



CLIMATE EQUITY REFERENCE  
P R O J E C T  
C A N A D A 

## **DISCLOSURE OF MALPRACTICE ("WHISTLE BLOWER PROTECTION") POLICY**

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At Climate Equity Reference Project Canada (CERP Canada), it is vital that everyone who works for us maintains the highest standards of conduct, integrity and ethics, and complies with local legislation. If an employee, volunteer, partner, consultant or contractor has any genuine concerns about malpractice in the workplace, we wish to encourage them to communicate these without fear of reprisals and in the knowledge that they will be protected from victimization and dismissal.

This policy does not form part of an employee's terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management.

Malpractice includes (but is not limited to) the issues listed below:

- Financial wrongdoing including theft, bribery, fraud, money laundering or diversion of funds
- A failure to comply with any legal obligations
- Sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse, harassment or exploitation (see CERP Canada Safeguarding Policy)
- Abuse or exploitation of children, vulnerable adults or beneficiaries (see CERP Canada Safeguarding Policy as above)
- Breach of CERP Canada policy
- Abuse of position
- Danger to the health and safety of individuals or damage to the environment
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Activity which would bring the organization into serious disrepute
- The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the matters listed above

If you have a genuine concern and have a reasonable belief it is in the public interest, even if it is later discovered that you are mistaken, under this policy you will not be at risk of losing your job or from suffering any form of retribution as a result. This assurance will not be extended to an individual who maliciously raises a matter they know to be untrue or who is involved in any way

in the malpractice. Those found to be making false allegations maliciously will have disciplinary action taken against them.

Malpractice is not a complaint about the performance and behaviour of a manager or other work colleague towards you. Such complaints will be directed for action to CERP Canada's HR policies and procedures.

If you genuinely believe that the actions of someone who works for CERP Canada could lead to or has resulted in malpractice, please follow the procedure below.

1. Raise the matter with the Executive Director or with any of the members of the board of directors<sup>1</sup>

At the point of raising a concern it would be useful for you to share information describing:

- Whether anyone is at immediate risk of harm?
- What happened? If possible, make note of dates, times, places, people.
- Who is involved?
- How do you know about it?
- When were you first concerned about it?
- Have you told anybody about it?
- Was any action taken?

2. A decision will be made on whether it is appropriate to handle such complaints under this policy. Where not appropriate the complainant will be informed and their permission sought to divert the issue to the appropriate procedure.

3. If an investigation is conducted, the outcome may involve taking disciplinary action if misconduct has been proved, which may include dismissal.

You will be notified once the matter has been resolved, but outcomes are subject to confidentiality and may not be communicated.

CERP Canada will take appropriate action, which may end in dismissal, in accordance with the relevant procedure against any employee, volunteer or consultant who:

- Has been found to be victimizing another individual for using this procedure, or deterring them from reporting genuine concerns under it.
- Made a disclosure maliciously that is known to be untrue or without reasonable grounds for believing that the information supplied was accurate.

*(with thanks for Oxfam GB)*

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<sup>1</sup> A current list of board members can be found at: <https://climateequityreference.org/board/>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What if the Executive Director or a board member is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way?

If the Executive Director is involved in the alleged malpractice in some way, the matter should be raised with a board member directly. If a board member is involved, one of the other board members is available to receive the information about the alleged malpractice.

### Can the disclosure be made anonymously?

You are strongly encouraged not to make anonymous disclosures as details and further concerns cannot then be checked with you and this may seriously limit the ability of investigators to pursue your concerns. Nonetheless, all disclosures, made anonymously or otherwise, will be reviewed but lack of information may limit the nature, extent and outcome of the investigation.

### Who will conduct the investigation?

If possible, an independent person from within CERP Canada will be appointed. Otherwise, or for complex cases such as safeguarding, external investigation support may be sought.

### What if the matter involves a criminal offence?

The issue may also be reported to the police if a criminal offence, such as fraud or theft, or sexual assault has been committed.

### What if the matter is a complaint about the performance or behaviour of a manager or colleague against me?

Such complaints will be directed for action to the appropriate policy unless the concerns relate to concerns of sexual misconduct or other forms of malpractice listed in this policy.