

Approved by the Governing Board: **5<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Whistleblowing encourages and enables VIRTUS employees, volunteers and Member Organisations to raise serious concerns within the organisation rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.
- 1.2 Our staff, volunteers and Members are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong but may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the organisation.
- 1.3 VIRTUS is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect employees, volunteers and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the organisations work to come forward and voice those concerns.

#### 2 Types of Concern

- 2.1 If you are aware of any of the following types of activity, then you should come forward:
  - a) Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law
  - b) Failure to comply with a legal obligation
  - c) Breaches of VIRTUS policy and procedure
  - d) Health and safety risks, including risks to athletes, the public, volunteers or employees
  - e) Damage to the environment
  - f) The unauthorised use of charitable funds
  - g) Possible fraud and corruption
  - h) Sexual, physical or other abuse
  - i) Other unethical conduct
  - j) Actions which are unprofessional, inappropriate or conflict with a general understanding of what is rights and wrong

#### 3 Safeguards Confidentiality

- 3.1 VIRTUS recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. However, if such concerns are well-founded then individuals have nothing to fear.

## SECTION 4: POLICIES



### 4.15 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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- 3.2 VIRTUS will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals who raise a concern in good faith.
  - 3.3 All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal a persons identity. However, whistleblowers may need to come forward as a witness.
  - 3.4 This policy encourages individuals to put their name to the concern whenever possible. Please note that:
    - a) Information must be disclosed in good faith.
    - b) You must believe it to be substantially true.
    - c) You must not act maliciously or make false allegations.
    - d) You must not seek any personal gain.
- 4 How to Raise a Concern
- 4.1 As a first step, you should raise concerns with the Executive Director or a member of the Governing Board. This may depend on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice.
  - 4.2 The Executive Director or Governing Board member will make any initial enquiries to ascertain the accuracy of the report. It is normal at this time to assemble a small panel (of up to 2 further people) from within the Governing Board to review the facts the issue that has been raised.
  - 4.3 After investigation, a report will be prepared for the Governing Board and the matter will then be managed according to the Virtus Disciplinary Policy.
- 5 Outcome
- 5.1 Whatever the outcome of the investigation and the validity of the concern raised, the person who acted as a whistleblower will not receive any less favourable treatment in their role and involvement in the organisation. Any breach of this could result in a case being brought forward under the Disciplinary Policy.