

# Speak up Speak out



**Safeguarding**  
**Office**

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DOWN AND CONNOR

## What is Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing is when someone who works for an organisation in a paid or voluntary capacity wishes to raise concerns about the behaviour or practice of others, which causes them concern.

e.g. *Negligence, Dereliction, Fraud, Misconduct, Corruption or Health and Safety Violations.*

## Reasons for Whistle-blowing

There are good reasons for speaking up and speaking out about concerns that come to your attention. Everyone has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, in order to:

- Prevent the problem worsening or widening
- Protect or reduce risks to others
- Prevent yourself becoming implicated.

## Confidentiality

All concerns raised using the whistle-blowing policy will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

## How to Raise a Concern

You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can – the earlier a concern is expressed, the easier and sooner action can be taken.

Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you, and why.

You can approach your immediate line manager/group leader or the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for the diocese. It is within the remit of these people to listen to your concerns and to initiate whatever action is deemed necessary.

If your concern is about your immediate line manager/group leader, speak to the (DLP), or if you feel you need to take it to someone outside of the

Safeguarding Office, then make contact with the Chancellor.

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. If you wish to make a written report, you are invited to consider the following format by providing:

- the background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates)
- the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

If your concern is raised verbally, a written note will be taken in line with the format above. You will be asked to check the note made for accuracy.

You may wish to consider discussing your concern with a colleague first, and you may find it easier to raise the matter if there are two (or more) of you who have had the same experience or have the same concerns. You may invite a work colleague to be present during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns you have raised.

Please note that the information provided will be held on file in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the data protection policy of the Diocese of Down and Connor and the Privacy Notice of the Down and Connor Safeguarding Office, which can be found at

<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/privacy-notices/>

## Further Advice and Support

It is recognised that whistle-blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support are available from the Safeguarding Office or the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI).

Contact details for the above are on the back of this leaflet. You can access the full whistleblowing guidance in the Parish Resource Pack which can be found at [www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com](http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com)

Advice or guidance on how to pursue matters of concern may be obtained from the people named at the end of this section.

***“Absolutely without fail – challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong.”***

(Reproduced with acknowledgement to  
“Sounding the Alarm” – Barnardo’s)

## Contact details

Safeguarding Office  
email: **office@soddc.org**  
120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6LA

**028 9049 2798**

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

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**07534 992 124**

National Board for Safeguarding Children  
in the Catholic Church in Ireland

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**00353 1 505 3124**

The Chancellor,  
Very Reverend Eugene O'Hagan  
email: **dcoffice@downandconnor.org**  
Lisbreen, 75 Somerton Road, Belfast, BT15 4DE

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**028 9077 6185**

