

ReSkilled Whistle-blowing Policy

ReSkilled recognises the importance of early identification of abuse or malpractice; whistle-blowing is an important early warning system. It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice and it is encouraged within ReSkilled, particularly in order that issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults are addressed.

It can be the case that a staff member or volunteer may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express concerns, feeling that this would be disloyal, or invite harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in an adult continuing to be unnecessarily at risk.

In all cases of whistle-blowing, if the concern about practice, performance or behaviour relates to the safeguarding of adults, it should be investigated immediately.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives employees legal protection against being dismissed or penalised as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Whilst the Act does not provide the same protection for volunteers, ReSkilled does afford the same protection with reference to safeguarding concerns.

Members of staff and volunteers should be encouraged to acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of unacceptable practice, performance or behaviour to the attention of the Programme Manager or Chair of trustees. Where possible, whistle-blowers must be able to disclose information in confidence and remain anonymous.

No disciplinary action will be taken against whistle-blowers in respect of disclosures made in good faith. However, if you make malicious or vexatious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

For situations reported which involve a vulnerable person (i.e. adult experiencing or at risk of harm), refer to the **Safeguarding Reporting Procedure** poster (or ReSkilled Safeguarding Policy). These concerns must be reported **within 4 hours** to ReSkilled's Programme Manager, or if the concern is about the Programme Manager, then to the ReSkilled Safeguarding Lead Trustee.

For all other malpractice concerns, use the procedure below.

Procedure

Referrals

These can be made by the whistle-blower or the individual receiving the information and must be made as soon as practicable - at least within 24hrs. The concern should be submitted in written form or e-mailed to the ReSkilled Programme Manager, or if the concern is about the Programme Manager, to the ReSkilled Chair of Trustees (contact details below).

Incident details

The referral needs to contain:

- Date(s)
- Time
- Nature and description of incident/concern
- Persons involved
- Outcome requested
- Your preferred means of communication (phone or e-mail)

Acknowledgement

The ReSkilled Programme Manager or Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will confirm their receipt of a referral by the preferred means of communication to the individual within 24 hrs. Unless the referral has been reported directly to the Chair of Trustees, it is the responsibility of the ReSkilled Programme Manager to inform the Chair of Trustees of the referral within 24 hrs of their being made aware.

Involvement of external agencies

The investigation may include obtaining advice from statutory agencies (see list below). The ReSkilled Programme Manager and Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will be responsible for assessing the details of the concern to determine whether, and which, statutory agencies should subsequently be notified.

Individuals' statements

It is important that all persons involved – as recorded on the *Incident Details* – should have statements recorded of their part in the concern, e.g. witness, victim or perpetrator (use Whistle-blowing Statement form).

Outcome

Once all relevant material has been reviewed, subject to the involvement of any statutory agencies, the Programme Manager and Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will, as soon as reasonably practicable, determine the outcome and inform both the individual concerned in writing and also the whistle-blower.

Appeal

Following notification of the outcome, the individual against whom the allegation was made is entitled to appeal the decision. The appeal must be submitted to the Chair of Trustees within 7 days, made in writing and setting out the grounds for the appeal and based on evidential and factual information. The appeal will be considered by ReSkilled's Board of Trustees (minimum of 4) and Programme Manager (if appropriate) within 7 days of receipt and the individual notified in writing within 48hrs of the meeting.

It is not in the interests of ReSkilled for the process to take any longer than necessary due to the negative impact that it could have on both the time availability to run the project and on the charity's reputation. This process does not exclude or override the employment rights of any individual.

Statutory Agencies list:

- Police
- The Health and Safety Executive;
- The Charity Commission
- HM Revenue & Customs;
- The Environment Agency;

Contact details

Project Lead:

Piers Rosslyn-Smith piers@reskilled.org

Chair of Trustees:

Paul Robbs de la Hoyde paul.robbsdelahoyde@reskilled.org

Safeguarding Lead Trustee:

Pauline Searle safeguarding@reskilled.org

January 2020

ReSkilled Whistle-blowing Process

Referral

Submitted in written form or e-mailed to the ReSkilled Project Lead, or if the concern is about the Project Lead, to the ReSkilled Chair of Trustees within 24 hrs, including the relevant details



Acknowledgement

The ReSkilled Project Lead or Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will confirm their receipt of a referral by the preferred means of communication to the individual within 24 hrs.



Involvement of external agencies

The investigation may include obtaining advice from statutory agencies



Individuals' statements

It is important that all persons involved should have statements recorded of their part in the concern



Outcome

Once all relevant material has been reviewed, subject to the involvement of any statutory agencies, the Project Lead and Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will, as soon as reasonably practicable, determine the outcome and future involvement of the individual at ReSkilled



Appeal

Following notification of the outcome, the individual against whom the allegation was made is entitled to appeal the decision. The appeal must be submitted to the Chair of Trustees within 7 days

Whistle-blowing Statement form

Name			
Position			
Does this relate to your line manager?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date(s) of incident		Time of incident (if known)	
What concern(s) do you wish to raise (summary of disclosure)?			
Why are you concerned about the issue(s)?			
Individuals involved (include any witnesses)?			
Outcome requested?			
Have you discussed the issue(s) with anyone else?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please state their name			
Their position			
Date discussed			
What was the outcome of this discussion?			
Your preferred means of communication	Phone <input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail <input type="checkbox"/>	
Declaration:			
I confirm that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that, if I knowingly make false allegations, this may result in disciplinary action against me.			
Signed			
Date			