

A checklist for making a public interest disclosure

If you have information about wrongdoing in the public sector, follow these steps to decide if it could be a public interest disclosure and how to report the wrongdoing.

Step 1: Is this a public interest disclosure?

Under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2010* (the PID Act), only some kinds of information are 'public interest disclosures' (PIDs).

Any person, including a public sector employee, can make a PID about:

- substantial and specific danger to the health or safety of a person with a disability
- the commission of an offence, or contravention of a condition imposed under a provision of legislation mentioned in Schedule 2 of the PID Act, if the offence or contravention would be a substantial and specific danger to the environment
- reprisal because of a belief that a person has made, or intends to make a PID.

A public sector officer can also make a PID about:

- corrupt conduct
- maladministration that adversely affects a person's interests in a substantial and specific way
- a substantial misuse of public resources
- a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety

- a substantial and specific danger to the environment.

Find out more about ['what is a public interest disclosure'](#).

Step 2: Who can I make a public interest disclosure to?

You can make a PID to:

- the public sector agency in which the wrongdoing has occurred
- a public sector agency that has the power to investigate the wrongdoing
- the Crime and Corruption Commission if the PID involves corruption
- the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman if the PID involves maladministration.

If the PID is about corrupt conduct or reprisal by a judicial officer, the matter can be reported to the Chief Judicial Officer of the court or tribunal, or the Crime and Corruption Commission.

A PID can also be made to any Member of the Queensland Parliament.

Step 3: How do I make a public interest disclosure?

All public sector entities are required to have a PID procedure published on their website. Agencies should also have information on their website about how to make a complaint. Check the 'contact us' page of the agency's website for contact details.

You should check the agency's PID procedure for information on how to make a PID. Generally speaking, you may make a PID by:

- using the agency's online complaint form (if they have one)
- by sending an email (to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer of the agency)
- by telephone (explain you wish to make a public interest disclosure and ask to speak to a senior officer).

Report corruption to the [Crime and Corruption Commission](#) or [make a complaint to us](#).

Step 4: What do I include in a public interest disclosure?

You may make a PID in any way, including anonymously. To assist in the assessment, and any subsequent investigation of a PID, you should include as much information as possible about the suspected wrongdoing:

- who was involved
- what happened
- when it happened
- where it happened
- whether there were any witnesses, and if so who they are
- any evidence that supports the PID, and where the evidence is located
- any further information that could help investigate the PID.

You should also include contact details (this could be an email address that is created for the purpose of making the disclosure, or a telephone number).

A PID can still be made even if you do not have all this information. For example, you may have information about an event, time and place but not know the names of the officer/s.

When you make a public interest disclosure, you have a responsibility to:

- keep the information about the PID confidential
- keep copies of letters or emails you receive about the PID secure
- comply with your agency's code of conduct
- report reprisal if it occurs
- not post on social media about the PID
- not make false or misleading PIDs
- not take reprisal action against others.

Under the PID Act, it is an offence to:

- record, or intentionally or recklessly disclose confidential information

- make a false or misleading PID
- take reprisal action against another person because of their involvement in a PID.

Frequently asked questions

Can I make an anonymous public interest disclosure?

You are able to make a PID anonymously. If you choose to do so, you should provide a way for the agency to contact you (such as an email address you have set up for the purpose of making the PID), in case the agency needs to contact you for more information. This will also allow the agency to provide you with updates on what action they have taken.

What can I expect after I make a public interest disclosure?

When a PID is received, agencies are required to advise you:

- that the information has been received and assessed as a PID
- what action that will be taken
- the likely timeframe involved
- details of any support arrangements
- your obligations to maintain confidentiality
- the agency's obligations to maintain confidentiality
- what protections are available to you
- how updates and outcome advice will be provided.

Learn more about the [support available for people who have made public interest disclosures](#).

Who can review public interest disclosure decisions?

If you are dissatisfied with an agency's handling of a PID, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed by the agency under its complaints management system (CMS). Details of the agency's CMS can be found on its website.

If you are dissatisfied after the agency has reviewed its decision, you can make a complaint to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman.