Factsheet

Raising behavioural concerns and reporting suspected misconduct

The *Australian Public Service Commissioner’s Directions 2022* (the Commissioner’s Directions) provide that upholding the ‘Ethical’ Value requires each employee, having regard to their duties and responsibilities, to report and address misconduct and other unacceptable behaviour by public servants in a fair, timely, and effective way (s.13(f) of the Commissioner’s Directions).

This means that every employee has, at a minimum, an obligation not to ignore concerning behaviour by others. To enable employees to meet this obligation, agencies should foster a culture in which employees feel empowered to raise concerns and confident that they will not be penalised for doing so in good faith. Employees should be able to expect their concerns to be taken seriously and addressed in an appropriate, timely, and proportionate way.

## Options for raising concerns

The *Public Service Act 1999* does not provide for a specific statutory reporting mechanism. Agencies may have a range of avenues for their employees to raise concerns about behaviour, report suspected breaches of the Code, or make public interest disclosures. Such avenues may include:

* line managers
* harassment contact officers (while they cannot accept reports or complaints, these officers can provide advice on options available to employees for dealing with concerns, including avenues for reporting suspected misconduct)
* central conduct or integrity units
* nominated individuals or teams in HR, including employee advice units or hotlines, or fraud prevention and control units or hotlines
* email reporting addresses
* ‘authorised officers’ who receive public interest disclosures.

## Agencies should ensure employees are aware of these options and have easy access to them.

Further information can be found in **Chapter 3** of **Handling Misconduct.**