

Ely Diocesan Board of Finance (EDBF)

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

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Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure - EDBF

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Introduction

The Diocese of Ely is committed to the highest possible standards of integrity and recognises that clergy, lay staff and volunteers are often the first to become aware of or identify serious concerns. When such concerns arise, barriers to coming forward could be in relation to misplaced loyalty to colleagues or the Church, or fear of harassment or victimisation.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the 'Act') protects workers who raise concerns from victimisation or harassment. In accordance with the Act, the Diocese of Ely welcomes clergy and staff members who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Diocese's work to come forward and voice those concerns, in confidence, within the Diocese.

The Church of England and Diocese of Ely rely heavily upon the contribution of volunteers and recognise that they are in an important position to recognise and report concerns. While voluntary roles are not included within the Act, the Diocese of Ely encourages volunteers to use this process with the relevant principles of protection applied to them.

This policy is in place to ensure that an internal process is available to encourage and enable workers and volunteers to raise serious concerns which would not meet the criteria for a complaint in confidence and without fear of reprisals, to ensure that the Diocese of Ely continues to provide the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- All Office Holders and lay staff are responsible for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, safeguarding concerns and any health and safety risks. We also invite volunteers to raise these matters.
- The Diocese of Ely does not tolerate victimisation or harassment and will take action to protect clergy, lay staff and volunteers when they raise a concern in good faith.
- The Diocese of Ely will endeavour to protect the identity of any individual who raises a whistleblowing concern and wishes to remain anonymous. However, in certain circumstances, such as any inquiry arising from the concern, the individual may be required to provide a signed statement. In certain circumstances the Diocese may have to disclose the identity of the individual without their consent, for example where there is risk to others involved. The reasons for this will be discussed with the individual.

Support

Clergy, lay staff and volunteers who raise concerns will be offered appropriate advice and support and will be kept informed in relation to the progress and outcome of any inquiries.

Dependent on the circumstances and the wishes and needs of the person raising the concerns the support offered could include arranging a named supporter with independence from the situation, pastoral support, spiritual support, signposting to independent sources of support and advice or counselling support.

Any person receiving a whistleblowing disclosure should discuss support needs with the person raising the concern.

How to raise a concern:

The Diocese of Ely recognises the difficulties in raising a concern about the behaviour of a colleague. However, raising the concern at an early stage may protect others, prevent the problem getting worse, and prevent individuals themselves becoming implicated

Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns in cases where:

- the law may have been broken
- House of Bishop's or Diocesan policies and procedures may have been breached
- there are concerns of a safeguarding nature

Who to tell:

Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers should raise concerns initially with their;

- Incumbent
- line-manager
- volunteer co-ordinator
- Parish Safeguarding Officer
- Archdeacon or Bishop.

This will be dependent upon the nature of the concerns and who might be involved.

Alternatively, office holders, lay staff and volunteers may approach the Diocesan Secretary via 01353 652702, or by email at diocesansecretary@elydiocese.org.

Members of Staff or those working directly with the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance (EDBF) can also report concerns confidentiality to the Diocesan secretary at ds.confidential@elydiocese.org.

Special Note: Safeguarding Concerns

The Diocese of Ely is committed to safeguarding the welfare and protection of children and adults at risk of harm. Concerns about the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm should be reported without delay to prevent any ongoing risk of harm. The [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#) shows the reporting procedure for safeguarding concerns or allegations.

If the individual who has a concern does not feel confident to report the matter within the Diocese they are encouraged to refer directly to their relevant Local Authority or Constabulary. Contact details are shown at the end of this document.

Who to tell

Office Holders, lay staff and volunteers should raise concerns initially with their incumbent, line-manager, volunteer co-ordinator, Parish Safeguarding Officer, Archdeacon or Bishop. (This will be dependent upon the nature of the concerns and who might be involved.) Alternatively, clergy, lay staff and volunteers may approach the following:

- Safeguarding Duty Phone: 01353 652747
- Sarah Kennedy, Head of Safeguarding: 07904487912 or sarah.kennedy@elydiocese.org
- George Woods, Diocesan Secretary: 01353 652702 or diocesansecretary@elydiocese.org

If the concern relates to either of the above Diocesan Staff (or a member of the Safeguarding Team), or there is another reason why they should not be approached, the Bishop's Office may be contacted.

Clergy, staff and volunteers can call, write to, or arrange to meet with any of the above. In the case of a meeting, the individual raising the concern may wish to invite a supporter.

Written concerns should

- identify that it is a whistleblowing disclosure;
- detail the background and history of the concerns;
- give, dates and places (where possible); and
- note the reasons why the individual is particularly concerned about the situation.

What could happen?

This will be dependent upon the nature of the concern. The matter may be:

- investigated internally
- refer to the Police and / or other statutory agencies
- independently investigated
- referred for consideration under the Clergy Discipline Measure; or
- a combination of the above

Anonymous Allegations

The Diocese of Ely encourages staff, Office Holders and volunteers to identify themselves when reporting a concern. However, any anonymous concerns will be investigated as far as reasonably possible based upon the information provided.

Malicious or Vexatious Allegations

Any malicious or vexatious allegations made by clergy or lay staff may lead to a disciplinary process for the individual concerned.

Independent Contacts

- **Cambridgeshire or Norfolk Police** – dial 101 or in an emergency dial 999
- **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Children's Services** Tel: 0345 045 5203 (Cambridgeshire) Tel: 01733 864170 (Peterborough)
- **Norfolk Children's Services**, Tel: 0344 800 8020
- **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Adult Services** Tel: 0345 045 5202 (Cambridgeshire) Tel: 01733 747474 (Peterborough)
- **Norfolk Adult Services**, Tel: 0344 800 8020
- **Emergency Out of hours** (Cambridge & Peterborough Children and Adults) Tel: 01733 234724

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for concerns about an adult who works or volunteers with children

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| • LADO Cambridgeshire | 01223 727967 | LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk |
| • LADO Peterborough | 01733 864038 | LADO@peterborough.gov.uk |
| • LADO Norfolk | 0344 800 8020 | LADO@norfolk.gov.uk |

Persons in a Position of Trust Team (PIPOT) for concerns about a person who works, in either a paid or unpaid capacity, with adults with care and support needs

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| • PIPOT Cambridgeshire | 01480 379019 | pipot@cambridgeshire.gov.uk |
| • PIPOT Peterborough | 01733 747474 | pipot@peterborough.gov.uk |
| • PIPOT Norfolk | 0344 800 8020 | |

- For a range of other organisations check the Diocese of Ely Website here [Resources and Organisations for Care and Support](#)
- Independent, free, expert help and advice in relation to whistleblowing is also available from **Protect**, Tel: 0207 3117 2520, whistle@protect-advice.org.uk