protections](#)
- [Australian Securities and Investments Commission Regulatory Guidance RG 270 – Whistleblower policies](#)
- [How ASIC handles Whistleblower reports](#)

Document Control Information

Whistleblowing Policy	
Owner	Director of Risk, Governance and Business Optimisation
Master Copy	Risk & Governance Team
Document Type	Approval required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance, Substantive Operational/ Organisation Policies	Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Operational/ Organisation Policies	Executive
<input type="checkbox"/> Departmental Policies	Department Director
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure	Department Director
<input type="checkbox"/> Substantive Procedure/ Procedure that impacts whole organisation	Executive
<input type="checkbox"/> Other BWAA Documents: work instructions, forms, guidelines, manuals	Department Director
<input type="checkbox"/> Other substantive BWAA Document	Departmental Director, Executive and Board
Date created	19/09/2019
Date last reviewed	11/03/2025
Date Approved	27/02/2020
Date next Review	11/03/2028

Date	Version	Revision Description	Reviewed / Updated by
19/09/2019	1	Significantly updated / re-wrote previous policy in line with new Whistleblowing Legislation and requirements.	Director of Finance and Operations
13/02/2020	2	Updated in line with advice from Prolegis lawyers.	Governance and Risk Coordinator
22/04/2020	3	Updated to include Whispli details	Governance and Risk Coordinator
3/05/2022	4	Updated point of contact to include CFO	Governance and Risk Coordinator
14/8/2024	5	Significant review and update as part of usual cycle. Updated protected disclosure officer from HR to Governance in line with practice.	Compliance and Risk Coordinator

11/03/2025	6	Update clauses to ensure compliance with Regulatory Guideline 270.	Vocare Law

Appendix 1: BWAA Complaints Mechanisms

