

Youth With a Mission (YWAM) England

Whistle-blowing policy and procedures

Statement of Intent

YWAM England is committed to operating in an open and transparent manner. YWAM England is aware of the possibility of unethical conduct taking place within the charity and daughter charities. If an individual discovers serious malpractice or wrongdoing, then the following procedure is in place to consider how best to remedy any concerns that may be apparent. The following policy allows all staff and associates that are connected with YWAM England to report under it. Any staff (as defined below) who use this whistle-blowing policy as an attempt to highlight serious concerns within YWAM England will be afforded courtesy, respect, anonymity, and initial confidentiality. They will be listened to, and their concerns given due attention.

Scope

This policy will apply to*:

Staff - Long & Short Term

Trainees

Volunteers

Interns

Trustees

All those representing YWAM England

*All of which will henceforth collectively be known as 'Staff'

Policy aims

As YWAM England, we ensure:

- That staff can and should report their concerns where they feel, and are, safe and where they will be listened to
- That all relevant individuals understand the whistle-blowing policy and know how to raise concerns
- That staff will not face retribution for reporting genuine concerns.

Whistle-blowing definitions and examples

A whistle blower is a person who raises a genuine concern that he/she believes is in the public interest relating to any of the examples below. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of YWAM England's activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

A whistle blower is protected by law. They should not be treated unfairly or lose their position because they "blow the whistle".

A concern can be raised at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or is believed will happen in the near future. You can refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

Examples of whistleblowing include:

- A criminal offence, e.g. fraud, common assault, theft
- Someone's health and safety is in danger
- Risk or actual damage to the environment
- A miscarriage of justice
- The company/charity is breaking the law, e.g. does not have the right insurance
- You believe someone is covering up wrongdoing.

Whistleblowers will be signposted, where relevant, to alternative policies and procedures to deal with such issues such as bullying or harassment (e.g. Code of conduct and Safeguarding procedures).

If whistleblowers are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy, depending on the nature of their concerns, they may be directed to:

- An appropriate and staff person or persons within the relevant local ministry
- YWAM England Elders' Core Team
- A member care specialist trained in whistleblower management
- A named Trustee who has taken responsibility for managing whistleblowing
- A blend of these scenarios

External advisory organisations such as the Advisory Conciliation Arbitration Service (ACAS)/PROTECT may be consulted for whistleblowing advice where needed.

Reporting concerns

Below is an outline of the practical steps that should be taken.

Staff should be given this policy in their induction and informed of the relevant person(s) to initially connect with regards to reporting. These people can be contacted at safeguarding@ywamengland.org. This will go to designated people on the following teams.

- A member of the Safeguarding Team
- A member of the Elders' Core Team

These people may or may not be a part of an investigative team. They will make arrangements for the report to be addressed in the best possible manner and will select and involve someone from the following:

- An appropriate staff person or persons within the relevant local ministry
- YWAM England Elders' Core Team
- A member care specialist trained in whistleblower management
- A named Trustee who has taken responsibility for managing whistleblowing
- A blend of these scenarios

External advisory organisations such as the Advisory Conciliation Arbitration Service (ACAS) or PROTECT, the independent whistleblowing charity, who offer a confidential helpline.

Their contact details are:

PROTECT

Phone: 020 3117 2520

Website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk>

Any reporting person in YWAM England, will then be told who their contact person is within the team who will receive the report. This contact person will keep the whistleblower informed of all relevant developments. The person handling the e-mail address sets up the investigative team. This must comprise of, recommended person/s in YWAM whose roles (and relationships) are independent from each other. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be a consideration in this process. These people could include:

- A community leader like a location leader or member of a location leadership team
- A member of the National Safeguarding Advisory Team
- A member of YWAM England Elders' Core Team
- A respected member care specialist
- A Chairperson\Trustee with whistleblowing management experience
- A connected international leader where relevant, i.e. ACT'S member.

Those addressing the report will do the following:

- Speak to the whistleblower to ascertain full details
- Ensure that the matter pertains to this whistleblower policy
- Speak with all relevant parties in the matter
- Examine if outside parties need to be engaged
- Keep documentation and provide recommendations to all relevant leadership. Recommendations should seek the best interests of all concerned and be in line with our disciplinary procedures where relevant
- Keep the whistleblower apprised of all relevant matters
- Respect confidentiality and anonymity (See below).

Confidentiality/Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained within the confines of the law. Confidentiality and anonymity cannot be guaranteed as legislation and connected policy may necessitate a release of information.

YWAM England will accept the use of a third party if the senior leaders addressing the report believe this to be appropriate. One such charity that could be used is, Protect.

If a whistleblower reports a relevant issue regarding either an existing safeguarding situation, a member of the national safeguarding advisory team, a location leader, a DSL, DSO, SSO, trustee or safeguarding representative. If an issue is related to a child where an outside party is deemed necessary, then the NSPCC Whistleblower Helpline can be called at, 0800-028 0285 (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>).

Investigations

An internal investigation will take place if the team handling the report believe that it meets the threshold to fall within this policy. The threshold is defined as 'something that falls within the examples above and does not fall under our safeguarding policy'. If the situation is deemed to be a safeguarding issue it will be referred to the relevant parties.

The whistleblower will be kept informed of appropriate progression, development, and conclusion of the investigation. All aspects of the investigation are considered confidential outside of agreements for sharing information between the relevant parties. Protocols for documentation production and retention and connection to local authorities, regulatory bodies mirror our current safeguarding policy.

Any investigation outcome that establishes that the whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or outside of our code of conduct may face disciplinary action.

Any person or persons that are found to have breached YWAM England's code of conduct as a result of a whistleblower policy investigation, will be treated with grace and respect. Any investigation will fall in line with the safeguarding policy, code of conduct, disciplinary procedure, and any other existing relevant policies, results could include:

- A change in position whilst remaining in YWAM England
- A negotiated transfer to another YWAM community
- Period of suspension for the duration of the investigation
- Dismissal
- Withdrawal of visa or visa renewal sponsorship
- Counselling and mental health services
- A combination of the above.

Protection and support for whistleblowers

Protection and support will be provided for all whistleblowers. It is always our hope that YWAM England will operate within biblical values and function with integrity, transparency and humility. Should any of the following take place to a whistleblower (because of their report)

- Dismissal
- Disciplinary action
- Threats
- Unfavourable treatment in their service (e.g. being overseen for opportunities)

the following will take place:

All whistleblowers that have a grievance and report intimidation and/or retaliation will be listened to. Accusations will be investigated and will follow the protocols of this policy and the safeguarding policy, and code of conduct if appropriate. Third party organisations may be brought in to assist.

All staff that are found to have acted with intimidation/retaliation towards anyone involved in a whistleblower case will be subject to disciplinary action as per our disciplinary policy.

Whistleblowing and appeal's process

Any person or persons that have faced disciplinary action outside of the realm of legal prosecution have a right to appeal. Those concerned will not be able to return to their position during this process but can return if the appeal finds in their favour. Any agreed reparations are decided by the Board of Trustees and the Elders' Core Team of YWAM England.

Whistleblowing and media

We are committed to appropriate transparency with media. Media communication must take place within the bounds of this policy, our safeguarding policy and code of conduct. Only pre-agreed and appointed individuals can represent us in the media (as per Section 7.4 YWAM England Code of Conduct).

LEGISLATION and supporting documents

YWAM England is fully committed to ensuring compliance with national legislation for Charities, statutory and other guidance i.e. relevant UN and International Standards and Commitments. When operating internationally, we expect all YWAM England representatives to respond in compliance with this Code of Conduct.

This Whistleblowing policy should be viewed in conjunction with YWAM England's:

Code of Conduct – <https://www.ywamsafeguarding.co.uk/policies>

Safeguarding policy – <https://www.ywamsafeguarding.co.uk/policies>

Disciplinary Procedure – <https://www.ywamsafeguarding.co.uk/policies>

Commitments made by YWAM - <https://ywam.org/for-ywamers/documents-for-ywamers/>

YWAMs Purpose, beliefs and foundational values - <https://ywam.org/about-us/values/>

GDPR Policy - <https://www.ywamengland.org/privacy-notice>