



# WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY & PROCEDURES

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<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>
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## POLICY AMENDMENTS

This is a working document and subject to amendment. This Policy will be available in English, Hebrew and Arabic.

Any suggestions about this Policy should be directed to the Project Rozana Development Director or Executive Director so changes can be considered. When suggestions are raised, the matter will be raised with the Executive Management Committee (EMC) for consideration. Any amendments or changes to the Policy will be submitted to the Board for endorsement.

The Development Director and Executive Director are responsible for maintaining this document; including updating confirmed changes, informing staff of the changes, and disseminating the latest version across the organisation.

Any changes or amendments involve the following steps:

- Updating the Document Version table on the first page;
- Updating the relevant provision in this manual;
- Replacing the updated version of the manual eg. shared drives, Intranet;
- Printing a hard copy of the updated manual for the office;
- Communicating the changes to all staff; and
- Archiving the old version of manual.

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## 1. PREAMBLE

This policy was written by Project Rozana in Australia. It may be used as a template across all Project Rozana offices. Project Rozana operates five offices registered in each of Australia, USA, Canada, UK and Israel, which are part of the Project Rozana Global Alliance. In this policy, 'Chair' means Chair of Project Rozana International. Unless specified otherwise the 'Board' refers to the board of Project Rozana Australia.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Project Rozana requires all Representatives to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. All Representatives of Project Rozana must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Project Rozana is committed to fostering a culture which encourages raising concerns about unethical and unacceptable conduct and behaviour. We encourage the disclosure of suspected wrongdoing and are committed to providing a safe environment for disclosures to be made without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

Project Rozana will respond in a timely manner to all disclosures of actual or suspected wrongful acts, act confidentially within relevant laws and take steps to protect those personnel who make such disclosures from detrimental treatment.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, a *whistleblower* is a Project Rozana Representative who attempts to make or wishes to make a report in connection with a wrongful act under this policy and who wish to avail themselves of the protection offered by this policy.

A wrongful act includes, but is not limited to:

- Breaches of legal obligations (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of administrative law);
- Criminal offences;
- Mismanagement of funds;
- Actual or suspected fraud;
- Abuse of authority;
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice;
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees;
- Damage to the environment;
- The unauthorised use of organisational funds;
- Possible fraud and corruption;

- Sexual or physical abuse of staff or program recipients
- Other unethical conduct; or
- The concealment of any of the above.

A **Project Rozana Representative** refers to: all individuals and institutions who act on behalf of Project Rozana regardless of whether or not there is a formal legal agreement between them and Project Rozana. This includes, but is not limited to, all directors, employees, contractors, consultants, advisors, volunteers and implementing partners irrespective of which country their role is situated.

## 4. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Encourage the reporting of matters that may cause harm to individuals or financial or nonfinancial loss to Project Rozana or damage to its reputation;
- b) Enable [Project Rozana to deal with reports from whistleblowers in a way that will protect the identity of the whistleblower as far as possible and provide for the secure storage of the information provided;
- c) Establish policies for protecting whistleblowers against reprisal by any person internal or external to the entity;
- d) Provide for the appropriate infrastructure;
- e) Help to ensure Project Rozana maintains the highest standards of ethical behaviour and integrity.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director, Australia is responsible for the implementation of the Whistleblower Policy. All staff and all volunteers are responsible for reporting breaches of general law, organisational policy, or generally recognised principles of ethics to a person authorised to take action on such breaches.

## 6. POLICY

### 6.1 Concerns regarding illegal or corrupt behaviour

As a Project Rozana Representative, you are encouraged to make a report under this policy if you know about or have reasonable grounds to suspect wrongdoing with respect to Project Rozana or any of its partners (“reportable conduct”).

Reportable conduct may include:

- Breaches of legal obligations (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) (Corporations Act), Taxation Administration Act 1953 (Cth), The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth);
- Criminal offences;
- Fraud, negligence, default, breach of trust and breach of duty (“misconduct”), corruption, money laundering, terrorism financing or any other conduct which contravenes our Fraud Prevention Policy and Anti-Terrorism and Money Laundering Prevention Policy;
- Mismanagement or unauthorised use of organisational funds;
- Abuse of authority;
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other personnel;
- Harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying, other than personal work-related grievances (see our Grievance Policy);
- Sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or physical abuse of other personnel, children or vulnerable adults;
- Conduct that is contrary to, or a breach of, our policies (including our Code of Conduct which is available on our website ([www.projectrozana.org](http://www.projectrozana.org)));
- Conduct which may cause financial loss or damage to our reputation or be otherwise detrimental to our interests.

## 7. PROCEDURES

### 7.1 Confidentiality

If a wrongful act or a suspected wrongful act is reported under this policy, Project Rozana will endeavour to protect the whistleblower’s identity. In order not to jeopardise the investigation into the alleged wrongful act, the whistleblower is also expected to keep the fact they have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved confidential. Generally, Project Rozana will not disclose the whistleblower’s identity unless:

- The whistleblower consents to the disclosure;
- The disclosure is required or authorised by law; and/or
- The disclosure is necessary to further the investigation.

Mostly, reports made under this policy will be treated confidentially. However, when a report is investigated it may be necessary to reveal its substance to people such as other Representative, external persons involved in the investigation process and, in appropriate circumstances, law enforcement agencies. At some point it may also be

necessary to disclose the fact and the substance of a report to the person who is the subject of the report.

Project Rozana will take reasonable precautions to store any records relating to an Incident Report of a wrongful act securely and to permit access by authorised personnel only. Unauthorised disclosure of information relating to a report, the identity of the whistleblower or information from which the identity of the whistleblower could be inferred will be regarded seriously and may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

## **7.2 Protection of whistleblowers**

No person who raises genuinely held concerns in good faith under this policy will be dismissed or subjected to any detriment as a result of such action, even if the concerns turn out to be unfounded. Detriment includes, but is not limited to, unwarranted disciplinary action and victimisation in any of the following forms:

- Dismissal;
- Demotion;
- Any form of harassment;
- Discrimination;
- Current or future bias; or
- Threats of any of the above.

Any such retaliatory action will be treated as serious misconduct and will result in disciplinary action which may include dismissal.

If a whistleblower believes retaliatory action has occurred or has been threatened, the whistleblower has the right to make a submission to the Project Rozana Board. The Project Rozana Board is independent of management and will arbitrate the matter.

## **7.3 Whistleblowers implicated in a wrongful act**

Even though a whistleblower may be implicated in the wrongful act, they will not be subjected to any actual or threatened retaliatory action or victimisation in reprisal for making a report under this policy. However, making a report will not necessarily shield the whistleblower from the consequences flowing from that person's involvement in the wrongful act. In some circumstances an admission may be a mitigating factor when considering disciplinary or other action.

## **7.4 False disclosures**

Project Rozana will treat all disclosures of wrongful acts seriously and protect staff who raise concerns in good faith. However, while protection is provided to whistleblowers under this policy, deliberate false reports will not be tolerated and anyone found making a deliberate false claim or report will be subjected to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

## 7.5 Procedure for raising a concern

Project Rozana has an open door policy and suggests that Representatives share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with their supervisor which in most cases will be the Executive Director. Complaints regarding the Executive Director should be directed to the Chairperson.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing and should include full details together with any supporting evidence that may be available. Representatives should state they are using the Whistleblowing Policy and specify whether they wish for their identity to be kept confidential.

Representatives choosing to raise their concerns in writing must use the template Project Rozana Incident Report.

## 7.6 How a disclosure will be handled

All disclosures will be taken seriously, and the following procedure will be used:

(a) The whistleblower must disclose at the outset, any personal interest they may have in the matter. This must include full disclosure of any involvement the whistleblower has had in the matter.

(b) The person to whom it was raised (see 5.5) shall manage the disclosure (the Disclosure Manager).

(c) The Disclosure Manager will identify a suitable individual who will be instructed to conduct an investigation into the allegation. This person may be internal or external to Project Rozana. Project Rozana undertakes to start the investigation within two weeks of the disclosure. The length and scope of the investigation will depend on the subject matter of the disclosure. In most instances, there will be an initial assessment of the disclosure to determine whether there are grounds for a more detailed investigation to take place or whether the disclosure is, for example, based on erroneous information.

(d) The whistleblower may be asked to provide more information during the course of the investigation.

(e) The person investigating the disclosure will prepare an investigation report that will be reviewed by the Disclosure Manager.

(f) Appropriate action will be decided by the Disclosure Manager in discussion with Board. Action may include initiating a disciplinary process, or informing external authorities if a criminal action has been committed, eg fraud or theft. If referral to an external authority is necessary the Board will be advised and the whistleblower will be informed, although if Project Rozana considers it appropriate to do so, such a referral may need to be made without the whistleblower's knowledge or consent.

(g) If it is found that there is not sufficient evidence of a wrongful act, or the actions of the individual(s) are not serious enough to warrant disciplinary action, it may be appropriate for the Disclosure Manager to take a more informal approach to dealing



with the matter. In this circumstance possible outcomes of the investigation could be that:

- The allegation could not be substantiated; or
- Action has been taken to ensure that the problem does not arise again.

(h) If the whistleblower is not satisfied with the response, they have received they have the option to raise the matter directly with a Board member directly.

## **8. CORRECTIVE ACTION AND COMPLIANCE**

Should allegations be found to be unsubstantiated, every effort will be made to address any negative effects on the reputation and morale of personnel involved. As part of the investigation into disclosures made under this policy, recommendations for change will be invited from the investigator to enable Project Rozana to minimise the risk of the recurrence of any wrongful act that has been disclosed. The Disclosure Manager will be responsible for reviewing and implementing these recommendations.

## **9. MANAGEMENT OF A PERSON AGAINST WHOM A REPORT IS MADE**

Generally, the person who is the subject of any report that is investigated, will:

- Be informed as to the substance of the allegations;
- Be given the opportunity to answer the allegations before any investigation is finalised;
- Be informed about the substance of any adverse comments that may be included in any report arising from the investigation before it is finalised; and
- Have their defence set out fairly in any report.

Project Rozana recognises that individuals against whom a report is made must also be supported during the handling and investigation of the alleged wrongful act. Project Rozana will take reasonable steps to ensure the person who is the subject of a report, is treated fairly, particularly during the assessment and investigation process. Support provided by Project Rozana may include referral for counselling. Where a person is named by a whistleblower as being suspected of a possible wrongful act, but preliminary inquiries determine that the suspicion is baseless or unfounded and that no formal investigation is warranted, then the whistleblower will be informed of this outcome and the matter laid to rest. Where an investigation does not substantiate the report, the fact that the investigation has been carried out, the results of the investigation and the identity of the person who is the subject of the report must be handled confidentially.

## 10. RELATED POLICIES

Other organisational policies that should be read in conjunction with this policy include:

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Fraud Prevention Policy

## APPENDIX A - WHISTLEBLOWER REPORT FORM

Please provide the following details for any suspected serious misconduct or any breach or suspected breach of law or regulation that may adversely impact the Company. Please note that you may be called upon to assist in the investigation, if required.

*Note: Please follow the guidelines as laid out in the Whistleblower Policy*

REPORTER'S CONTACT INFORMATION	
(This section may be left blank if the reporter wish to remain anonymous)	
NAME *	
DESIGNATION	
DEPARTMENT/AGENCY	
CONTACT NUMBER	
E-MAIL ADDRESS *	
SUSPECT'S INFORMATION	
NAME *	
DESIGNATION	
DEPARTMENT/AGENCY *	
CONTACT NUMBER	
E-MAIL ADDRESS	
WITNESSES'S INFORMATION (if any)	
NAME	
DESIGNATION	
DEPARTMENT/AGENCY	
CONTACT NUMBER	
E-MAIL ADDRESS	

**COMPLAINT:** *Briefly describe the misconduct / improper activity and how you know about it. Specify what, who, when, where and how. If there is more than one allegation, number each allegation and use as many pages as necessary.*

1. What misconduct / improper activity occurred?\*

2. Who committed the misconduct / improper activity?\*

3. When did it happen and when did you notice it?\*

4. Where did it happen?\*

5. Is there any evidence that you could provide us?

6. Are there any other parties involved other than the suspect stated above?

7. Do you have any other details or information which would assist us in the investigation?

8. Any other comments?

Date:

Signature: