

Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace Policy (Whistleblowing)

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Purpose

At New Day Church, it is vital that everyone who works for us maintains the highest standards of conduct, integrity and ethics, and complies with local legislation. If anybody, whether a member of staff or not, has any genuine concerns about malpractice in the workplace, we wish to encourage them to communicate these without fear of reprisals and in the knowledge that they will be **protected from victimisation or dismissal** (in the case of employees).

Please note that this procedure is not intended to replace New Day Church's Grievance Procedures, which continue to be the appropriate way to raise personal issues relating to the specific job or employment.

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

Malpractice includes (but is not limited to) the issues listed below:

- Financial wrongdoing including theft, bribery, fraud, money laundering and aid diversion
- A failure to comply with any legal obligations
- Sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse, harassment or exploitation (see New Day Church Safeguarding Policy)
- Abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults or beneficiaries (see New Day Church Safeguarding Policy as above)
- Breach of New Day Church policy
- Abuse of position
- Danger to the health and safety of individuals or damage to the environment
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Activity which would bring the organisation into serious disrepute
- The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the matters listed above

If you have a genuine concern and have a reasonable belief it is in the public interest, even if it is later discovered that you are mistaken, under this policy you will not be at risk of losing your job or from suffering any form of retribution as a result. This assurance will not be extended to an individual who maliciously raises a matter they know to be untrue or who is involved in any way in the malpractice. Those found to be making false allegations maliciously will have disciplinary action taken against them.

Malpractice is not a complaint about the performance and behaviour of a leader, line manager or other work colleague towards you. Such complaints will be directed for action to New Day Church's HR policies and procedures.

If you genuinely believe that the actions of someone who works for New Day Church could lead to or has resulted in malpractice, please follow the procedure below.

1. Raise the matter with your Line Manager, who will consult with the appropriate contact point. If you feel that you are unable to raise the matter with your Line Manager raise it with a Trustee who is not implicated in the matter.

At the point of raising a concern it would be useful for you to share information describing:

- Whether anyone is at immediate risk of harm
- What happened? If possible make a note of dates, times, places, people.
- Who is involved?
- How do you know about it?
- When were you first concerned about it?
- Have you told anybody about it?
- Was any action taken?

All Line Managers should:

- Report incidents of theft, fraud, or corruption immediately to a New Day Church Trustee.
- Report Safeguarding concerns relating to sexual abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults, beneficiaries or any New Day Church representative to New Day Church's Safeguarding Trustee.
- Report any other incidents of malpractice in the workplace to a New Day Church Trustee.

2. A decision will be made on whether it is appropriate to handle such complaints under this Malpractice in the Workplace policy. Where not appropriate you will be informed and your permission sought to divert the issue to the appropriate HR procedure.

3. When matters are reported to a New Day Church Trustee, the Board will investigate. The outcome may involve taking disciplinary action if misconduct has been proved, which may include dismissal where a staff member is concerned. If the complaint has been investigated and found to be without foundation all charges must be dropped and you must not pursue it further.

4. If you are still dissatisfied and seriously concerned then you may bring the matter to the attention of the External Board of Reference. The Leadership document states that issues that may be taken to the External Board of Reference by members are limited to:

4.1. Illegal or immoral behaviour

4.2. Physical, sexual and racial abuse of others.

4.3. Emotional abuse of others where such behaviour is sustained over a period of time

For example: contempt, shaming, bullying, name-calling, marginalising, blaming and blackmailing.

4.4. Behaviour which dishonours either God's name and reputation or that of the Church.

4.5. Beliefs which have been expressed which contravene the Church Statement of Faith.

5. When matters are reported to the Safeguarding Trustee, New Day Church's Safeguarding Guidelines will be followed. If an investigation is conducted, the outcome may involve taking disciplinary action if misconduct has been proved, which may include dismissal in the case of an employee. You will be notified once the matter has been resolved, but outcomes are subject to confidentiality and may not be communicated.

New Day Church will take appropriate action, which may end in dismissal, in accordance with the relevant procedure against any employee, volunteer or consultant who:

- Has been found to be victimising another individual for using this procedure, or deterring them from reporting genuine concerns under it.
- Made a disclosure maliciously that is known to be untrue or without reasonable grounds for believing that the information supplied was accurate.

Frequently asked questions

What if the Line Manager is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way?

If the Line Manager is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way, the matter should be raised with the Designated Trustee, or if they are involved, with another Trustee. Concerns regarding financial wrongdoing may be raised directly with the Trustees and concerns relating to sexual abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults, beneficiaries or any New Day Church representative to the Safeguarding Trustee.

Can the disclosure be made anonymously?

You are strongly encouraged not to make anonymous disclosures as details and further concerns cannot then be checked with you and this may seriously limit the ability of investigators to pursue your concerns. Nonetheless, all disclosures, made anonymously or otherwise, will be reviewed but lack of information may limit the nature, extent and outcome of the investigation.

Who will conduct the investigation?

Normally a Trustee from within New Day Church will be appointed. On rare occasions, or for complex cases such as safeguarding, external investigative support may be sought.

What if the matter involves a criminal offence?

The issue may also be reported to the police if a criminal offence, such as fraud or theft, or sexual assault has been committed.

What if the matter is a complaint about the performance or behaviour of a manager or colleague against me?

Such complaints will be directed for action to the appropriate HR policy unless the concerns relate to sexual misconduct or other forms of malpractice listed in this policy.