

Whistleblowing Process Map

1. Concern Arises

Employee, contractor, or stakeholder observes malpractice, risk, or wrongdoing (e.g., patient safety, fraud, safeguarding, health & safety, regulatory breaches).

2. Decide to Report

- The individual considers if the concern is:
 - A grievance (personal to them) → handled through **Grievance Policy**
 - A public interest concern → **Whistleblowing**

3. Raise Concern (Initial Report)

- Preferred Route: Line Manager
- **Alternative Route:** Senior Manager / Whistleblowing Officer (appointed contact)
- **Anonymous option** available (e.g., secure email/reporting form)

4. Acknowledgement

- Concern is acknowledged within **5 working days**
- Reporter is assured of confidentiality and protection from detriment

5. Triage & Initial Assessment

Designated Manager:

- Reviews the nature of concern
- Decides whether it is:
 - Serious & requires investigation
 - Minor & resolvable locally
 - Not a whistleblowing issue (redirect appropriately)

6. Formal Investigation

- Independent manager or external investigator appointed
- Collects evidence, interviews witnesses, documents findings
- Investigation timeframe: normally **up to 28 days**

7. Outcome & Action

- Findings reviewed by Senior Leadership Team

- Possible actions:
 - Disciplinary action
 - Policy/procedure changes
 - Escalation to regulator (CQC, HSE, NHS England)
 - No further action (if unsubstantiated)

8. Feedback to Whistleblower

- Reporter informed of outcome (within confidentiality limits)
- Opportunity to raise concerns about process fairness

9. External Escalation (if unresolved)

- If the whistleblower is not satisfied, they may escalate to:
 - CQC
 - NHS England
 - Health & Safety Executive
 - Professional regulatory bodies

10. Protection & Monitoring

- Ongoing monitoring to ensure whistleblower suffers no detriment
- Annual review of whistleblowing cases by leadership