

V-Aid (Victual Aid) Whistleblowing Policy



**Whistleblowing Policy approved by Trustees
on 13/10/26**

The policy will be subject to an annual review.

Signed: *C. Lau* (Christin Lau on behalf of Trustees)

Our Principles

V-Aid encourages people involved in its work to raise genuine concerns about serious wrongdoing, unsafe practice, misconduct or other matters that may affect the charity, the people it supports or the public interest.

Concerns should be taken seriously and handled fairly, sensitively and as confidentially as reasonably possible. No one should suffer victimisation or disadvantage for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

What is Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the raising of a genuine concern about suspected wrongdoing or serious risk connected with V-Aid's activities.

Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- criminal activity or breaches of the law;
- fraud, corruption or misuse of charitable funds or assets;
- serious safeguarding concerns;
- serious health and safety risks;
- significant breaches of legal or regulatory requirements;
- abuse of authority;
- deliberate concealment of wrongdoing; or
- other serious misconduct or unethical behaviour.

Whistleblowing will normally concern matters affecting others or the wider public interest rather than an individual personal complaint. Personal grievances or complaints may be more appropriately dealt with through V-Aid's Complaints Policy or other relevant procedure.

This policy may be used by trustees, staff, sessional workers, volunteers and others involved in V-Aid's work. Any statutory whistleblowing protection will depend on the individual's status and the circumstances of the disclosure.

Reporting Your Concern

A concern should normally be raised with the CEO or another appropriate senior person within V-Aid.

Where the concern involves the CEO, or where the person raising the concern does not feel able to report it to the CEO, it may be raised directly with an appropriate trustee.

Safeguarding concerns should also be dealt with in accordance with V-Aid's Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. The person raising the concern should provide as much relevant information as they reasonably can, but they are not expected to prove the allegation before reporting it.

Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm or criminal activity, emergency services or another appropriate authority may be contacted where necessary.

A person who is unsure about raising a concern may seek independent advice, including from Protect or another appropriate professional or regulatory body.

Confidentiality

Concerns will be handled sensitively and as confidentially as reasonably possible.

V-Aid will take reasonable steps to protect the identity of a person raising a concern. However, information may need to be shared where this is necessary to investigate the matter, protect people from harm, obtain professional advice or comply with legal or regulatory requirements.

Where possible, the person raising the concern will be informed if their identity may need to be disclosed.

Anonymous Allegations

V-Aid will consider concerns raised anonymously.

The ability to investigate an anonymous concern may depend on the information available, the seriousness of the matter and whether there are other sources of evidence.

People are encouraged to provide contact details where they feel able to do so, as this may make it easier to clarify information and provide feedback, but anonymous concerns will not automatically be disregarded.

Untrue or Unsubstantiated Allegations

No action will be taken against someone simply because a genuine concern raised in good faith is not ultimately substantiated.

V-Aid will not tolerate knowingly false, malicious or deliberately misleading allegations.

Where there is evidence that a person has deliberately made such an allegation, appropriate action may be considered in accordance with their role and the circumstances.

This distinction is intended to protect people who raise genuine concerns while also protecting individuals and V-Aid from deliberate misuse of the whistleblowing process.