



Public Interest Disclosure process

Answers to frequently asked questions for public sector employees and organisations

Q. What is a Public Interest Disclosure?

- A. Some reports or complaints made about wrongdoing in a public sector organisation are known as Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs).

To be considered a PID by IBAC, a report needs to be about conduct that falls within one of two categories:

- Improper conduct – this may include criminal offences, breaches of public trust or behaviour that puts one or more person’s safety at risk.
- Detrimental action – this may include intimidation, discrimination or harassment in retaliation for making a public interest disclosure.

PIDs are guided by the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)* (PID Act) which encourages you to report any improper conduct or detrimental action you may see. The PID Act also legally protects you and ensures your information stays confidential throughout the process.

Q. Who can make a PID?

- A. Anyone should make a disclosure if they see improper conduct happening in a public sector organisation. Rest assured if you make a PID, you will be legally protected throughout the reporting process.

Q. Who can I make a report or complaint about?

- A. PIDs may be made about improper conduct within various public sector organisations. They can be made about a public body or public officer, as well as about people who seek to improperly influence public bodies and public officers.

Q. How do I make a report or complaint?

- A. The PID legislation defines who can receive a PID in public sector organisations. In some cases, a person may be nominated to receive disclosures, sometimes called a PID Coordinator. If you are an employee of a public service body you can make a disclosure to a manager or supervisor.



You can also report PIDs directly to IBAC, and other agencies such as the Victorian Ombudsman or the Victorian Inspectorate. The agency you report to may depend on the conduct you are seeking to report.

Disclosures can be made verbally or in writing. Disclosures can be made anonymously.

Q. If I make a report, how am I protected?

- A. Anyone who makes a disclosure is legally protected under the PID Act. You cannot be fired, disciplined or bullied for making a disclosure.

Q. Will my disclosure be confidential?

- A. Yes. All your information is confidential and protected under the PID Act.

Q. How are PIDs assessed?

- A. For a disclosure to be considered a PID, it needs to be about improper conduct or detrimental action. Once IBAC receives a report, we will assess it, and then either investigate the complaint, refer it to an investigative agency like the Victorian Ombudsman or take no further action.

Q. What else can my organisation do to stop misconduct?

- A. Fostering a speak up culture in the workplace benefits the entire public sector. You can also take steps to make sure your workplace has policies and procedures in place to support the welfare of people who speak up. This might mean referring disclosers to your agency's employee assistance program or ensuring they understand who they can talk to about their disclosure.

You can find more information and report PIDs by:



Filling out the secure online form at www.ibac.vic.gov.au



Calling 1300 735 135 for further assistance.



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