

Guidelines for external warnings –“whistle blowing”

The whistle blower HOTLINE is an easy and effective method for reporting actions by Red Cross personnel, or in activities connected with the Red Cross, that are unethical, illegal, a waste of resources or otherwise not in compliance with professional standards. The HOTLINE goes directly to the Department for Quality Assurance and Internal Audit (EKI), who is responsible for investigating and assessing any reports received.

Information about external warning procedures should be easy to find on Red Cross' internet site. Separate guidelines also exist concerning internal warnings for employees of Red Cross (see "Guidelines for internal warning in Red Cross").

Suspicious or irregular conduct can be reported by telephone, e-post or mail:

Telephone: **+47 22 05 40 00** ask to be put in contact with internal audit.

E-Post: Hotline@redcross.no

Post address: **Norwegian Red Cross
Internal Audit (EKI) - “CONFIDENTIAL”
Postbox 1 Grønland
0133 Oslo
Norway**

All reports received will be treated confidentially.

A whistleblower can remain anonymous, however EKI encourages whistleblowers to give their name and contact information in order to facilitate inquiries into the complaint received. The identity of whistle blowers will be kept confidential.

When EKI contacts a whistleblower, it is important to ensure that the method and location of the contact is secure and unthreatening, in order to insure confidentiality, trust and continued cooperation.

It is important to obtain adequate information about the circumstances and facts surrounding suspicions raised, in order to ensure that inquiries can be carried out in an efficient and professional manner. All information received will be registered and considered by EKI. The following information is crucial to inquiries and should be obtained from the whistleblower whenever possible:

- Whistleblower's name and contact information
- The date when the report was received
- The timeframe or date and time of day for observations made
- A specific description of what was observed
- Location where the observation was made
- Any other witnesses
- Knowledge of other cases/suspicions made against the same person(s)

A whistleblower, or other persons, who give information to EKI or aid inquiries in other ways, is protected from discrimination or retaliation of any kind.

A whistleblower that chooses not to be anonymous will be given prompt confirmation that the warning has been received, whenever possible.

EKI will make inquiries and consider all warnings received in order to decide if the complaint is warranted and requires further investigation. EKI will involve others in their inquiries as required, depending on the type of case and whose actions are under suspicion. Employee conflicts and work related disputes will be handled by the HR department.

When EKI's inquiries find suspicions well founded, a preliminary investigation will be performed. The results of the preliminary investigation will be shared with the Secretary General and affected department head. Fraud and misconducts cases must be treated discretely. Discretion must be taken when choosing the time and place for confrontation of the accused.

EKI's role is to obtain all relevant facts concerning the complaint during their investigation. The affected department must fully cooperate and provide necessary resources to facilitate EKI's inquiries. When the investigation is completed, EKI will report their conclusions to the Secretary General and affected department head. Cases concerning fraud, corruption or economic infidelity will also be reported to the National Board.

EKI's investigation must be fair and objective. When preliminary investigations confirm suspicions concerning irregularities, the suspect will be given the opportunity to defend themselves in a meeting, where they will be allowed to have an assistant present. Minutes will be taken. In advance of the confrontation, Red Cross must consider the need to have aid and support available for the suspect.

Inquiries from the media concerning irregularities should always be directed to the head of the communications department.

After all facts are obtained and considered, it is up to the affected department head and the head of the HR department to decide if any disciplinary actions are to be taken, and if the Police should be involved. EKI will review existing routines in order to evaluate if changes are required in order to reduce the risk of future occurrences.

After the case is finalized, and independent of the outfall, the whistleblower will be informed whenever possible that the investigation is completed.