

Purpose of this policy

Protech Group (Protech) is committed to fostering a culture of honesty, fairness, and integrity. Protech recognises the importance of ensuring a safe, supportive and confidential environment where people feel confident about reporting wrongdoing and are supported and protected throughout the process.

The purpose of Protech's Whistle-blower Policy is to provide very clear guidelines on how people can speak up when they see activity or behaviour that they feel is wrong. In doing so, we aim to:

- encourage full disclosures of wrongdoing;
- help deter wrongdoing, in line with Protech's risk management and governance framework;
- ensure individuals who disclose wrongdoing can do so safely, securely and with confidence that they will be protected and supported;
- ensure disclosures are dealt with appropriately and on a timely basis;
- provide transparency around Protech's framework for receiving, handling and investigating disclosures;
- support Protech's values, code of ethics and professional conduct, and Anti Bribery, Corruption and Conflicts of Interest Policy;
- support Protech's long-term sustainability and reputation, and
- meet Protech's legal and regulatory obligations.

Who the policy applies to

An individual is an eligible whistleblower in relation to Protech if the individual is, or has been, any of the following:

- an officer or director of Protech;
- an employee of Protech;
- an individual who supplies services or goods to Protech (whether paid or unpaid);
- an employee of a person that supplies services or goods to the regulated entity (whether paid or unpaid);
- an individual who is an associate of Protech, and
- a relative or dependent of an individual mentioned above.

The policy applies to all Protech's Group's, entities, worksites and offices. It also applies across all jurisdictions where we operate. If local legislation, regulation, or laws provide a higher level of protection than what is included in this policy, the local legislation will take precedence.

A person reporting wrongdoing qualifies for protection as a whistleblower under the Corporations Act 2001 (Corporations Act) if they are an eligible whistleblower in relation to Protech and:

- they have made a disclosure of information relating to a 'disclosable matter' directly to an 'eligible recipient' or to ASIC or another Commonwealth body prescribed by regulation;
- they have made a disclosure to a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation about the operation of the whistleblower provisions in the Corporations Act; or
- they have made an 'emergency disclosure' or 'public interest disclosure'.

Matters the policy applies to

Protech wants any eligible person to be able to freely report if they witness or know about any past, present or expected future activity, behaviour or state of affairs reasonably considered to be:

- illegal;
- unethical;
- improper;
- an activity that could or will lead to unsafe work practices, environmental or health risks;
- a breach of any legislation or internal policy, including the Code of Conduct;
- an intentional disclosure or misuse of commercially sensitive information;

- any other conduct, deliberate or otherwise, that may cause material financial or non-financial loss to Protech or otherwise be materially detrimental to the interests of Protech;
- in breach of the Corporations Act, and
- concealing reportable conduct.

Protech considers the above to be 'disclosable matters'. Examples of wrongdoing that relates to these disclosable matters may include:

- illegal conduct, such as theft, dealing in, or use of illicit drugs, violence or threatened violence, and criminal damage against property;
- fraud, money laundering or misappropriation of funds;
- offering or accepting a bribe;
- financial irregularities;
- failure to comply with, or breach of, legal or regulatory requirements, and
- engaging in or threatening to engage in detrimental conduct against a person who has made a disclosure or is believed or suspected to have made, or be planning to make, a disclosure.

It is important to highlight that disclosable matters can include conduct that may not involve a Contravention of a particular law. Information that indicates a significant risk to public safety or the stability of, or confidence in, the financial system is also a disclosable matter, even if it does not involve a breach of a particular law.

Additionally, it's important to note that a person reporting a disclosable matter can still qualify for protection as a whistleblower even if their disclosure turns out to be incorrect.

Matters the policy does not apply to

Disclosures that relate solely to personal work-related grievances, and that do not relate to detriment or threat of detriment to the discloser, do not qualify for protection under the Corporations Act or the Whistleblower Policy.

Personal work-related grievances are those that relate to the discloser's current or former employment and have, or tend to have, implications for the discloser personally, but do not:

- have any other significant implications for Protech (or another Company); or
- relate to any conduct, or alleged conduct, about a disclosable matter.
- Specific examples of grievances that may be personal work-related grievances include:
- an interpersonal conflict between the discloser and another employee;
- a decision that does not involve a breach of workplace laws;
- a decision about the engagement, transfer or promotion of the discloser;
- a decision about the terms and conditions of engagement of the discloser; or
- a decision to suspend or terminate the engagement of the discloser, or otherwise to discipline the discloser.
- A personal work-related grievance may still qualify for protection if:
 - it includes information about misconduct, or information about misconduct includes or is accompanied by a personal work-related grievance (mixed report);
 - Protech has breached employment or other laws punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more, engaged in conduct that represents a danger to the public, or the disclosure relates to information that suggests misconduct beyond the discloser's personal circumstances;
 - the discloser suffers from or is threatened with detriment for making a disclosure, or
 - the discloser seeks legal advice or legal representation about the operation of the whistleblower protections under the Corporations Act.

Employees wishing to raise personal work-related grievances or other types of concerns that are not covered by the Whistleblower Policy, are able to do so by following the Dispute Resolution process.

Who can receive a disclosure

An eligible person who knows of information and has reasonable grounds to suspect the information concerns misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances, in relation to Protech will have legal protection under the Act and the Whistleblower Policy if they disclose that information to:

- the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) or another Commonwealth body prescribed by regulation and qualify for protection under the Corporations Act;
- a Company director or manager; or
- the following person authorised by Protech to receive disclosures that may qualify for protection under the Act (Whistleblower Protection Officer):

Natalie Stewart, Chief People and Compliance Officer

Ph: 07 3440 2845

Email: natalie.stewart@protech.com.au

In addition, a disclosure to any officer or senior manager of Protech or a related body corporate, an auditor, or a member of an audit team conducting an audit, of Protech or related body corporate or an actuary of Protech or a related body corporate may qualify for protection.

Disclosures to a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation in relation to the operation of the whistleblower provisions in the Corporations Act are protected, even in the event that the legal practitioner concludes that a disclosure does not relate to a 'disclosable matter'.

Public interest disclosures and emergency disclosures

Disclosures can be made to a journalist or parliamentarian under certain circumstances and qualify for protection. A 'public interest disclosure' is the disclosure of information to a journalist or a parliamentarian, where:

- at least 90 days have passed since the discloser made the disclosure to ASIC or another Commonwealth body prescribed by regulation;
- the discloser does not have reasonable grounds to believe that action is being, or has been taken, in relation to their disclosure;
- the discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that making a further disclosure of the information is in the public interest; and
- before making the public interest disclosure, the discloser has given written notice to the body (i.e. the body to which the previous disclosure was made) that:
 - includes sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure; and
 - states that the discloser intends to make a public interest disclosure. An 'emergency disclosure' is the disclosure of information to a journalist or parliamentarian, where:
 - the discloser has previously made a disclosure of the information to ASIC or another Commonwealth body prescribed by regulation;
 - the discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that the information concerns a substantial and imminent danger to the health or safety of one or more persons or to the natural environment;
 - before making the emergency disclosure, the discloser has given written notice to the body (i.e. the body to which the previous disclosure was made) that:
 - includes sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure;
 - states that the discloser intends to make an emergency disclosure;
 - the extent of the information disclosed in the emergency disclosure is no greater than is necessary to inform the journalist or parliamentarian of the substantial and imminent danger, and



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- A discloser should contact an independent legal adviser before making a public interest disclosure or an emergency disclosure.

How to make a disclosure

If an employee or eligible whistleblower would like to make a report, they have different channels available where they can do this.

- Via Telephone;
- Contact Protech Head Office on 07 3440 2800 and ask to speak with the Whistleblower protection officer;
- Contact Natalie Stewart, Chief People and Compliance Officer;
ph: 07 3440 2845
- ASIC Customer Contact Centre:
1300 300 630 (for calls made within Australia)
+ 61 3 5177 3988 (for calls made outside Australia)
- Via email:
Natalie Stewart email: natalie.stewart@protech.com.au
- Via online at ASI:
<https://asic.gov.au/about-asic/contact-us/how-to-complain/report-misconduct-to-asic/>

Legal protections for disclosers

Identity protection (confidentiality)

Protech respects and protects your identity if you choose to make an anonymous report. You can choose to remain anonymous while making a report, interacting with case managers during an investigation of your report, as well as after your case is closed. At any given time you can identify yourself, but this is your choice and at no point do you need to do this or will you be forced to provide your identity.

If you decide to disclose your identity, Protech will work to protect your identity and will outline and document who in the organisation will know you submitted your report. Protech will also take all steps necessary as outlined in the Whistleblower Policy to ensure you do not suffer any retaliation.

A person cannot disclose the identity of a discloser or information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser (which they have obtained directly or indirectly because the discloser made a disclosure that qualifies for protection).

The exception to this is if a person discloses the identity of the discloser: to ASIC or a member of the Australian Federal Police (within the meaning of the Australian Federal Police Act 1979);

- to a legal practitioner (for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation about the whistleblower provisions in the Corporations Act);
- to a person or body prescribed by regulations, or
- with the consent of the discloser.
- A person can disclose the information contained in a disclosure with or without the discloser's consent if:
 - the information does not include the discloser's identity;
 - Protech has taken all reasonable steps to reduce the risk that the discloser will be identified from the information, and
 - it is reasonably necessary for investigating the issues raised in the disclosure.

It is illegal for a person to identify a discloser, or disclose information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser, outside the above exceptions.

Protection from detrimental acts or omissions



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A person cannot engage in conduct that causes detriment to a discloser (or another person), in relation to a disclosure, if:

- the person believes or suspects that the discloser (or another person) made, may have made, proposes to make or could make a disclosure that qualifies for protection, and
- the belief or suspicion is the reason, or part of the reason, for the conduct.

In addition, a person cannot make a threat to cause detriment to a discloser (or another person) in relation to a disclosure. A threat includes those threats that may be express or implied, or conditional or unconditional. A discloser (or another person) who has been threatened in relation to a disclosure does not have to actually fear that the threat will be carried out.

Detrimental conduct may include the following:

- dismissal of an employee;
- injury of an employee in his or her employment;
- alteration of an employee's position or duties to his or her disadvantage;
- discrimination between an employee and other employees of the same employer;
- harassment or intimidation of a person;
- harm or injury to a person, including psychological harm;
- damage to a person's property;
- damage to a person's reputation;
- damage to a person's business or financial position, or
- any other damage to a person.
- actions that are not considered detrimental conduct are:
 - administrative action that is reasonable for the purpose of protecting a discloser from detriment (e.g. moving a discloser who has made a disclosure about their immediate work area to another office to prevent them from detriment), and
 - managing a discloser's unsatisfactory work performance, if the action is in line with Protech's performance management framework.

Compensation and other remedies

A discloser (or any other employee or person) can seek compensation and other remedies through the courts if:

- they suffer loss, damage or injury because of a disclosure, and
- Protech failed to take reasonable precautions and exercise due diligence to prevent the detrimental conduct.

Disclosers should seek independent legal advice before seeking compensation and other remedies through the courts.

Civil, criminal and administrative liability protection

A discloser is protected from any of the following in relation to their disclosure:

- civil liability (e.g. any legal action against the discloser for breach of an employment contract, duty of confidentiality or another contractual obligation);
- criminal liability (e.g. attempted prosecution of the discloser for unlawfully releasing information, or other use of the disclosure against the discloser in a prosecution (other than for making a false disclosure)), and
- administrative liability (e.g. disciplinary action for making the disclosure).

The protections do not grant immunity for any misconduct a discloser has engaged in that is revealed in their disclosure.

Support and practical protection for disclosers Identity protection (confidentiality)

Protech will ensure it has appropriate measures and/or mechanisms in place for protecting the confidentiality of a discloser's identity.

To reduce the risk that the discloser will be identified from the information contained in a disclosure, Protech will ensure the following:



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- all personal information or reference to the discloser witnessing an event will be redacted; • the discloser will be referred to in a gender-neutral context;
- where possible, the discloser will be contacted to help identify certain aspects of their disclosure that could inadvertently identify them;
- disclosures will be handled and investigated by appropriate staff;
- additionally, Protech will ensure secure record-keeping and information-sharing processes are kept by ensuring:
 - all paper and electronic documents and other materials relating to disclosures will be stored securely;
 - access to all information relating to a disclosure will be limited to those directly involved in managing and investigating the disclosure, and
 - only a restricted number of people who are directly involved in handling and investigating a disclosure will be made aware of a discloser's identity (subject to the discloser's consent) or information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser.
- communications and documents relating to the investigation of a disclosure will not be sent to an email address or to a printer that can be accessed by other staff, and
- each person who is involved in handling and investigating a disclosure will be reminded about the confidentiality requirements, including that an unauthorised disclosure of a discloser's identity may be a criminal offence.

Protection from detrimental acts or omissions

Protech will ensure it has appropriate measures and/or mechanisms in place for protecting disclosers from detriment.

Protech will:

- assess the risk of detriment against a discloser and other persons (e.g. other staff who might be suspected to have made a disclosure), which will commence as soon as possible after receiving a disclosure;
- provide support services (including free and confidential counselling through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in order to assist the discloser, identify and engage strategies to help them minimise and manage stress, time or performance impacts, or other challenges resulting from the disclosure or its investigation;
- take necessary actions for protecting a discloser from risk of detriment—for example, Protech could allow the discloser to perform their duties from another location, reassign the discloser to another role at the same level, make other modifications to the discloser's workplace or the way they perform their work duties, or reassign or relocate other staff involved in the disclosable matter;
- ensure that management are aware of their responsibilities to maintain the confidentiality of a disclosure, address the risks of isolation or harassment, manage conflicts, and ensure fairness when managing the performance of, or taking other management action relating to, a discloser;
- provide information to the discloser on how they can lodge a complaint if they have suffered detriment, and the actions Protech may take in response to such complaints (e.g. the complaint could be investigated as a separate matter by an officer who is not involved in dealing with disclosures and the investigation findings will be provided to the Executive Team), and
- intervene in protecting a discloser if detriment has already occurred—for example, Protech could investigate and address the detrimental conduct, such as by taking disciplinary action, or Protech could allow the discloser to take extended leave, develop a career development plan for the discloser that includes new training and career opportunities, or offer compensation or other remedies.

A discloser may seek independent legal advice or contact regulatory bodies such as ASIC, APRA or the ATO, if they believe they have suffered detriment.

Handling and investigating a disclosure

Protech will need to assess each disclosure to determine whether:

- it qualifies for protection, and



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- a formal, in-depth investigation is required

Investigating a disclosure

It is important for Protech to be transparent with our employees and outline what is the process for us to investigate a report submitted through our whistleblowing channels.

It is important to highlight that without the discloser's consent, Protech cannot disclose information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser as part of its investigation process—unless:

the information does not include the discloser's identity;

- Protech removes information relating to the discloser's identity or other information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser (e.g. the discloser's name, position title and other identifying details), and
- it is reasonably necessary for investigating the issues raised in the disclosure.

Protech may not be able to undertake an investigation if it is not able to contact the discloser (e.g. if a disclosure is made anonymously and the discloser has refused to provide, or has not provided, a means of contacting them).

In practice, Protech may investigate a disclosure by asking the discloser for consent to a limited disclosure (e.g. disclosure to Protech's Whistleblower protection officer or equivalent and the Case Manager or equivalent investigating the disclosure. Protech may also investigate a disclosure by conducting a broad review on the subject matter or the work area disclosed. In addition, it could investigate an anonymous disclosure, even if it cannot get in contact with the discloser, if the discloser has provided sufficient information to Protech and Protech removes information that is likely to lead to the identification of the discloser.

Below, we have provided the different steps a case manager or member of our whistleblowing team will go through once a report is received until the case is closed:

- Report/disclosure (anonymous or otherwise) is received;
- The Whistleblower protection officer receives the report to assess it and confirm its receipt;
- The Whistleblower protection officer will do an initial assessment to confirm it is a valid report and request permission to investigate or assign another appropriate case manager to investigate the disclosure. Certain senior managers might be alerted to the report as part of the reporting process or if they are involved in the investigation in some manner. Any information that could potentially identify an anonymous informant will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be shared, unless Protech is compelled by law;
- The Whistleblower protection officer, may explain that if Protech determines that it will need to investigate a disclosure, Protech will need to determine:
 - the nature and scope of the investigation;
 - the person(s) within and/or outside Protech that should lead the investigation;
 - the nature of any technical, financial or legal advice that may be required to support the investigation, and
 - the timeframe for the investigation.
- The Whistleblower protection officer or case manager will begin their investigation. This can include corresponding with the informant if there is a channel to do this. =;
- The Whistleblower protection officer or case manager will investigate and update management and the informant;
- Once the Whistleblower protection officer or case manager has finalised their investigation and report, management and the informant will be updated, and
- At this point, the Whistleblower protection officer or case manager will hand everything over to management for any subsequent action to take place.

It is important for entities to follow best practice in investigations.



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Investigations need to be objective, fair and independent, while preserving the confidentiality of the investigation. To ensure fairness and independence, investigations need to be independent of the discloser, the individuals who are the subject of the disclosure, and the department or business unit involved. Protech may decide to undertake investigations jointly with an external investigation firm, if required (e.g. when additional specialist skills or expertise are necessary).

Use of 3rd parties

Protech may utilise 3rd parties in our whistleblowing program and strategy. Examples of how we might utilise 3rd parties include:

- Whistleblowing Platform: Protech may use a 3rd party whistleblowing platform to ensure we protect informant's identities and leverage technologies to ensure no one in our organisation can identify them. This platform also allows for 2-way, anonymous communication as well as case management and data protection features;
- Accounting Firms: Protech may use 3rd party accounting firms to do forensic investigating of specific reports that come through our whistleblowing program;
- Investigative Firms: Protech may use specialist investigative firms to investigate specific cases where we do not have the skills needed in-house. They are also used for investigations that we would prefer a 3rd party execute on due to the nature of the report, and
- Human Resources Consultants: Protech may utilise human resources consultants across our business and they might be involved in specific whistleblowing cases, ensuring we use human resource best practices as we assess, investigate, and take action.

What is the process of updating the discloser

As part of our investigative process, Protech will update the informant of the progress of the investigation. These updates can include the following:

- Protech has confirmed the receipt of a report from the Discloser;
- Protech has begun the investigative process;
- The investigation is currently ongoing, and
- The investigation has been closed.

Protech's commitment is that while the investigation is ongoing, the Discloser will be provided with regular updates, if the discloser can be contacted (including through anonymous channels). The frequency and timeframe may vary depending on the nature of the disclosure. They will then be updated once the investigation has been closed.

Protech will strive to provide as much feedback on the investigation as possible. However, due to privacy, there may be certain information that cannot be shared with the Discloser.

Ensuring fair treatment of individuals mentioned in a disclosure

Protech will ensure it has appropriate measures and/or mechanisms in place for ensuring fair treatment of individuals mentioned in a disclosure. This includes:

- disclosures will be handled confidentially, when it is practical and appropriate in the circumstances;
- each disclosure will be assessed and may be the subject of an investigation;
- the objective of an investigation is to determine whether there is enough evidence to substantiate or refute the matters reported;
- when an investigation needs to be undertaken, the process will be objective, fair and independent;
- an employee who is the subject of a disclosure will be advised about the subject matter of the disclosure as and when required by principles of natural justice and procedural fairness and prior to any actions being taken—for example, if the disclosure will be the subject of an investigation, and
- an employee who is the subject of a disclosure may contact Protech's support services (e.g. counselling through EAP).



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Protech may determine the most appropriate time to inform an individual who is the subject of a disclosure about the investigation, provided that the individual is informed before making any adverse finding against them. In some circumstances, informing the individual at an early stage of an investigation may compromise the effectiveness of the investigation, such as when there may be concerns that the individual may destroy information or the disclosure needs to be referred to ASIC, APRA, the ATO or the Federal Police.

Ensuring the policy is easily accessible

Protech will take appropriate steps to ensure that the Whistleblower Policy and Whistleblower Procedure is widely disseminated to and easily accessible by its employees.

Methods for making the Policy and Procedure available to employees may include:

- holding staff briefing sessions and/or smaller team meetings;
- posting the policy on the TMS or other communication platform;
- posting information on noticeboards, and
- incorporating the policy in employee induction information packs and training for new starters.

Roles and responsibilities

Roles

The roles within Protech's Whistleblowing program include the following:

- Program owner/Whistleblowing Protection Officer;
- Case Managers that investigate individual reports, and
- Human Resources who are involved in cases and made aware of specific investigations.

Responsibilities

The following are the responsibilities of each role in Protech's whistleblowing program:

Program owner/whistleblowing protection officer: This individual owns the entire program and is measured on its overall success. This includes employees knowing and understanding the program, an easy process of making a report, investigating reports, as well as being a point of escalation for any concerns or retaliation that has taken place. While this individual reports into the organisation, the result of their work goes directly to the Board of Directors.

Case managers: Case managers are assigned anonymous reports, and their role is to investigate these reports. This includes interacting and asking questions of informants, as well as using the information provided to investigate the report submitted. Their investigation can be internal or external to the organisation depending on what was documented in the report. Their goal is to gather the facts and put forth a final report to management on what happened and what action they feel needs to take place.

People and Culture (internal or external HR consultants): Colleagues from People and Culture may be called upon to provide advice and guidance during any investigation. The whistleblowing program leverages their expertise and acumen to ensure Protech are using HR best practices during investigations and we are treating all employees fairly.

Reviewing and updating the policy and procedure

From time to time, Protech's whistleblowing policy will need to change to keep up with our values, best practices, improvements, as well as legislation and regulations. Any changes to our whistleblowing policy will be communicated with all employees and any relevant stakeholders.

Any changes to Protech's whistleblowing policy must be approved by the:

- Owner of Protech's whistleblowing program



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All changes will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and the Board can comment and provide feedback as necessary. All changes will also be documented in Protech's whistleblowing policy and will be made available to all employees.

Reporting to the Executive Team

The Executive Team is updated every quarter on Protech's whistleblowing program, inclusive of reports, investigations, and results. Reports or investigations carrying an undue amount of risk will be reported to the Executive Team outside of the quarterly updates. The Executive Team at any time can ask about anonymous reports, investigations, as well as the state of Protech's whistleblowing program.

The Executive Team are responsible and accountable for the implementation and effectiveness of Protech's whistleblowing program.

Approval

Marc Meili
Managing Director



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