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WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION FAQ's

What is a whistleblower?

A whistleblower is a person who provides information about a person or an organisation to expose conduct that they consider is illegal, dishonest or unethical.

To "blow the whistle" means revealing to supervisors or managers (or to another appropriate authority) information about wrongdoing so that it can be stopped or prevented from reoccurring. This might include revealing information about someone or a group of people who have:

- acted illegally;
- wasted public money;
- misused public resources;
- falsified records; or
- risked public health, safety or the environment.

All AIM personnel have an obligation to report corruption or serious or systemic misconduct or maladministration to the New South Wales Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) www.icac.nsw.gov.au or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission in Victoria www.ibac.vic.gov.au

You can make a confidential online disclosure or contact the relevant WPO for further guidance.

What is a *Public Interest Disclosure*?

Both NSW and Victoria have Public Interest Disclosure acts [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 \(NSW\)](#) and [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012 Victoria](#) (PID Acts) which establish a scheme to encourage and facilitate appropriate disclosures of public interest information. The PID Acts provides protections to AIM personnel who may be concerned about reprisals.

AIM has developed a new *Whistleblower Policy and Procedure* to provide guidance on disclosure.

If you have a disclosure to make and seek protection from reprisal or victimisation as a consequence, then you should refer to the Policy and use mechanisms that are available to support you.

Please note that disclosures of corruption or serious or systemic misconduct or maladministration made under the *Whistleblower Policy and Procedure* may be required under law to be reported to the ICAC and/or the IBAC.

How does whistleblower protection work?

Whistleblowers play a vital role in exposing misconduct and illegal activity within the workplace. Most whistleblowers are close enough to see wrongdoing because they are a part of the organisation or work area. This closeness to the activity can also make it difficult for someone to report misconduct.

AIM has a *Whistleblower Policy and Procedure* which establishes a report management structure to protect anyone who is aware of wrongdoing but is concerned that there may be consequences for them if they make a report.

The NSW and Victoria Public Interest Disclosure Acts makes it unlawful to treat people who make an appropriate disclosure unfairly because they are whistleblowers. The [Corporations Act 2001 \(Cth\)](#) and [Taxation Administration Act 1953 \(Cth\)](#) provides further whistleblower protection.

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Whistleblower protection laws also allow protected disclosures of some reportable conduct to be made directly to external regulatory or integrity agencies. These agencies will liaise with AIM as appropriate to ensure that the conduct reported is properly investigated.

For more information on whistleblower protection refer to the *Whistleblower Policy and Procedure* or to the Public Interest Disclosure Acts. Further information about reporting wrongdoing is available from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in NSW www.icac.nsw.gov.au or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) in Victoria www.ibac.vic.gov.au

How to make a report

If you become aware of conduct that you reasonably suspect or know is fraudulent, illegal or improper, please report it as soon as possible. Reports should generally be directed to your Manager or the Whistleblower Protection Officer. If you have a concern that you may suffer consequences, please refer to the Whistleblower Reporting Procedures and make a report to one of the Institute's Whistleblower Protection Officers.

The Whistleblower Protection Officers are:

- Executive Dean of Academic Affairs
- Head of People and Culture

For more information about reporting fraud or corruption please refer to the *Whistleblower Policy and Procedure*. You may also have obligations under the [Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 \(NSW\)](#) and/or the [Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 \(Vic\)](#) to report to the relevant authorities.

When making a report under whistleblower provisions, you are expected to act in good faith and reasonably and to ensure the information you disclose is based on facts. An investigation may not be possible if the conduct cannot be substantiated.

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Acts, false or misleading disclosures are not protected and may attract penalties and/or imprisonment.