

Whistleblower Policy

Issue Date: 1 August 2023

Review Date: 31 July 2025

Purpose

Brownes Dairy encourages all workers to disclose public interest disclosures about our Company and any other potential serious misconduct issue.

You will be expected to have reasonable grounds to suspect the information you are disclosing is true and accurate from first-hand knowledge, but you will not be penalised if the information turns out to be incorrect. However, you must not make a report that you know is untrue or misleading.

The Company has engaged the services of an external independent whistleblower service that will manage all disclosures in a rigorous and transparent way that promotes confidence in the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality, and fairness of our business activities.

Scope

This policy applies to all workers. For the purposes of this policy a worker is defined as a person who conducts work in any capacity for Brownes Dairy, including employees, contractors, apprentices or trainees and volunteers.

Types of Disclosures

Public interest disclosures may include, but not limited to:

- Failure to comply with, or breach of legal or regulatory requirements.
- Breach of the Company's Code of Conduct or any other Company policy, standards, or codes.
- Engaging in or threatening to engage in detrimental conduct against a person who has made a disclosure, or is believed or suspected to have made, or be planning to make a disclosure.
- Criminal activity.
- Bribery or corruption.
- Conduct endangering the health and safety of any person or persons or causing damage to the environment.
- Dishonest, unethical, or irresponsible behaviour.
- Conflicts of interest, including those relating to outside business interests, relationships, improper payments, and donations.
- Modern slavery, which exists if a person is not working of their own free will, is treated like property, or is seriously exploited or abused.
- Misleading or deceptive conduct, including conduct or representations that amount to improper or misleading accounting, taxation, or financial reporting practices.
- Breaches of privacy.
- Unauthorised use of Company Confidential Information; or
- Deliberate concealment of any of the above.

Independent Whistleblower Service Provider

Brownes Dairy has appointed an external independent whistleblower service provider called "Grapevine." This independent service will provide you with a safe environment for reporting public interest disclosures about our Company. You can either provide your name or remain anonymous.

Making a confidential disclosure where your identity is known is the preferred option as it allows the matter to be fully investigated whilst providing you with ongoing protection and support. Otherwise, you can make an anonymous disclosure if you do not want to reveal your identity. This is the least preferred option as it may not be possible to investigate the disclosure effectively if we are unable to contact you for further information.

Your identity will only be disclosed if you give your consent to the Company to disclose that information or in exceptional circumstances where the disclosure is allowed or required by law.

How to make a Disclosure

There are three (3) options for how you can make a disclosure. The choice is entirely yours and will simply depend upon which method you prefer.

To make a disclosure report:

1. **By telephone: 1300 933 977**
2. **Online report at: <https://brownesdairy.grapevineonline.com.au/>**
3. **By mail to: PO Box 119, Carlton South, VIC, 3053**

Whistleblower Protection

In 2019, whistleblower protection clauses in the *Corporations Act 2001*, were expanded to provide greater protection for whistleblowers who report disclosures. The Corporations Act also includes a confidentiality protection for the whistleblower, making it an offence for anyone associated with the Company to reveal a whistleblower's disclosed information or identity.

To receive protection under the Corporations Act as a whistleblower, the person disclosing misconduct within a company must be:

- An officer or employee of that company; or
- Have a contract to provide goods or services to that company; or
- Be an employee of a person that has a contract to provide goods or services to that company.

To be protected as a whistleblower, you must make the disclosure in accordance with the reporting procedure provided in this policy.

The Corporations Act also provides that, to qualify for whistleblower protection, the person making a disclosure cannot do so anonymously. The discloser must make the disclosure in good faith and have reasonable grounds to suspect that:

- The Company has, or may have, contravened a provision of the corporation's legislation; or
- An officer or employee of the company has, or may have, contravened a provision of the corporation's legislation.

Legal Action Protection

The Corporations Act also protects a whistleblower against certain legal actions related to making a whistleblower disclosure, including:

- Criminal prosecution (and the disclosure cannot be used against the whistleblower in a prosecution unless the disclosure is false).
- Civil litigation (such as for breach of an employment contract, duty of confidentiality, or other contractual obligation).
- Administrative action (including disciplinary action).

If you are the subject of an action for making a whistleblower disclosure, you may rely on this protection in your defence. However, this protection does not grant immunity to you for any misconduct that you were involved in that is revealed in the disclosure. If you voluntarily self-report your involvement in corporate misconduct, we will take into account your cooperation when we consider what action, if any, we will take in respect of any wrongdoing on your behalf.

Confidentiality

All information, documents, records, and reports relating to the investigation of a disclosure will be confidentially stored and retained in an appropriate and secure manner. Access to all information relating to the disclosure will be limited to those directly involved in managing and investigating the disclosure. Only a restricted number of people who are directly involved in handling and investigating the disclosure will be made aware of your identity, subject to your consent, or information that is likely to lead to the identification of your identity.

Related Documents

- Corporations Act 2001
- The Code of Conduct – “The Way We Work.”
- Conflict of Interest Policy.