

WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

The **National Hair and Beauty Federation (NHBF)** is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity, and we expect the people and organisations acting on behalf of the Federation to maintain high standards.

This policy is intended to encourage the members of our governing body (the “Board”), NHBF members, contractors or volunteers to report suspected or actual occurrence(s) of illegal, unethical or inappropriate events, behaviours or practices regarding the Federation or the Board.

These may include instances of bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and breaches of legal or professional obligations.

If the whistle-blower is a member of the Federation’s staff, he/she should promptly report the suspected or actual event in accordance with the whistle-blowing policy contained in the Staff Handbook.

If a member of the public wishes to contact the Federation regarding a matter of wrongdoing, they should call the Federation on **01234 831965** and ask to speak confidentially to the individual designated for overseeing this policy.

In all other cases:

1. The whistle-blower should promptly report the suspected or actual event to a Board member including those who are officers (being the President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, or the Chief Executive).
2. The whistle-blower may provide his/her identity when reporting the event or choose for their name to be kept as confidential. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate, and the Federation will make every effort to keep the identity of a whistle-blower secret, only revealing it where necessary to those involved in investigating the matter.
3. The whistle-blower shall not suffer any detrimental treatment or be punished or blamed for a report that was provided in good faith.
4. If a whistle-blower makes a report in bad faith (for instance to damage the reputation of another

individual or organisation, or to cause disruption within the Federation), they may (if they are an NHBF Member or Board member) become subject to disciplinary proceedings under the Disciplinary Regulations, which may lead to suspension or expulsion from their role or membership with the Federation.

5. Anyone who threatens or retaliates against a whistle-blower will be subject to disciplinary action as appropriate under the policies of the Federation.
6. Crimes against person or property should immediately be reported to local police authority.
7. When a whistle-blower reports a matter to the Federation, the relevant Board member or the Chief Executive should act promptly, considering whether a disciplinary procedure should be initiated in respect of the disclosure, meaning:
 - In respect of NHBF staff, the disciplinary procedure contained in the Staff Handbook; and
 - In respect of NHBF members and Board members, the disciplinary procedure contained in the Disciplinary Regulations.
8. The whistle-blower must receive a report within five business days of the initial report being made, setting out how the investigation will be handled (and under which disciplinary procedure), with regular updates on progress and, when the investigation is completed, how the issue will be resolved.
9. If the investigation of a report, that was made in good faith and investigated in accordance with the Federation’s policies, is not to the whistle-blower’s satisfaction, and all rights of appeal under the relevant disciplinary procedure have been exhausted, then he/she may report the event to the appropriate legal or investigative agency.
10. The identity of the whistle-blower, if known, shall remain confidential to those persons directly involved in applying this policy, unless the issue requires investigation by police, in which case members of the organisation are subject to all the requirements of external legal agencies.