

EXPECT GROUP OF COMPANIES

Whistleblowing

Scope

This procedure describes how the Expect Group of Companies is committed to creating an environment that allows Staff and Service Users alike to raise issues of concern and to ensure compliance with the principles laid down in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013.

Related Expect Documents

None

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Signed: Chief Executive Officer

EXPECT GROUP OF COMPANIES

WHISTLEBLOWING

1 AIMS

- Staff and Service Users voice concerns to management where they are aware of or suspect that abusive, unethical, illegal or unsafe practices are taking place within the service and that they can do so without fear of victimisation.
- Expect management take issues raised seriously and arrange to respond to such concerns by investigating them thoroughly and taking any necessary action in a prompt and fair manner.

2 STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

- Staff and Service Users have a simple means of informing senior managers if they detect or suspect any abusive, unethical, illegal or unsafe practices taking place within the service.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REPORTING

3.1 All members of staff have a duty to make a disclosure of information where they have reason to believe that:

- abusive or unethical behaviour or practices are taking place within a service.
- a staff member or others acting on behalf of the Company has, is or is likely to commit a criminal offence.
- a staff member or others acting on behalf of the Company has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation.
- a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

- the health or safety of an individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered.

3.2 Staff are encouraged to put their names to their allegations. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and are more difficult to investigate but they will be considered at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

3.3 Staff are encouraged to report their concerns as soon as possible as any delay may make future investigation difficult.

3.4 In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES - STAFF

4.1 A member of staff identifying any action which they consider falls under the headings as defined in 3. above shall immediately contact any Manager they feel they can approach.

4.2 The Manager contacted shall:

- take any immediate action necessary to protect service users and/or others
- inform the Head of Service / Department
- make a full record of the allegations

4.3 Where the allegations are of a serious nature the Manager shall inform the Chief Executive Officer.

4.4 The staff member may contact the Chief Executive Officer where they:

- consider the discussions with their line manager have been ineffective

- are unwilling to talk to such managers because of his/her involvement/possible involvement.
- fear repercussions

Note: Staff may feel they need support in bringing an allegation to the attention of a senior manager. Should this be the case they may seek advice and support from a trusted member of staff.

4.5 Where the allegations are of abuse of a service user:

- follow the relevant local '**Adult Protection**' protocols, which generally include informing Social Services and if appropriate the Police. If in doubt contact the local Social Services Department.
- for registered services inform the CQC within 24 hours, in accordance with the relevant regulations.

5 EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION

5.1 Following the outcome of the social services strategy meeting, a decision to investigate internally may be reached.

6 INTERNAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS

6.1 The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that a person is appointed to investigate the allegations.

6.2 The Investigating Officer shall as quickly as possible carry out a thorough investigation of the allegations:

- where an investigation has not been completed within two weeks the Investigating Officer shall give the reasons for the delay.
- within one working day of completion of their investigation, report their findings to the manager who appointed them.

6.3 The senior manager shall ensure that appropriate support is given to the person making the allegations. This is especially relevant:

- if the person feels that they are isolated
- if the person fears repercussions. Any member of staff alleged to be victimising another member of staff or service user as a consequence of their being a legitimate concern, will be subject to investigation under the Company's disciplinary procedure.
- where the investigation itself identifies the staff member as the person who has informed management.

6.4 The staff member making the allegations shall, taking into consideration the needs for confidentiality, be informed of the results of the investigation.

6.5 Following the completion of the investigation and any subsequent action, the Head of Department shall ensure that a review takes place and any action required is implemented.

6.3 An employee who raises a concern that is later found:

- to be unsubstantiated, but was made in good faith **will not** be subject to any disciplinary action
- to be **intentionally** malicious, false or vexatious **will** be subject to disciplinary action.

NOTE: Following the outcomes of an investigation, especially where the claims have been unsubstantiated, support shall be made available for all staff involved.