

Public Interest Disclosures

What is a Public Interest Disclosure

In general terms, a Public Interest Disclosure (PID) is the disclosure of information of public interest involving suspected wrongdoing within the public sector. PIDs are managed in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* (PID Act). You can view the precise legal definition for what constitutes a PID [here](#).

A disclosure of suspected wrongdoing is an important component for ensuring that everyone at the University upholds the highest standards of integrity and accountability. People who report disclosures (Disclosers) are an important source of information for identifying and resolving wrongdoing and are encouraged to speak up.

Action taken by the University

Once the Integrity Unit (IU) has assessed the information received about suspected wrongdoing in accordance with the PID Act, the Discloser will receive formal advice about:

- The outcome of the assessment;
- Information they need to be aware of;
- Action being taken by the University as a result of the disclosure.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Discloser will receive formal advice about:

- Resultant actions and outcomes.

If an investigation is undertaken, a report may be submitted to the relevant senior executive at the University for consideration as to whether further action is required in accordance with *The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026* (the Enterprise Agreement).

Protection from reprisal and defamation proceedings

It is an offence, under sections 40 and 41 of the PID Act, for someone to cause, or attempt or conspire to cause, detriment to another person because, or in the belief that they or someone else has made a public interest disclosure or is involved in a proceeding under the PID Act.

In accordance with the PID Act, the University will take reasonable measures to ensure that Disclosers do not suffer reprisal as a direct result of their public interest disclosure. Please note that reasonable management action is not considered to be a form of reprisal.

The vast majority of people who make a public interest disclosure do so without experiencing reprisal. The IU undertakes a risk assessment for each public interest disclosure which includes assessing the likelihood of reprisal occurring and considering any appropriate interventions. Any concerns regarding potential reprisal should be brought to the IU's attention immediately.

The PID Act (section 38) provides protection from defamation proceedings for a person who makes a public interest disclosure.

Confidentiality

In accordance with section 65 of the PID Act, information relating to a public interest disclosure, and the action being taken by the University in relation to it, remains strictly confidential.

Wherever possible, a Discloser's identity will not be disclosed to the Subject Officer during the investigation process or any resultant misconduct process. However, subsections 4 and 5 provide that information disclosing or likely to disclose the identity of the Discloser may be provided in certain circumstances where it is essential to do so under the principles of natural justice and where it is unlikely a reprisal will be taken against the person because of the disclosure.

Support

In order to ensure that Disclosers are provided with appropriate support whilst the PID is being dealt with, where required, the University will appoint a PID Support Officer. The role of the PID Support officer is to check on the Discloser's welfare and to help them access available support services until the investigation and management of the PID is finalised. The PID Support Officer will be the Discloser's primary point of contact should they have any concerns.

The IU team member will provide the Discloser with the name and contact details of their PID Support Officer.

Confidential support is also available through the University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provided by [PeopleSense](#) who can be contacted on 1300 307 912.

Resources

[Integrity Unit | Public Interest Disclosures](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010](#)

[Queensland Ombudsman | Public Interest Disclosures](#)