

If you want to report serious wrongdoing in your workplace, the Ombudsman may be able to help you.

### Appropriate authorities

The following are named in the Protected Disclosures Act as 'appropriate authorities' to whom disclosures of serious wrongdoing may be made:

- Commissioner of Police
- Controller and Auditor-General
- Director of the Serious Fraud Office
- Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security
- The Ombudsman
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
- Independent Police Conduct Authority
- Solicitor-General
- State Services Commissioner
- Health and Disability Commissioner
- Head of every public sector agency
- Heads of some private sector professional organisations who have disciplinary powers over members.

For more information or help, please contact our staff.

## Contacting the Ombudsman

Free phone: 0800 802 602

[www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)

### Email:

[info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz)



### Post:

PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143

### Fax:

(04) 471 2254

### Office enquiries:

8:30am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday

### Wellington

Level 7, 70 The Terrace, Wellington 6011

### Auckland

Level 10, 55-65 Shortland Street, Auckland 1010

### Christchurch

Level 2, 138 Victoria St, Christchurch 8013

### Other Ombudsman leaflets include:

Making complaints about government agencies, Making or complaining about requests for official information, Making complaints about prisons and Community Corrections, Monitoring places of detention, Fair treatment for people with disabilities, and The Ombudsman: who we are.

**Ombudsman**

Fairness for all

## 'Whistle-blowing': a guide to the Protected Disclosures Act



Office of the Ombudsman  
Tari o te Kaitiaki Mana Tangata

# What is the Protected Disclosures Act?

The Protected Disclosures Act provides protection for employees who want to report serious wrongdoing in or by their organisation. This is sometimes called 'whistle-blowing'.

The Act sets out procedures that need to be followed when making a protected disclosure.

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## What is serious wrongdoing?

Examples include:

- unlawful, corrupt or irregular use of public funds or resources
- conduct that poses serious risk to public health, safety, the environment or maintenance of the law
- any criminal offence
- gross negligence or mismanagement by public officials.

## When is a disclosure protected?

To make a protected disclosure, you must be a current or former employee of the organisation concerned. 'Employee' has a wide definition, and can include an individual who is contracted to do work for the organisation.

Your disclosure will be protected if:

- the information you are disclosing is about serious wrongdoing in or by that organisation
- you reasonably believe that the information is true or likely to be true
- you want to have the matter investigated.

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## Making a protected disclosure

If you're thinking about whistle-blowing, you may want to speak in confidence to one of our staff first who can provide you with information and guidance.

If your organisation has systems for dealing with information about serious wrongdoing, you must generally make your disclosure in accordance with them.

However, in some cases you may be able to make your disclosure to one of the authorities listed in the Act (see overleaf).

If you make a protected disclosure, information which identifies you will be kept confidential, unless one of the exceptions in the Act applies.

# The Ombudsman's role

Under the Act, the Ombudsman can provide you with information about:

- the kind of disclosures that are protected
- how and to whom disclosures can be made
- the roles of the relevant authorities listed in the Act
- the protection available under the Act if whistle-blowing leads to victimisation.

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## Talk to us

If this information sounds like it relates to your situation, you may want to speak to one of our specialist staff first. Contact details are overleaf.

Any information you give will be treated in confidence.