

St Vincent's Group Whistleblower Policy

Version 4: Approved 8 August 2024

Portfolio: Public Affairs, Governance, Risk and Legal

Policy Title: SVHA Group Whistleblower Policy (Policy)

Policy Statement

The St Vincent's Health Australia Group (**SVHA**) is committed to high standards of ethical and values-based behaviour in all of the work we do by promoting and supporting a culture of honest, just and responsible behaviour, corporate compliance and strong corporate governance. SVHA values transparency and accountability across our public, private, and aged care services.

SVHA includes all St Vincent's Health Australia Group Corporate Services & Support Services, the St Vincent's Health Australia Private Hospitals Division, St Vincent's Health Australia Public Hospitals (St Vincent's Health Network Sydney and St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne), the St Vincent's Health Australia Care Services Division and the St Vincent's Health Australia Virtual and Home Division.

For clarity, this Policy is applicable to the following legal entities/ affiliates:

- St Vincent's Health Australia Ltd;
- St Vincent's Healthcare Ltd;
- St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Limited;
- St Vincent's Hospital Sydney Limited;
- St Vincent's Care Services Ltd;
- St Vincent's Private Hospitals Ltd;
- St Vincent's Community Health Ltd;
- St Vincent's Private Hospital Northside Ltd;
- St Vincent's Private Hospital Sydney;
- St Vincent's Clinic.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Establish a framework that will enable the prompt reporting of misconduct and wrongdoing, and ensure that individuals who report wrongdoing can do so safely, securely, and with confidence that they will be protected and supported;
- Ensure that disclosures are received, assessed, investigated and dealt with, confidentially and within reasonable timeframes;

- Embed a process of reporting and continuous improvement to help identify and address vulnerabilities in SVHA's internal control systems; and
- Comply with SVHA's obligations under section 1317A1(5) of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) (**Corporations Act**) to have a whistleblower policy.

Disclosures under Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic)

This Policy does not cover disclosures intended to be made as a public interest disclosure under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012* (VIC) (**PID Act**). A Discloser as defined in this Policy may report concerns about improper conduct or taking detrimental action against a person for making a public interest disclosure relating to St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (public hospital) (**Public Interest Disclosure**) under this Policy or under the PID Act. Individuals who are not recognised as a Discloser under this Policy may be able to make a Public Interest Disclosure directly to an entity that is authorised to receive disclosures under the PID Act. Further information about Public Interest Disclosures can be accessed at [IBAC's website](#).

2. Who is protected under this Policy?

You will be protected under this Policy if:

- (a) you are a person who may raise a concern under this Policy as set out in the 'Who may make a report?' section below;
- (b) you raise a concern about a matter covered by the 'Issues that can be reported' section below; and
- (c) you raise a concern in accordance with the 'How to make a report' section below.

3. Who may make a report?

The terms of this Policy will apply to you if you are a current or former:

- (a) employee (whether full time, part time, casual, temporary), or volunteer worker of SVHA;
- (b) SVHA officer (including a director or secretary);
- (c) supplier, consultant, or contractor of SVHA (including their employees, whether paid or unpaid);
- (d) associate of SVHA as defined under the *Corporations Act* (including a director or secretary of SVHA);
- (e) relative (including a parent, child or sibling), spouse (including a de factor partner), or dependant (including a dependant of the spouse) of any of the above individuals; and/or
- (f) any other person who is an eligible whistleblower in accordance with applicable legislation, including the *Corporations Act*, from time to time.¹

A **Discloser** is any of the above individuals who makes a report in accordance with this Policy.

Disclosures by other individuals

Even if you do not fall into one of the above categories, you are still encouraged to raise any concern you have with SVHA. SVHA will assess the concern raised and take appropriate steps. While SVHA may not

¹ A person may also be a Discloser and eligible for protection under this Policy in accordance with the provisions of the [Taxation Administration Act 1953](#) (Cth)

be able to apply all of the protections set out in this Policy to you in this circumstance, it will look for ways to support all people who raise a concern.

However, individuals who do not fall under any of the above categories who wish to make a disclosure under the PID Act about Public Interest Disclosures relating to St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (public hospital) may disclose directly to an entity that is authorised to receive disclosures under the PID Act.

4. Who qualifies for protection?

A person qualifies for protection under this Policy if:

- (a) they are a Discloser; and they have disclosed a Reportable Matter directly to:
 - (i) an Eligible Recipient, a Disclosure Coordinator, SVHA Principal Officer or the KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline;
 - (ii) the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (**ASIC**), the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (**APRA**), the Commissioner of Taxation or another Commonwealth body prescribed by regulation;
 - (iii) a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation about the operation of the whistleblower protections under the Corporations Act. The protection applies even if the legal practitioner concludes that a disclosure does not relate to a Reportable Matter;
 - (iv) a registered tax agent or BAS agent who provides tax agent or BAS services to SVHA, or any other officer of SVHA who has duties that relate to tax affairs;
 - (v) a parliamentarian or journalist in accordance with the emergency and public interest disclosure provisions (set out at section 5 of this Policy).

5. Issues that can be reported

A **Reportable Matter** means any information about SVHA (including its SVHA Group entity, or an officer or employee of SVHA or SVHA Group entity) that the Discloser has reasonable grounds to suspect concerns misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to SVHA (including its tax affairs).

The following are examples of behaviour or conduct that would be a Reportable Matter:

- (a) breach of laws or regulations;
- (b) information that represents a danger to the public or the financial system;
- (c) conduct that is a breach of any internal policy or code of SVHA;
- (d) criminal activity;
- (e) dishonest, fraudulent or corrupt activity, including bribery, facilitation, payments or other such benefits;
- (f) undisclosed conflicts of interest;
- (g) anti-competitive behaviour;
- (h) conduct endangering or causing substantial risk to health and safety;
- (i) conduct causing damage or substantial risk to the environment;

- (j) mismanagement of SVHA resources including any uneconomical, inefficient or ineffective use of resources or funds;
- (k) unauthorised access, use or disclosure of SVHA confidential information or use or dealings with SVHA's intellectual property;
- (l) conduct likely to damage the financial position or reputation of SVHA;
- (m) misconduct, or an improper state of affairs in relation to the tax affairs of SVHA;
- (n) the dishonest destruction, concealment or alternation of any documents or records in connection with any other Reportable Matter; or
- (o) detrimental conduct against an individual for making or proposing to make a disclosure under this Policy.

You do not have to be sure that any of the above behaviour or conduct has occurred in order to raise a concern (for example, if you only have some information leading to a suspicion, but not all of the details).

Issues that should not be reported under this Policy

This Policy generally does not apply to personal work-related grievances.

A personal work-related Grievance means a grievance about any matter in relation to the Discloser's employment, or former employment, having (or tending to have) implications for the discloser personally but which do not have significant implications for SVHA or relates to any Reportable Matter. This includes:

- (a) an interpersonal conflict between the discloser and another employee;
- (b) a decision relating to the engagement, transfer or promotion of the discloser;
- (c) a decision relating to the terms and conditions of engagement of the discloser; or
- (d) a decision to suspend or terminate the engagement of the discloser, or otherwise to discipline the discloser.

A disclosure involving a personal work-related grievance can still qualify for protection if:

- (e) the disclosure also includes information about misconduct or an improper state of affairs described in this Policy;
- (f) the Discloser suffers from or is threatened with detriment for making a report or proposing to make a report under this Policy; or
- (g) or the matter would have significant implications for SVHA.

Personal work-related grievances should be reported to your line manager or Human Resources (People and Culture) representative, in accordance with the Grievance Resolution Policies. Disclosures about these matters may be protected under other legislation.

Government Policy: A report that principally involves questioning the merits of government policy is not a Reportable Matter

Reasonable Grounds

A Discloser must have reasonable grounds to suspect the information relied on has the required quality for a report to be made under this Policy. A mere allegation with no supporting information is unlikely to be considered as having 'reasonable grounds'. However, a Discloser does not need to prove their allegations or be certain that conduct has occurred. A Discloser will still qualify for protection under this Policy even if their disclosure turns out to be incorrect.

The reporting of false or misleading information is taken very seriously by SVHA. Individuals who deliberately or knowingly report false or misleading information will not be able to access the protections available under this Policy. Disclosers, and individuals who are employees, officers or contractors of SVHA may be subject to disciplinary action. .

6. How to make a report

We encourage Disclosers to make disclosures to one of the Disclosure Coordinators, the SVHA Principal Officer, the External Whistleblowing Hotline and Eligible Recipients in the first instance. This level of reporting will enable SVHA to properly apply the protections and support to the Disclosers, identify and address any wrongdoing as early as possible, and to build trust and confidence in the Policy.

Report to a Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer

A Discloser may make a report directly to a Disclosure Coordinator.

There are currently three Disclosure Coordinators for SVHA, being:

- **The Group General Manager Public Affairs & General Counsel: Pat Garcia, Ph: 0409 225 214, Email: pat.garcia@svha.org.au**
- **The Group Mission Leader: Dr Chris Jacobs-Vandegeer, Ph: 0476 859 525, Email: chris.jacobsvandegeer@svha.org.au**
- **The Divisional CEO, SVHA Private Hospitals Division: Professor Patricia O'Rourke, Ph: 0417 572 593, Email: patricia.orourke@svha.org.au**

Where it is not appropriate to make a report to a Disclosure Coordinator because the report may involve a Disclosure Coordinator, a report may be made directly to the SVHA Principal Officer:

- **Group Chief Executive Officer: Chris Blake, Email: chris.blake@svha.org.au**

A report to a Disclosure Coordinator or the Principal Officer may be made by telephone, e-mail or post marked "Confidential – Addressee Only" and addressed to Level 22, 100 William Street Woolloomooloo NSW 2011.

Report to External Whistleblowing Hotline

A Discloser who does not feel comfortable making a report via the above channels, or where this would not be appropriate for any reason (including because the Disclosure Coordinator and/or SVHA Principal Officer are involved in the concern) may make a report through the KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline. The service allows for anonymous reporting and is available 24 hours a day. Reports to the KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline are secure and confidential. Reports may be made to this service using the following methods:

Telephone	1800 500 965
Email	faircall@kpmg.com.au
Post	Addressed to "The <i>FairCall</i> Manager KPMG Forensic PO Box H67 Australia Square Sydney NSW 1213"
Facsimile	+61 2 9335 7466

Report to an Eligible Recipient

If a Discloser is unable to use any of the above channels for reporting, a report can be made to an Eligible Recipient within SVHA. Eligible Recipients in relation to an SVHA Group entity are any:

- (h) officers, directors and senior managers. For the purpose of this policy senior managers are defined as the members of the SVHA Executive Leadership Team;
- (i) internal or external auditors (including a member of an audit team conducting an audit) or actuary of SVHA or SVHA Group entity;
- (j) (for tax-related reports only) a registered tax agent or BAS agent who provides tax agent services or BAS services to the entity, or any other employee or officer of the company who has functions or duties that relate to the tax affairs of the company.

Reports to an Eligible Recipient:

- must be made in person, telephone or in writing by email marked "Confidential"; and
- the Discloser must first inform the Eligible Recipient that they wish to make a report under this Policy, so that the Eligible Recipient can make appropriate arrangements in relation to confidentiality.

An Eligible Recipient may direct the Discloser to make the report to a Disclosure Coordinator, if they consider it appropriate in the circumstances.

Regulatory bodies and other external parties

A Discloser may also report a Reportable Matter directly to an external regulator such as ASIC, APRA, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) or any other Commonwealth regulatory body and qualify for protection under the Corporations Act.

Journalist or Parliamentarian

A Discloser may make a public interest disclosure or an emergency disclosure to a journalist (as defined by the Corporations Act) or a Member of Parliament of the Commonwealth, the Parliament of a State or the Legislature of a Territory (parliamentarian) in certain circumstances.

A Discloser can make an emergency disclosure where:

- (k) the matter has previously been reported to ASIC, APRA or a prescribed Commonwealth body in accordance with the Corporations Act or regulation;
- (l) 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;
- (m) the Discloser provides written notice to the persons or body to whom the initial disclosure was made under this Policy, that includes sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure and states that the Discloser intends to make an emergency disclosure; and
- (n) the extent of the information disclosed in the emergency disclosure is not greater than is necessary to inform the journalist or parliamentarian of the substantial and imminent danger.

In addition to emergency disclosures, a Discloser may also make a **public interest disclosure** to a parliamentarian or journalist where:

- (o) at least 90 days have passed since the matter was reported to ASIC, APRA or a prescribed Commonwealth body in accordance with the Corporations Act or regulation;
- (p) the Discloser does not have reasonable grounds to believe that action is being, or has been taken, in respect of that disclosure;

- (q) the Discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that making a further disclosure of the information is in the public interest;
- (r) the Discloser provides written notice to the person or body to whom the initial disclosure was made under this Policy, that includes sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure and states that the discloser intends to make a public interest disclosure; and
- (s) the extent of the information disclosed in the public interest disclosure is no greater than is necessary to inform the recipient of the Reportable Matter.

Disclosers who make disclosures to parliamentarians or journalists that do not meet the conditions of an emergency or public interest disclosure do not qualify for the protections set out in this Policy in respect of those disclosures.

Report to other Bodies

SVHA encourages employees and other Disclosers to make a report to SVHA in the first instance or the KPMG FairCall Hotline, so that it can identify and address wrongdoing as early as possible. However, in the case of wrongdoing or misconduct relating to St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (public hospital) the Discloser may choose to make a report under the PID Act.

Further information

If you would like further information before making a report, please contact Lorraine Yii, Legal Counsel (email: lorraine.yii@svha.org.au), or the KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline via 1800 500 965 or faircall@kpmg.com.au

7. Content of a Report

Information to include in a Report

For a report to be investigated, it must contain sufficient information to form a reasonable basis for investigation. For this reason, Disclosers should provide as much information as possible, in any form, about the Reportable Matter

By way of example, information could include (but must not necessarily include):

- (a) the date, time and location;
- (b) the name(s) of person(s) involved and possible witnesses to the events;
- (c) evidence of the events (e.g., documents, emails etc); and
- (d) steps the Discloser or another person may have already taken to report the matter or to resolve the concern.

8. Anonymity

A Discloser may elect to make a report anonymously and still be afforded the confidentiality protections as set out in this Policy.

A Discloser can choose to remain anonymous while making a disclosure, over the course of the investigation and after the investigation is finalised. SVHA will protect the anonymity of Disclosers by:

- (a) allowing for anonymous disclosures to be made;
- (b) allowing Disclosers to use anonymised email addresses; and
- (c) allowing Disclosers to adopt a pseudonym for the purpose of their disclosure (for example, where the Discloser's identity is known by the person to whom they made the report, but they do not wish to disclose their identity to others).

Disclosers are encouraged (but not required) to disclose their identity when making a report. Providing your identity will assist in SVHA:

- (a) monitoring your wellness and protections against Detriment;
- (b) investigating your report and obtaining further information as is necessary to complete the investigation; and
- (c) taking action as a result of your disclosure.

Even where a Discloser identifies themselves and consents to the disclosure of their identity, reports will be handled confidentially, and the Discloser's identity may only be disclosed where there is a need to know that information.

If the Discloser maintains their anonymity or has not consented to the disclosure of their identity, the matter may still be referred for investigation, but the investigator will be required to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk that the Discloser will be identified as a result of the investigation. The fulsomeness of the investigation may be limited if the investigator is unable to investigate certain issues without disclosing the Discloser's identity.

9. Assessment and Investigation of Reports

Assessment of Reports

Reports received under this Policy by the External Whistleblowing Hotline and Eligible Recipients are where appropriate, passed to a Disclosure Coordinator or the Principal Officer for assessment and investigation. If the Discloser has not consented to the disclosure of his or her identity:

- (a) the Discloser's identity will not be disclosed when the information is passed on to a Disclosure Officer / the SVHA Principal Officer; and
- (b) all persons involved in handling the report must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk that the Discloser will be identified. These steps may include, for example, ensuring that no identifying information is included in any written record of the report, ensuring that the information is kept confidential and is only accessible to those who have a need to know the information, and not taking any steps to try and identify the Discloser.

The Disclosure Coordinator (or the SVHA Principal Officer) is responsible for assessing all reports made under this Policy and will determine whether the report concerns a Reportable Matter in accordance with this Policy.

If the report concerns a Reportable Matter, the Disclosure Coordinator or SVHA Principal Officer will assess whether a formal investigation of the matter is possible and/or is required, and whether the matter may be investigated or confirmed in other ways, having regard to the nature of the report (including the amount of information provided). An investigation may not be possible or progressed fulsomely if the Discloser cannot be contacted for further information or if additional details cannot be obtained (for example, if a report is made anonymously and no contact details are provided).

Appointment of an Investigator

While making a report under this Policy does not guarantee that it will be formally investigated, if a formal investigation is deemed by the Disclosure Coordinator or SVHA Principal Officer to be appropriate and necessary in the circumstances, the Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer will appoint an investigator to investigate the matter. The investigator can be:

- (a) an employee of SVHA with the required skills and experience;
- (b) an external independent resource; or
- (c) another suitably qualified person,

who, in whichever case, is not implicated directly or indirectly in the report.

Conduct of the investigation

To the extent that they include sufficient detail and are assessed as requiring investigation, reports of Reportable Conduct made under this Policy will be investigated as soon as possible after the matter has been reported. The investigator will be required to use his or her best endeavours to conduct the investigation in a timely, thorough, confidential, objective and fair manner and as is reasonable and appropriate having regard to the nature of the Reportable Matter and all of the circumstances. The timeframe for an investigation will vary depending on the nature of the allegations, the number of individuals to be interviewed (including any witnesses), and any other relevant matters.

Where an investigation is undertaken, the objective will be to determine whether the evidence substantiates the issues reported. Investigations will be impartial of both the Discloser and the person(s) or business unit(s) reported.

All investigations will seek to gather a full and detailed description of the allegations which form the basis of the report, the facts surrounding and context to the allegations, and the evidence that supports, or does not support, the allegations. The investigation should ensure that (subject to confidentiality considerations):

- (a) the relevant parties to the matter are heard, and all of their statements and submissions are considered;
- (b) other available and relevant evidence is collected;
- (c) reasonable inquiries are made and followed up; and
- (d) statements, submissions and other evidence are verified as appropriate.

Findings will be made on the balance of probabilities and it will be either that the allegation(s) are:

- (a) fully substantiated;
- (b) partially substantiated (for example, if one but not all allegations are substantiated);
- (c) not able to be substantiated;
- (d) unsubstantiated; or
- (e) disproven.

The method for documenting and reporting the findings of an investigation will depend on the nature of the report. Any report prepared in relation to an investigation may be provided to a decision-maker in relation to the matter who may be the SVHA Principal Officer (unless the SVHA Principal Officer is implicated in the report, in which the decision-maker will be a nominated member of the SVHA Board) and remains the property of SVHA. It will not be provided to a person who makes a report or any other person to whom a report relates.

Communication with the Discloser

Where appropriate, the Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer will update the Discloser on the progress of the investigation, subject to the privacy and confidentiality considerations of the person(s) against whom the allegations or complaint is made. The frequency and timeframe of any updates may vary depending on the nature of the disclosure. A Discloser must not disclose and must keep confidential any details of the investigation, its progress or outcome.

While SVHA in its absolute discretion may communicate the findings of any investigation to a Discloser, it may not always be appropriate to provide details of the outcome having regard to confidentiality and privacy considerations. If appropriate, the persons the subject of the investigation and findings will also be informed of the findings of any investigation.

Investigation outcomes

The outcome of the investigation may result in SVHA taking appropriate disciplinary action in its discretion on officers and employees up to and including dismissal without notice. If an investigation finds that criminal activity is likely to have occurred, the matter may also be reported to the police or the appropriate regulatory authorities.

10. Protections and support for Disclosers

Confidentiality

SVHA's priority is to support and protect Disclosers under this Policy including by observing the confidentiality protections set out in this Policy.

In particular, if you are a Discloser (or one of their relatives, dependants or spouse) and you raise a concern that is reportable under this Policy, your identity (and any information that SVHA has because of your report that could likely lead to your identification) will only be disclosed if:

- (a) you give your consent;
- (b) the disclosure is required or permitted by law (for example, disclosure by SVHA to ASIC, APRA or member of the Australian Federal Police; or a lawyer to obtain legal advice, or to a third party to conduct an investigation);
- (c) in the case of information likely to identify you, it may be reasonably necessary to disclose this information for the purposes of an investigation, but your identity will not be disclosed and all reasonable steps will be taken by SVHA to prevent someone from identifying you; or
- (d) it is reasonably necessary to do so for the purposes of investigation provided your identity is not disclosed at all.

Reports received will be treated sensitively and seriously. To maintain confidentiality of a report, SVHA:

- (a) limits access to information relating to your report;
- (b) carefully reviews and potentially de-identifies certain aspects of your report as appropriate;
- (c) uses tools and platforms that allow reports to be made anonymously.

Where necessary, your consent may be required to enable the limited sharing within SVHA or its nominated service providers of your identity to assist SVHA to protect and support you in relation to your disclosure and facilitate SVHA in investigating, reporting and taking action arising as a result of your disclosure. Please be aware that if you do not consent to the limited sharing of your identity and this information is needed, this may limit SVHA's ability to progress your report and to take any action.

You are encouraged to raise with SVHA any issue you experience as a result of making a report (including if you believe or suspect that there has been a breach of your confidentiality) directly with KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline or Lorraine Yui, Legal Counsel (email: lorraine.yui@svha.org.au).

Information contained in a disclosure can be disclosed with or without the Discloser's consent if:

- (a) the information does not include the Discloser's identity;
- (b) SVHA has taken all reasonable steps to reduce the risk that the Discloser will be identified from the information; and
- (c) it is reasonably necessary for investigating the issues raised in the report.

To maintain confidentiality of the Discloser's identity and the investigation process, SVHA will:

- (a) ensure personal information or references to the Discloser's identity are redacted in all investigation and reporting documents;

- (b) refer to the Discloser in a gender-neutral context;
- (c) ensure that all files (whether paper or electronic) relating to reports under this Policy are kept in a secure filing system that can only be accessed by the SVHA Principal Officer, the Disclosure Coordinators and investigators. All printed material will be kept in files that are clearly marked as a 'CONFIDENTIAL-Whistleblower Protection Matters' and warn that unauthorised access and dissemination of information concerning a report of Reportable Matter under this Policy is not permitted and may result in disciplinary and/or legal consequences. All electronic files produced will be stored securely and will be provided with password protection.

Protection from detrimental acts or omissions

It is an offence to engage in, or threaten to engage in, conduct which causes Detriment to a Discloser because they have made, propose to make, or are suspected to have made, a report under this Policy.

Detriment includes (without limitation):

- (a) dismissal of an employee;
- (b) injury of an employee in their employment;
- (c) alteration of an employee's position or duties to his or her disadvantage;
- (d) discrimination, harassment or intimidation;
- (e) harm or injury (including psychological harm);
- (f) damage to a person's property, reputation, business or financial position, or any other damage; and/or
- (g) threats to carry out any of the above.

Any actual or threatened Detriment will be treated as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment. In some circumstances, this conduct can also attract civil and/or criminal penalties.

Detriment does not include administrative action that is reasonable to protect a Discloser from Detriment (for example a temporary transfer), or reasonable management action in relation to managing an employee's work performance or misconduct if the action is in line with SVHA's management framework.

SVHA can take a number of steps to protect Disclosers from Detriment arising from making a report of Reportable Matters by:

- (a) conducting a risk assessment of the disclosure to manage the risk of detriment to the Discloser;
- (b) monitoring and managing the behaviour of other employees;
- (c) implementing investigation processes where appropriate;
- (d) where applicable, putting in place temporary work arrangements as required to allow the Discloser to perform their duties at work without being potentially exposed to Detriment (eg by changing reporting lines or moving the Discloser's desk to another location);
- (e) taking disciplinary action where appropriate for conduct that amounts to Detriment or breaches the confidentiality requirements under this Policy; and
- (f) offering access to support for Disclosers, as outlined at section 11 of this Policy.

SVHA will look for ways to support individuals who raise a concern, but it will not be able to provide non-employees with the same type and level of support that it provides to its employees. Where this Policy cannot be applied to non-employees, SVHA will still seek to offer as much support as reasonably practicable.

If a Discloser believes they have suffered or may suffer Detriment because they have made a report under this Policy, or if any person has threatened to cause Detriment to them or another person in connection with a report, they should immediately report the matter to a Disclosure Coordinator.

11. Support for Disclosers

Support available for Disclosers includes:

- (a) connecting the Discloser with access to the Employee Assistance Program (**EAP**);
- (b) appointing an independent support person from the human resources team to deal with any ongoing concerns they may have; and/or
- (c) connecting the Discloser with third party support providers such as Lifeline (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636).

Use of these support services by a Discloser may require the Discloser to consent to disclosure of their identity or information that is likely to lead to the discovery of their identity.

12. Fair Treatment of Persons implicated in a Disclosure

Any reports that implicate an employee or officer of SVHA must be kept confidential to comply with SVHA's legal obligations. Information should only be disclosed to those persons who have a need to know the information for the proper performance of their functions under this Policy, or for the proper investigation of the report.

No action will be taken against employees or officers who are implicated in a report under this Policy until an investigation has determined whether any allegations against them are substantiated. However, an employee or officer who is implicated may be temporarily stood down on full pay whilst an investigation is in process, or may be temporarily transferred to another office, department or workplace, if appropriate in the circumstances. Any such stand-down or temporary transfer may only continue for the duration of the investigation. If the investigation determines that the allegations are not substantiated, the employee or officer will be immediately reinstated to full duties.

Where appropriate, and subject to confidentiality and other relevant considerations, the subject(s) of the report will be informed of the allegations made against them and will have an opportunity to respond as and when required in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

Support available for persons implicated in a report under this Policy includes:

- (a) connecting the person with access to the EAP; and/or
- (b) appointing an independent support person from the human resources team to deal with any ongoing concerns they may have connecting the person with third party support providers such as Lifeline (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636).

13. Reporting to the Board

The SVHA Principal Officer will report to the Board Audit and Risk Committee of SVHA on a quarterly basis regarding the effectiveness of this Policy, and SVHA's whistleblowing processes, inclusive of summary information relating to reports, investigations and results. All such reports will be de-identified and shall ensure confidentiality of Disclosers as required. The Board at any time can ask about the state of SVHA's whistleblowing program.

If a report under this Policy relates to serious misconduct, material incidents and/or involve a serious risk to SVHA, a Disclosure Officer or the Principal Officer may immediately notify the Board.

14. Review

SVHA will review this Policy, and its whistleblowing processes, on a periodic basis to ensure that it is operating effectively, and appropriately reflects how whistleblowing matters are managed by SVHA.

The SVHA Principal Officer will ensure reporting obligations relating to Public Interest Reportable Matters are complied with.

15. Breach of this Policy

Where you are concerned that a breach of this Policy has occurred or will occur, you should report your concern to the KPMG FairCall Whistleblowing Hotline or Lorraine Yii, Legal Counsel (email: lorraine.yii@svha.org.au). A breach of this Policy may be regarded as misconduct, which may lead to disciplinary action (including up to termination of employment or engagement). An individual may also be exposed to criminal and civil liability for a breach of legislation.

16. Effect of Policy

This Policy is non-contractual and does not form part of any employment agreements with employees or contract of engagement. This Policy does not bind SVHA and does not create any obligation on the part of SVHA toward an employee.

17. Policy administration and amendments

This Policy is subject to ongoing review and may be amended, replaced or revoked at any time by SVHA in its absolute discretion. Any questions relating to the scope, interpretation, or operation of this Policy should be directed to Lorraine Yii, Legal Counsel (email: lorraine.yii@svha.org.au).

18. Availability of this Policy

A copy of this Policy will be made available on SVHA's intranet for internal staff and will also be made publicly available for the reference of other stakeholders at SVHA's website – www.svha.org.au.

19. Communication

In addition to making this Policy accessible on its internet website, SVHA will distribute communications in relation to this Policy to employees on a regular basis.

Review officer:

Group General Manager Public Affairs & General Counsel

Date introduced: 17 December 2014

Last review date: 8 August 2024

Next review date: August 2027 or as required following legislative amendments

Approval:

Approved by the SVHA Board on 8 August 2024.

Policy ID: D/2015/37428[v4]

Annexure A

Roles and responsibilities

<p>SVHA Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring appropriate governance mechanisms and framework are in place to achieve the objectives of this Policy; Reviewing the summary of reports relating to reports of Reportable Matters to ensure SVHA has appropriate controls in place to prevent, detect and respond to risks associated with Reportable Matters; and Overseeing, reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of this Policy.
<p>SVHA Principal Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointing appropriate SVHA Disclosure Coordinators; Determining the steps required to be taken following receipt of a report under this Policy (whether received directly or through a Disclosure Coordinator), including where necessary referring and/or reporting matters to external authorities; Taking appropriate disciplinary, remedial or other managerial action based on the outcome of an investigation; Reviewing this Policy regularly for effectiveness; Implementing organisational change identified as necessary as a result of any report under this Policy; Keeping the Board apprised of the investigation of reports under this Policy; and Ensuring that there are systems in place across all SVHA entities, services, facilities and offices to support and protect Disclosers who make a report under this Policy. <p>The SVHA Principal Officer may obtain such advice (including legal advice) as they consider necessary in connection with carrying out their role under this Policy. Such advice may be from persons within SVHA or from persons external to SVHA.</p>
<p>Disclosure Coordinators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving, recording and impartially assessing and determining the nature of all reports under this Policy and then raising the Disclosure with the SVHA Principal Officer; Appointing an investigator to investigate a report received under this Policy; Coordinating all matters relating to a report under this Policy by liaising with the investigator; Developing and implementing plans to minimise the risk of reprisal against a Discloser; Assessing, determining and (as applicable) organising the welfare needs of persons implicated or involved in a report under this Policy; Providing updates and reports to the SVHA Principal Officer in relation to reports under this Policy; Coordinating any annual or other reporting requirements under applicable legislation; Liaising with any external authorities as delegated by the Principal Officer; Ensuring all documentation and records relating to reports under this Policy are maintained in accordance with this Policy and any relevant regulatory requirements (as applicable);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that each Discloser is provided with a copy of this Policy and a written acknowledgement of their Disclosure; and Providing appropriate updates / feedback to the Discloser about the progress of the matter.
Investigator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrying out an investigation of the relevant report which is impartial and otherwise in accordance with this Policy; Ensuring that the fact of the report and the investigation, the identity of the Discloser (where suspected or known) and the identity of all others concerned with the report remains appropriately confidential at all times; and Recording all relevant information, preparing a detailed report of the investigation and delivering a report as appropriate to the SVHA Principal Officer and the relevant SVHA Disclosure Coordinator.
Group Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that this Policy is effectively communicated to all staff; and Promptly referring all reports of Reportable Matters and all information received in relation to such Disclosures to an SVHA Disclosure Coordinator whilst maintaining obligations in relation to anonymity and confidentiality.
Managers and Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that this Policy is accessible by all staff under their supervision and to maintain general awareness of this Policy; Understand their own obligations if they receive a disclosure, including to promptly refer all reports of Reportable Matters and all information received in relation to such reports to an SVHA Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer, whilst maintaining obligations in relation to anonymity and confidentiality; Not commencing any inquiry/ investigation into a report unless required to do so by an SVHA Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer; Supporting Disclosers and those involved in a report or an investigation (where known) whilst protecting and maintaining confidentiality; and Making a report to an SVHA Disclosure Coordinator or the SVHA Principal Officer if they believe any individual has been subjected to or threatened with Detriment because of making or proposing to make a report under this Policy.
All individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report any information that the Discloser believes on reasonable grounds indicates misconduct or improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to an SVHA entity; Provide all relevant information to assist in the assessment and/or investigation of a report under this Policy; Keep any information reported under this Policy, including the fact that a report has been made, strictly confidential, and only discuss such information with a Disclosure Coordinator or the Principal Officer; Refrain from taking or threatening any Detriment against any Discloser or individual who may be involved in a report made under this Policy; Read and understand all communications issued by SVHA in relation to this Policy; Where aware that a person is a Discloser, support that person and maintain any information known about the report and the individuals involved in confidence except to the extent that this Policy or the law requires otherwise; and



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediately make a report to a Disclosure Coordinator, if they believe any Discloser (or other relevant person) has been threatened or subjected to Detriment for making a report under this Policy. |
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Annexure B

Legal and compliance considerations:

- The *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth)
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (VIC)
- ASIC Regulatory Guide 270: Whistleblower policies
- AS 8001 Fraud and Corruption Control
- AS 8004 Whistleblower Protection Programs for Entities

Relevant references:

Internal

- SVHA Code of Conduct
- SVHA Fraud Control Policy
- SVHA Ethics Policy

VIC:

- What is a public interest disclosure? | IBAC
- www.ibac.vic.gov.au