

Public Interest Disclosures

Subject Officer Factsheet

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). The legal definition for what constitutes a PID can be found [here](#).

Action taken by the University

The Integrity Unit (IU) assesses the information received about suspected wrongdoing in accordance with the PID Act.

At the appropriate time, the person who is the subject of the matters raised (the Subject Officer) will receive formal advice about:

- The outcome of the PID assessment;
- Information they need to be aware of; and
- Action being taken by the University as a result of the disclosure, such as an investigation.

At the conclusion of an investigation, 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).

Support

The University acknowledges that this experience can be stressful for staff who are the subject of a public interest disclosure and will support and protect the rights of Subject Officers by:

- Ensuring the PID is dealt with, impartially, fairly, and reasonably in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- Confirming that the PID is an allegation only until information or evidence obtained through an investigation substantiates the allegation, or not;
- Providing them with information about their rights and the progress and outcome of any investigation; and
- Providing support and information until the matter is finalised.

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

Protection for Disclosers from reprisal and defamation proceedings.

It is an offence, under sections 40 and 41 of the PID Act, 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.

Accordingly, Subject Officers must abstain from any conduct that is or could be perceived as a reprisal.

The PID Act (section 38) also 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.

Subsections 4 and 5 provide that information disclosing or likely to disclose the identity of a person who makes a public interest disclosure 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.

Resources

[Integrity Unit | Public Interest Disclosures](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010](#)

[Queensland Ombudsman | Public Interest Disclosures](#)