

Balloon Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Background

Balloon Ventures (BV) aims to maintain the highest standards of openness and accountability and to ensure that our work is conducted in the safest manner possible so that staff, volunteers, external stakeholders (such as beneficiaries and partners) are protected.

Everyone who works with or for BV must be vigilant for signs of wrongdoing or criminal activity by individuals or organisations working with or for us and are encouraged to report such behaviour using this policy.

BV will not tolerate the intimidation or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern under this policy. Anyone who tries to deter, intimidate or victimise an individual in a bid to prevent them from reporting a suspicion, will be subject to appropriate formal action and, if appropriate, may be reported to the relevant authorities.

Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is a particular concern which we understand may not be detected without a confidential mechanism for reporting which protects the person doing the reporting.

This process is separate from and in addition to BV's grievance processes for employees or complaints process for volunteers. We understand that sometimes extra levels of diligence are needed. The Whistleblowing Policy allows confidential reporting of serious issues and for these to be handled accordingly. If you are uncertain as to whether or not something is within the scope of this process, you should seek advice from your line manager.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, whistleblowing refers to reporting of issues of concern, misconduct, illegal acts or failures of working practice by an individual whose identity will remain confidential and who shall not be penalised for airing their concerns.

Principles of Whistleblowing

The following principles apply to Whistleblowing:

- You are protected by law if you are a worker, volunteer or acting on behalf of Balloon when disclosing an issue under the Whistleblowing Policy;
- Balloon will not victimize those who report issues;
- All issues raised to Balloon are taken seriously and followed up on;
- Where appropriate, Balloon will involve outside stakeholders to comply with our legal obligations.

Confidentiality

BV will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation will be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

What Should You Report

You should report the following:

- You suspect/or know that a child is in danger and are unable to report this through other channels.
- Criminal offences (e.g. fraud, bribery, corruption, money laundering, modern day slavery, supporting or involvement in terrorism).
- You suspect a criminal offence has been committed, or is likely to be committed;
- Balloon as a company is breaking the law, either through its acts or through its staff;
- You suspect financial misconduct;
- Where someone's health, safety or security are in danger and current interventions have not been satisfactory;
- Balloon's activities pose a risk to others or the environment, or are being conducted in an unethical manner;
- Attempts to cover up any of the above.
- Unethical behaviour.

Balloon Whistleblowing Procedure

Background

The procedure for making a disclosure (report) under the Whistleblowing Policy is the same for staff, volunteers and external stakeholders. It is kept simple and straight forward to encourage reporting of Whistleblowing issues.

Procedure

Email any of the following board members:

- doug@balloonventures.com
- josh@balloonventures.com
- melinda@balloonventures.com

Ensure that you title the email subject 'Whistleblowing', so that it can be given priority and kept confidential.

In the email, detail the below:

- Your name and position;
- The issue you are reporting, with pertinent details;
- Who is linked to the disclosure;
- Who knows about the issue.

You will be contacted for more information where necessary.

Once a Report is Made

Once a disclosure is made under the Whistleblowing Policy, the following will happen:

Stage 1: Assessment

An assessment will be made on whether the issue is relevant to the Whistleblowing Policy. If not, you will be informed of where you should direct the issue.

Stage 2: Internal Investigation

An investigation will be triggered internally, involving the required people, though kept to a minimum (i.e. only those who need to know to resolve the issue). In some cases, external parties will be brought in to provide evidence or support. This stage will be completed within 15 working days of the report being made, unless otherwise communicated.

Stage 3: Resolution

A resolution will be decided upon, shared with the relevant people (including the whistleblower where appropriate), and implemented.

Stage 4: Follow-Up

The impact of the resolution will be evaluated, and the Whistleblowing Procedure reviewed based on lessons from the case. The whistleblower will be supported thoroughly and confidentially throughout.

Please note: The Whistleblowing Policy is not to be used for general grievances that do not require confidentiality. For issues of this sort, please refer to our Complaints Policy which is available in the footer on every page of our website.

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Sexual Harassment and Assault
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Health and Safety.

Reviews

All documents are reviewed annually at the same time
Policies apply to the Balloon group of companies
Last Annual Update December 2019