

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Aim and Scope

World Aid Network (WAN) encourages everyone connected with the charity to report any suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the confidence that their concerns will be taken seriously and properly investigated. This policy applies to all trustees, employees, volunteers, contractors and partners of WAN, in the United Kingdom and overseas.

Whistleblowers are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013). The Charity Commission for England and Wales is a "prescribed person" to whom charity-related disclosures may lawfully be made.

2. What Counts as Wrongdoing

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- criminal activity, including fraud, theft, bribery or modern slavery;
- failure to comply with any legal obligation, regulatory requirement or charity law duty;
- safeguarding failures or harm to beneficiaries, children or adults at risk;
- clinical negligence, malpractice or breach of professional standards;
- serious financial mismanagement or misuse of charitable funds;
- data protection breaches or misuse of personal data;
- attempts to conceal any of the above.

3. How to Raise a Concern

- Internal — to the Chair of Trustees in writing or in person.
- Internal alternative — where the concern involves the Chair, to any other independent trustee, or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at safeguarding@worldaidnetwork.org.
- External — to the Charity Commission via gov.uk/complain-about-charity, to the police, to the Information Commissioner's Office or to any other relevant prescribed regulator.

Concerns may be raised anonymously, although named reports allow follow-up and feedback. All disclosures are recorded confidentially.

4. Investigation

The trustees will acknowledge a disclosure within five working days. An impartial investigation will be commissioned, with terms of reference, a timeline and a named investigator. The whistleblower will be kept informed of progress so far as is lawful and practicable. Findings and any remedial action will be reported to the board.

5. Safe Harbour and Non-Retaliation

No person who raises a concern in good faith will suffer dismissal, loss of volunteer status or any other detriment, even if the concern is later shown to be mistaken. Acts of retaliation are themselves treated as serious misconduct.

6. Link to Safeguarding and Serious Incident Reporting

Any whistleblowing report that engages the Safeguarding Policy is referred without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where the matter meets the threshold of a Serious Incident, the trustees will report to the Charity Commission promptly in line with the Commission's guidance "How to report a serious incident in your charity".

7. Records and Review

Whistleblowing records are held securely in line with the Data Protection Policy and retained for a minimum of six years. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, regulator guidance or operational circumstances change.