

Wlwing Policy

Safety and Rights Society(SRS)

Title of Policy: Whistle Blowing Policy

Main Policy: Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)

Adopted by: Safety and Rights Society (SRS)

Approved By: Governing Body of SRS

Approval Date: 05 October 2019

Introduction:

It is vital that everyone who works for Safety and Rights Society (SRS) maintains the highest standards of conduct, integrity and ethics, and complies with national legislation. If an employee, field facilitator, cafe in charge has any genuine concerns about malpractice in the workplace, SRS encourages them to communicate these without fear of reprisals and in the knowledge that they will be **protected from victimization and dismissal**.

This policy does not form part of an employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management.

1. Purpose of the Whistle Blowing Policy

- 1.1 This policy covers the steps to take when an employee feels she/he has identified or observed conduct in the organization that breaches the Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 This policy provides a recognized means of raising concerns internally within the organization. As SRS employee and associates, they are usually the first to be aware of any malpractice, fraud, negligence, or illegality and they must be able to raise legitimate issues in an open and honest way without any fear.

2. Why does SRS have a Whistle Blowing Policy

- 2.1 SRS is engaged in an environment with a particular concern for human rights and equality. The organization is dedicated to raising awareness of the harmful consequences of human rights, and to advancing the values of equality, diversity, accountability and transparency. With such a mission, SRS must be especially vigilant about risks of harassments and other malpractices and fraud inside the organization.
- 2.2 SRS intends to support, underscore and complement practices of risk and compliance management in the existing ethics framework of SRS. An additional reporting mechanism for employees who become aware of wrongful conduct by SRS staff in violation of the following categories:
 - Financial wrongdoing including theft, bribery, fraud, money laundering and abetting terrorist activities
 - A failure to comply with any legal obligations
 - Sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse, harassment or exploitation
 - Abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults or beneficiaries
 - Breach of SRS policies in operation
 - Abuse of position
 - Danger to the health and safety of individuals or damage to the environment
 - Improper conduct or unethical behavior
 - Activity which would bring the organization into serious disrepute
 - The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the matters listed above

3. What to Report

- 3.1 SRS needs to know about risks which immediately challenge organization's vision and values. If an employee have information on such a risk or believe that wrongdoing may have occurred, has occurred, or could occur, requested to make sure it is known and follow the procedures below on how to report it.
- 3.2 While it is understood that the employee may want to seek further information or consult with colleagues before making a report, requested to avoid unnecessarily sharing the identity of individuals affected by his/her report to colleagues, undertaking his/her own investigations, or collecting evidence before contacting a responsible person. The goal of this policy is to help SRS address problems before or as soon as they arise. For that reason, it is important that a responsible person is advised of a concern quickly so that she/he can undertake a fair, impartial and prompt examination of matters brought to his/her attention.

4. Whistle Blowing Reporting Procedure

- 4.1 All individuals working under SRS including full- and temporary employees, interns, volunteers , can use this policy to raise concerns about any of the issues mentioned above.
- 4.2 If any of the above mentioned believe, in good faith, that she/he has uncovered or observed evidence that indicates harassment/abuse, fraud, malpractice or any other breach of the Code of Conduct, she/he is expected to report it, with the supporting factual evidence to:
 - Executive Director, in cases of alleged harassment/abuse, one shall report these in the first instance to the designated person in MJF, who will advise the Executive Director.
 - If the complainant considers that his/her SRS concern may not be taken seriously through this route,she/he may, alternatively go outside the line management structure and raise his/her concern with the Governing Board Members/designated external ombudsperson (contact details to be added once available).
- 4.3 Associates can voice their concern through the above channels or via the 'Contact us' link on www.safetyandrights.org. Concern can also be dropped in written form in the suggestion box available at SRS office.
- 4.4 Complaints can be made on behalf of affected parties where necessary, but only with the affected party's proven consent.

5. Ombudsperson

- 5.1 The ombudsperson is a remunerated position, held by a specialized lawyer. A core function of the ombudsperson is to confidentially help the complaints decide whether his/her information needs to be reported, to whom, whether openly, confidentially or anonymously. While she/he cannot act as complaints attorney, she/he will be in a position to help the employee to better understand the legal situation.
It also is/ will be available on the Facebook's Work places well as at www.safetyandrights.org

- 5.2 Provided complaints report meets the scope of this policy, she/he will relate employee's information to the responsible persons at SRS, namely the Executive Director or Director - F&A, duly protecting his/her identity. In case the report relates directly to the Executive Director or Director- F&A, the ombudsperson can relate the information to the chair of the Governing Board.

The ombudsperson will also follow up on the response to complaints concern by SRS. She/he will forward and discuss this response with the employee, as appropriate. She/he will be appointed by the SRS Executive Director/ Governing Board and reports to the chair of the Governing Board of SRS.

6. Confidentiality and Anonymity

- 6.1 Confidentiality is assumed unless complaints agree that his/her identity may be revealed. In respect of allegations of sexual abuse, it is important to remember that the best interests of the victim are paramount. A breach of confidentiality could have devastating effects on the life of the victim and his/her family.

Nevertheless, employee's identity will not be revealed without prior written permission unless required to do so by law.

7. Assessment, Review or Investigation

- 7.1 All concerns raised under this policy will be dealt with promptly and will be treated seriously and sensitively.
- 7.2 Complaints concerns will be discussed with him/her in order to help determine the precise action to be taken. It will be for the manager with whom employee have raised the concern to decide whether or not to involve other parties to investigate (e.g. where there is an issue of alleged sexual abuse or fraud, an investigation must be carried out).
- 7.3 Whenever possible, resolution will be reached and the outcome known within 28 days of raising the concern. Employee will be informed of the action taken and the outcome.
- 7.4 If an employee have raised a legitimate concern in good faith and an investigation finds the concern to be unfounded no action will be taken against the employee for 'whistle blowing'.

8. Whistle Blower Retaliation

- 8.1 Retaliation is defined as any direct or indirect detrimental action recommended, threatened, or taken towards an individual who has reported a complaint under the whistle blowing policy.
- 8.2 SRS will not accept any retaliation against person(s) who have made complaints under this policy.
- 8.3 SRS will take appropriate measures to protect complaints from any form of retaliation, disadvantage or discrimination at the workplace linked to or resulting from his/her report.
- 8.4 SRS will enforce mandatory discipline against staff members and associates where retaliation is proven to have taken place.

8.5 Anyone who makes false and malicious accusations or who raises concerns for personal gain will also be the subject of disciplinary action.

9. Review

9.1 Responsibility for overseeing compliance with this policy is with the Executive Director of SRS.

9.2 This policy has been approved by the SRS Governing Board. It will be reviewed annually for usability and efficiency, in consultation with SRS's Senior Management Team, and a representative from SRS staff and subject to Board approval whenever modified.

SRS will not tolerate any form of coercion, intimidation, reprisal or retaliation against anyone who reports losses, illegal acts or violations of the Code of Conduct, or provides any information or other assistance in an investigation. Making frivolous claims will not be tolerated and may lead to corrective action up to and including immediate termination of employment.