

Speak Up Policy (Incl. Whistleblower Policy)

1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

WESTS ASHFIELD (“**the Club**”) strives to operate with a culture of ethical and appropriate corporate behaviour in all our business activities. This includes conducting its business with integrity, honesty and fairness and complies with all relevant laws, regulations, codes and corporate standards as per the Club’s Code of Conduct.

This purpose is supported by:

- ensuring that the Club has sound procedures to allow all workers and their families to identify and report genuine concerns about illegal conduct or any improper state of affairs pertaining to the Club, without fear of reprisals; and
- ensuring all employees and officers of the Club are aware of the protections available under this policy and Whistleblower Laws.

In this policy:

Discloser(s) refers to the persons eligible to make a disclosure protected by Whistleblower Laws. These persons are identified in section 6 below.

Protected Matters refers to the types of matters outlined at section 5 below, which are protected by Whistleblower Laws and the terms of this policy.

Whistleblower Laws refers to the protections contained in Part 9.4AAA of the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Whistleblowing Officer is the Group Executive Manager (HR - People & Culture) – Michelle Nielsen.

2. COMMENCEMENT AND SCOPE

This policy will commence on 1st June 2020. It replaces all other policies dealing with whistleblowers and Whistleblower Laws.

This policy applies to all Disclosers, as defined in section 6 below.

The policy is not intended to create any contractually binding obligation on the Club and does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract for engagements with the Club.

3. TYPES OF DISCLOSURES PROTECTED BY WHISTLEBLOWER LAWS

A disclosure is protected by Whistleblower Laws if:

- (a) the disclosure relates to Protected Matters;
- (b) the information is disclosed by a Discloser identified in section 5 below; and
- (c) the disclosure is made to one of the persons identified in section 6 below or section 7 below (provided the pre-requisites in section 7 have been satisfied).

All of the above 3 conditions must be satisfied for a disclosure to be protected by Whistleblower Laws.

4. PROTECTED MATTERS

The types of disclosures which are protected are those where the Discloser has reasonable grounds to suspect that the information disclosed concerns misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances, in relation to the Club or its related bodies corporate.

These types of Protected Matters would include concerns that the Club, its related bodies or employees or officers of the Club or related bodies corporate, have engaged in conduct that:

- (a) constitutes a contravention of the *Corporations Act 2001*, the *ASIC Act*, the *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993*, the *Banking Act 1959* or any insurance or life insurance statutes;
- (b) constitutes an offence against a law of the Commonwealth which is punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more; and/or
- (c) represents a danger to the public or the financial system.
- (d) represents a danger to public health under COVID-19 public health guidelines.

The disclosure of information related to a personal work-related grievance is not generally protected by Whistleblower Laws. A personal work-related grievance relates to information where:

- (a) the information concerns a grievance in relation to the Discloser's employment or former employment which has implications for the Discloser personally; and
- (b) the information does not have significant implications for the Club that do not relate to the Discloser; and
- (c) the information does not concern conduct or alleged conduct referred to in the three examples cited at sections (a) to (c) earlier above.

Examples of personal work-related grievances include interpersonal conflicts between the Discloser and other employees, decisions regarding engaging, transferring or promoting a Discloser and decisions to

discipline a Discloser or suspend or terminate the engagement of a Discloser.

5. WHO MAY MAKE DISCLOSURES ABOUT PROTECTED MATTERS?

Each of the following persons may make a protected disclosure:

- (a) Former and current employees and officers of the Club;
- (b) Former and current contractors and suppliers of goods or services to the Club (including these entities employees); and
- (c) the Club related bodies corporate (and their directors/secretaries), including former employees and officers of these related bodies corporate as well as their relatives and dependents,
including a relative or dependent of an individual mentioned in paragraphs 5.a – 5.c above.

There is no requirement for a Discloser to identify themselves to be protected by Whistleblower Laws. That is, protected disclosures may be made anonymously.

6. WHO CAN A PROTECTED MATTER BE DISCLOSED TO?

In order to be protected by Whistleblower Laws, the disclosure of a Protected Matter must be made to:

- (a) The Club's external and independent hotline provider, Core Integrity;
- (b) ASIC or APRA;
- (c) a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or representation in relation to Whistleblower Laws;
- (d) an officer or senior manager of the Club or its related bodies corporate;
- (e) an auditor or member of an audit team conducting an audit on the Club or its related bodies corporate;
- (f) an actuary of the Club; and/or
- (g) the Whistleblowing Officer.

A "senior manager" is a person who:

- makes, or participates in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the business of the Club; or
- has the capacity to significantly affect the Club's financial standing.

7. DISCLOSURES TO POLITICIANS AND JOURNALISTS

A disclosure of a Protected Matter to a journalist or member of State or Federal Parliament will be protected by Whistleblower Laws only if it qualifies for the public interest requirements or emergency requirements outlined below.

Public interest disclosures

A disclosure of Protected Matters to a member of State or Federal Parliament or journalist will be protected by Whistleblower Laws if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

- (a) the Discloser has previously made a disclosure of the information pursuant to this policy;
- (b) at least 90 days have passed since the previous disclosure was made;
- (c) the Discloser does not have reasonable grounds to believe that action is being or has been taken to address the previous disclosure;
- (d) the Discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that making a further disclosure of the information to a member of Parliament or journalist would be in the public interest;
- (e) the Discloser has given the Club written notification that identifies the previous disclosure and states that the Discloser intends to make a public interest disclosure; and
- (f) the extent of information disclosed is no greater than is necessary to inform the journalist or member of Parliament of the relevant misconduct or improper state of affairs.

Emergency disclosures

A disclosure of Protected Matters to a journalist or member of State or Federal Parliament will be protected by Whistleblower Laws if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

- (a) the Discloser has previously made a disclosure of the information pursuant to this policy;
- (b) 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;
- (c) the Discloser has given the Club written notification that identifies the previous disclosure and states that the Discloser intends to make an emergency disclosure; and
- (d) the extent of information disclosed is no greater than is necessary to inform the journalist or member of Parliament of the substantial and imminent danger.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Where a disclosure is protected by Whistleblower Laws, the Laws prohibit persons from disclosing the identity of a Discloser or disclosing information that is likely to lead to the identification of the Discloser.

Persons may only disclose the identity of a Discloser with the Discloser's consent or to ASIC, APRA, the Australian Federal Police or a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice about the Whistleblower Laws.

Persons may also disclose the existence of the Protected Matters (without disclosing the identity of the Discloser) to the extent necessary for the matters to be investigated, provided all reasonable steps are taken to reduce the risk that the Discloser's identity can be discovered. These disclosures may include disclosures to:

- the Group Chief Executive Officer or a Group Executive;
- delegates to HR to make inquiries or to conduct investigations or order external investigations as is deemed appropriate; and
- disclosures to respondents to complaints ensures that the person/s against whom allegations are made are given the opportunity to respond to any allegations.

Any breach of these confidentiality protections attracts significant fines for both individuals and companies.

9. IMMUNITY FOR DISCLOSER

If a Discloser makes a disclosure protected by Whistleblower Laws, the Discloser cannot be subject to any civil or criminal liability for making the disclosure and cannot be subject to any contractual breach or other civil claim on the basis of the disclosure.

No contract of employment or contract for services can be terminated on the basis that a protected disclosure constitutes a breach of contract.

10. VICTIMISATION PROHIBITED

Whistleblower Laws prohibit any person or Club from:

- (a) engaging in any conduct that causes detriment to any person because that person (or another person) made a disclosure about a Protected Matter pursuant to Whistleblower Laws; or
- (b) carrying out any threats to cause detriment to any person (whether express or implied threats) because that person (or another person) made a disclosure about a Protected Matter pursuant to Whistleblower Laws.

Where a person or Club engages in breaches of these protections, significant fines apply and persons who are adversely affected may obtain compensation orders from a Court in relation to any detriment caused.

Persons who have their contracts terminated in contravention of these protections may also have their contracts reinstated by a Court.

11. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING PROTECTED MATTERS

Persons may disclose Protected Matters by either of the following steps:

1. Submit a written complaint or report and any relevant documentation on any Protected Matters to the person identified in Section 6 of this policy who is the Discloser's relevant manager or the Club contact. The manager or contact will report the concerns to the Whistleblowing Officer.
2. If a Discloser has a concern with Step 1 (for example the Discloser reasonably believes that the manager is involved in the Protected Matters or the Discloser does not feel comfortable reporting it to their manager for any other reason), then the Discloser may submit a report directly to the Whistleblowing Officer.

Investigations

The Club will refer Protected Matters to its Whistleblowing Officer for investigation to determine whether misconduct or some other improper state of affairs exists.

The Whistleblowing Officer will review and assess all matters to determine whether an investigation is the appropriate course of action. This assessment will be undertaken in a manner compliant with the confidentiality obligations outlined in Section 8 of this policy.

The Whistleblowing Officer may alternatively:

- appoint an appropriately qualified and impartial person or entity to investigate the relevant matters; or
- refer Protected Matters directly to ASIC, APRA or the Australian Federal Police.

Whilst every investigation process will differ according to the relevant circumstances, the Whistleblowing Officer will ordinarily ensure that appropriate enquiries are made to determine whether:

- (a) the allegations are substantiated; and
- (b) responsive action needs to be taken in order to address any established misconduct or other improper state of affairs.


12. SUPPORTING WHISTLEBLOWERS, PROVIDING FAIR TREATMENT AND PROTECTION FROM DETRIMENT

The Club intends to support Disclosers making disclosures about Protected Matters and to put in place procedures to promote fair treatment of Disclosers and protect them from detriment. This can be achieved by:

- Providing access to EAP counselling services to all Disclosers. These services may be accessed via the Corethix Portal or contacting on 1800 238 723.
- Investigating all complaints in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Implementing investigation processes which are procedurally fair to both Disclosers and respondents to allegations.
- In circumstances where a Discloser consents, having an appropriate senior manager or human resources officer monitor the Discloser's treatment in the workplace for relevant periods to ensure no victimisation takes place.
- Communicating this policy to the Club employees and officers.
- Taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employees or contractors that breach the victimisation or confidentiality provisions of the Whistleblower Laws.

13. MAKING A DISCLOSURE

All Eligible Parties can make a protected disclosure to the Club's external and independent hotline provider, Core Integrity, via any of the following means:

Reporting Channels	
Hotline Phone Number:	1800 324 775
Email:	speakup@coreintegrity.com.au
Mail (postal address):	PO Box 730, Milsons Point NSW 1565
URL:	https://speakup.coreintegrity.com.au/hbg
QR Code:	

14. HANDLING A DISCLOSURE

A person who receives a disclosure cannot circulate the whistleblower's identity to other staff without the whistleblowers consent. For instance, if the whistleblower lodges a whistleblower complaint to their direct manager, the manager will not circulate the whistleblower's identity to the secretary manager or any senior manager without the whistleblower's consent. If the whistleblower does not consent, the manager may circulate the complaint to the secretary manager or other senior managers in such a way that maintains strict confidentiality.

After receiving a disclosure, the Club will assess whether:

- the disclosure qualifies for protection; and
- a formal investigation is required.

In conducting this assessment, the Club may seek professional legal advice.

If a person makes a Disclosure in good faith and the Club subsequently concludes that the disclosure does not qualify for protection, the Club may choose to protect the discloser's confidentiality, and protect the discloser from detriment, despite the absence of legislative protections.

15. ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This policy will be made available to all the Club employees and officers by the following means:

- The policy will be uploaded to the Club intranet.
- On implementation, the policy will be communicated to all employees and officers by way of email.
- The policy will otherwise be disclosed to employees on commencement of employment.

16. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

All employees and contractors of the Club are required to comply with this policy at all times as well as with Whistleblower Laws.

Non-compliance with this policy or Whistleblower Laws may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or termination of a contractor's services.

17. VARIATIONS

This policy may be varied, amended, replaced or terminated from time to time and at any time at the absolute discretion of the Club.

EFFECTIVE DATE – DECEMBER 2022