



# RCH Group Policy: Whistleblowing

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| Policy Owner   | Group Services Director                |
| Policy Manager | Senior HR Manager                      |
| Approval Body  | Remuneration and Nominations Committee |
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This policy is available, on request, in different languages and in other formats such as large print, audio format and braille as required.

## 1. Scope

- 1.1 This is a Group policy and therefore applies to Staff, Board and Committee members of The RCH Group of companies. As at April 2026, The RCH Group consists of River Clyde Homes and its subsidiary, Home Fix Scotland Ltd.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 RCH Group is committed to having the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. We expect anyone who has a genuine concern about any aspect of our work to be able to come forward and speak up without fear of reprisal. Thus, we recognise that it is necessary to provide a suitable mechanism to report such a concern and to ensure that no-one is treated detrimentally for raising a legitimate concern.
- 2.2 The Chief Executive and the Board of RCH Group are committed to discharging their obligations under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which gives legal protection to staff against being dismissed or penalised by RCH Group as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns.
- 2.3 Several policies are already in place, including disciplinary, grievance and dignity work policies and procedures. This policy is intended to cover concerns that are in the public interest and may (at least initially) be investigated separately but may lead to the instigation of other procedures.
- 2.4 These concerns might include:
- Financial malpractice, impropriety, or fraud
  - Failure to comply with a legal obligation or Statutes
  - Dangers to health and safety or the environment
  - Criminal activity involving RCH Group, its staff, committee/board member or stakeholders
  - Professional malpractice
  - Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
  - Failure to meet legal obligations
  - Abuse of power or status
  - Sexual harassment
  - Deliberate attempts to conceal any of the above
- 2.5 Employees who 'blow the whistle' on wrongdoing in RCH Group will not suffer any detriment from doing so. Employees can claim unfair dismissal if they are dismissed or victimised for doing so. An employee's dismissal (or selection for redundancy) is automatically considered 'unfair' if it is wholly or mainly for making a protected disclosure.
- 2.6 Related Legislative and Statutory Frameworks are The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and Enterprise and Regulatory Act 2013.

- 2.7 RCH Group's Whistleblowing policy requires to be read in conjunction with the following policy and procedure:
- RCH Group Discipline Policy and Procedure,
  - RCH Group Grievance Policy and Procedure
  - RCH Group Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure and
  - RCH Group Code of Conduct for Staff

### **3. Policy Statement and Responsibilities**

- 3.1 This policy is designed to offer protection to staff who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:
- In good faith;
  - To an appropriate person/body; and
  - In the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure that it tends to show malpractice or impropriety.
- 3.2 RCH Group will not tolerate any harassment, bullying or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect the individual when they raise a concern in good faith.
- 3.3 All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the individual's identity if they so wish. However, at the appropriate time the individual may need to come forward as a witness. If we need to disclose an employee's identity to anyone, we will ensure that they are notified of this in advance.
- 3.4 Whistleblowing concerns can be raised to line managers or in writing to Whistleblowing, River Clyde Homes, Clyde View, 22 Pottery Street, Greenock, PA15 2UZ or by e-mail to [public.interest@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:public.interest@riverclydehomes.org.uk).
- 3.5 Depending on the circumstances surrounding the investigation appropriate action will be taken in accordance RCH Group's existing policies and procedures. This is also a notifiable event and is required to reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 3.6 **Raising a Concern**
- 3.6.1 First Step
- 3.6.2 The individual should raise concerns with their immediate line manager or in writing to Whistleblowing, River Clyde Homes, Clyde View, 22 Pottery Street, Greenock, PA15 2UZ or by e-mail to [public.interest@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:public.interest@riverclydehomes.org.uk) . This information will be passed on as soon possible to a Director/Chief Executive.

- 3.6.3 Any complaints will be investigated by the Director/Chief Executive unless the complaint is against the Director/Chief Executive or is in any way related to their actions. Where the complaint is related to the Director/Chief Executive, it should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Remuneration and Nomination Committee who will in turn appoint an independent person to investigate the allegations.
- 3.7.4 Although the individual is not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate that there are reasonable grounds for their concern.
- 3.7.5 The earlier the individual expresses their concern, the easier it is to action. The amount of contact between the persons considering the issues and the individual will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, RCH Group will seek further information from the individual concerned.

Where any meeting is arranged with the individual that raised the concerns, they can be accompanied by a trade union representative and the meeting can be held off-site if they so wish.

### **3.8 Process**

- 3.8.1 On receipt of a disclosure the following process will be followed:
- The disclosure will be considered, and, if appropriate, a meeting will be arranged with the individual who raised the concerns to gather initial information.
  - Further to this meeting, if appropriate, an independent investigator will be appointed to take forward an investigation into the concerns raised.
  - The individual who raised the concerns will be provided with an update and a likely timescale on when they will receive a final response.
  - Once the investigation is complete a report will be provided to the Whistleblowing Chairperson who instructed the investigation.
  - The report will be considered, and appropriate actions will be taken.
  - A final outcome will be provided to the individual who raised the concerns.
- 3.8.2 Depending on the outcome of the investigation appropriate action will be considered in accordance with RCH Group's existing policies and procedures.

### **3.9 Outcome of Investigation**

- 3.9.1 Once the investigation has been completed and the report is received by the Whistleblowing Chairperson, a decision on what action to take will be considered. If there are reasonable grounds to substantiate the complaint, an appropriate procedure will be initiated. This may also include referral to an external body or regulator.

### **3.10 Right of Appeal**

- 3.10.1 Where an individual feels that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately, they can appeal the decision internally to the Chair of the Remuneration and Nomination Committee (who should not be an office bearer).

### **3.11 Raising a Concern Externally**

- 3.11.1 RCH Group encourages employees to raise concerns internally to allow for appropriate investigation and action to be taken, however if an employee remains dissatisfied with the outcome they can raise this with the correct prescribed body or person.

### **3.12 Confidentiality and anonymity**

- 3.12.1 If an employee make a disclosure under this policy, we will make every effort to keep your identity confidential, at least until any formal investigation is under way. There may, however, be circumstances in which, because of the nature of the investigation or disclosure, it will be necessary to disclose your identity. We will discuss this with you.
- 3.12.2 In order not to jeopardise the investigation, an employee will be expected to keep the fact that they have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved confidential.
- 3.12.3 RCH Group does not encourage employees to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if the investigator cannot obtain further information from you. Also, we may not be able to provide you with feedback.

### **3.13 Protection and support for whistleblowers**

- 3.13.1. RCH Group aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. Workers who raise concerns under this policy which they reasonably believe to be true must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result. If an employee believes that they are being subjected to a detriment within the workplace as a result of raising concerns under this policy they should notify the Whistleblowing Chairperson immediately. If the matter is not remedied, they should raise it formally under RCH Group's Grievance Policy.

3.13.2 Workers who victimise or retaliate against those who have raised concerns under this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under RCH Group's Discipline Policy. In serious cases, this may be treated as gross misconduct leading to dismissal without notice.

3.13.3 If an investigation under this procedure concludes that a disclosure has been made maliciously, vexatiously or with a view to personal gain, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action under RCH Group's Discipline Policy. In serious cases, this may be treated as gross misconduct leading to dismissal without notice.

3.13.4 If an employee chooses to make a disclosure without following RCH Group's Whistleblowing Policy the employee may not receive the protection outlined in this policy.

#### **4. Equality Impact Assessment**

RCH Group will apply this policy fairly and consistently. In implementing this policy, we will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other grounds. Our commitment to equality and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other personal attributes

#### **5. Review**

This policy will be reviewed in its entirety every 3 years, unless an earlier review is required due to changes in legal, regulatory or best practice requirements, or because monitoring and reporting reveals that a change in policy is required sooner.