

Whistleblower Policy

Whistleblower Policy

Current Version	1	Policy Owner	Chief People Officer
Approved By:	Board	Date Approved:	1 March 2023
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1 Objective

- 1.1 This Policy is intended to promote a culture of HPC conducting its business with honesty, fairness and integrity. HPC recognises that any genuine commitment to detecting and preventing illegal, dishonest, unfair or other undesirable conduct must include a mechanism to enable individuals to report their concerns freely and without fear of repercussions.
- 1.2 HPC is committed to ensuring all its Officers, employees, secondees, contractors (and any employees of contractors) and consultants act at all times in accordance with HPC's Code of Conduct.
- 1.3 Anyone making a Disclosure based on reasonable grounds under this Policy should feel confident that they can do so without fear of retaliation.
- 1.4 This Policy reflects and supports the HPC strategic direction as it provides a framework to enable employees to speak up and gives effect to HPC's corporate values of Integrity and Trust to call out unacceptable behaviour and display HPC's willingness to do what's right.
- 1.5 This Policy is designed to achieve these outcomes:
 - a) Promote and encourage Disclosures relating to Reportable Conduct, Misconduct or an Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances.
 - b) Establish mechanisms for making Disclosures as a Whistleblower.
 - c) Protect the identity, well-being, dignity, career and reputation of Whistleblowers making a Disclosure based on reasonable grounds.
 - d) Outline the consequences for breaching this Policy.

Table of relevant regulatory standards

Regulation	Version
<i>Corporations Act 2001</i>	21 November 2022
ASIC Regulatory Guide 270 Whistleblower Policies	November 2019

2 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy may be used by all current and former Officers, employees, secondees, contractors or suppliers (and their employees) and consultants of HPC and its associated entities, including associates and family of these individuals. Anyone making a Disclosure under this Policy is deemed to be a Whistleblower.
- 2.2 This Policy applies to anyone making a Disclosure in accordance with this Policy, clearly indicating that the Disclosure is made under this Policy.
- 2.3 In some circumstances, such as a Disclosure to the HPC external reporting service or relating to nil or insufficient action taken on a previously reported matter, the Disclosure may be deemed to be made under this Policy without the need for a clear indication by the Whistleblower.

3 Definitions and Interpretation

- 3.1 **Detriment** means dismissal, demotion or other form of injury to their employment, alteration of an employee's position or duties to their disadvantage, any form of harassment or intimidation, harm or

injury (including psychological harm), damage to property, reputation, business or financial position, discrimination, bias or any other damage.

- 3.2 **Disclosure** means a report made under this Policy by a Whistleblower of Reportable Conduct, Misconduct and/or an Improper State of Affairs (including, but not limited to, conduct of the type referred to in paragraph 4.8 of the Procedure).
- 3.3 **HPC** means Heritage and People's Choice Limited and all its related entities including when operating under the "Heritage Bank" or "People's Choice Credit Union" trading names.
- 3.4 **Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances** means policies, practices, acts or conduct, while not unlawful, that are unethical, unconscionable or fall below reasonable community standards and expectations.
- 3.5 **Intranet** means the intranet sites of HPC called Pulse and HIVE.
- 3.6 **Misconduct** means acts or conduct in breach of the standards and duties required in employment including but not limited to theft, fraud, deception or dishonesty, breach of duty, illegal or unlawful acts or conduct, corruption, conflict of interest, negligence, default, serious breach of policy or procedure, disrepute, breach of trust or good faith duty.
- 3.7 **Officer** means an Officer (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)) of HPC which includes a director of HPC, a company secretary of HPC or a member of the HPC Executive Committee.
- 3.8 **Procedure** means the Whistleblower Procedure.
- 3.9 **Reportable Conduct** means breaches of the Code of Conduct, or activities that could be damaging to our members, employees or the community.
- 3.10 **Whistleblower** means current and former Officers, employees, secondees, contractors or suppliers (and their employees) and consultants of HPC, including associates and family of these individuals, who attempts to make or wishes to make a report in connection with Reportable Conduct, Misconduct or Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances under this Policy and avail themselves of the protections offered by this Policy.
- 3.11 **Whistleblower Investigation Officer** means the Manager, Employee Relations or other position as nominated by the Chief People Officer.
- 3.12 **Whistleblower Protection Officer** means the Head of Human Resources and Head of People & Culture Operations or other position as nominated by the Chief People Officer.

4 Policy Statement

Governance and Accountability

- 4.1 The Board is responsible for:
 - a) Ensuring that HPC has an effective program for Whistleblower protection.
 - b) Reviewing and approving this Policy and the Procedure.
 - c) Reviewing compliance with this Policy and the Procedure.
 - d) Ensuring a Whistleblower Protection Officer is appointed.
 - e) Ensuring a Whistleblower Investigations Officer is appointed (that is a separate individual to the Whistleblower Protection Officer).
 - f) Reviewing reports on Whistleblower activity from the Chief People Officer.

- g) Reviewing findings and actions relating to Whistleblower disclosures from the Whistleblower Investigation Officer and the Whistleblower Protection Officer.

4.2 The Board Audit Committee is responsible for:

- a) Reviewing findings and actions relating to Whistleblower disclosures from the Whistleblower Investigation Officer and the Whistleblower Protection Officer.

4.3 The Chief People Officer is responsible for:

- a) Establishing an effective program for Whistleblower protection.
- b) Oversight and monitoring of this Policy.
- c) Periodically reviewing this Policy and the Procedure, recommending material changes to the Board and for implementing and overseeing any changes made. The CPO may make non-material changes to this Policy and the Procedure, but must inform the Board of any changes made.
- d) Establishing and maintaining a dedicated, highly visible means for the reporting of Reportable Conduct.
- e) Appointing a Whistleblower Investigation Officer.
- f) Appointing a Whistleblower Protection Officer.
- g) Reviewing reports on Whistleblower activity.
- h) Reviewing findings and actions relating to Whistleblower disclosures from the Whistleblower Investigation Officer and the Whistleblower Protection Officer.

4.4 The Whistleblower Investigation Officer is responsible for:

- a) Receiving reports of Reportable Conduct, Misconduct and/or Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances directly from Whistleblowers, or through an eligible internal report recipient or the external reporting hotline.
- b) Investigating the substance of a Disclosure from a Whistleblower.

4.5 The Whistleblower Protection Officer is responsible for safeguarding the interests of the Whistleblower in terms of this Policy, the Procedure, the policies of HPC and any applicable legislation.

Requirements

- 4.6 This Policy is available to all employees of HPC and is also publicly available. HPC employees can access this Policy through the Intranet. It is publicly available through the HPC external website/s.
- 4.7 The Procedure sets out the mechanisms and processes adopted by HPC to meet the requirements of this Policy. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Procedure. The Procedure can be accessed by HPC employees through the Intranet. The Procedure is also publicly available through the HPC external website/s.
- 4.8 A Disclosure can be made where the Whistleblower has reasonable grounds to suspect Reportable Conduct, Misconduct or an Improper State of Affairs or Circumstance within HPC or an associated entity. Further information regarding Disclosures that qualify for protection (including guidance on 'reasonable grounds') is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.8 to 4.21 and Attachment 2 at paragraph 2).

- 4.9 There are a number of other HPC policies that also provide for the reporting of matters that may be considered as Reportable Conduct, Misconduct and/or Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances. This Policy compliments these reporting structures.
- 4.10 HPC will provide appropriate structures to facilitate reporting Disclosures. In addition to internal reporting structures, HPC will also maintain an independent external hotline service for reporting Disclosures. Further information regarding how to make a Disclosure and eligible persons to receive Disclosures is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.8 to 4.21).
- 4.11 Disclosures may be made anonymously.
- 4.12 The identity of the Whistleblower will be kept confidential by all HPC employees with involvement with the Disclosure, unless the Whistleblower consents to their identity being disclosed or the disclosure of their identity is required by law.
- 4.13 HPC will identify a Whistleblower Investigation Officer to accept and investigate Disclosures, and a Whistleblower Protection Officer to safeguard Whistleblower interests.
- 4.14 All Disclosures will be subject to an appropriate investigation conducted by the Whistleblower Investigation Officer. During the investigation process, fair treatment will be provided for anyone mentioned in a Disclosure or to whom the Disclosure relates. Further information regarding the investigation process and how fair treatment will be ensured, is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.23 to 4.30 and Attachment 1).
- 4.15 Whistleblowers who report matters on reasonable grounds will not be penalised, disadvantaged or suffer a Detriment initiated by HPC because they have reported a matter.
- 4.16 Despite the immunity from action for the act of disclosing a reportable matter, HPC may initiate disciplinary action for involvement by the Whistleblower in the substance of the matter disclosed. A Whistleblower who has been involved in the reported matter may nonetheless be provided with immunity from HPC initiated disciplinary proceedings, by agreement with HPC.
- 4.17 Any employee or manager who is found to have penalised, disadvantaged or caused a Detriment to a Whistleblower by reason of their status as a Whistleblower, may be subjected to disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal. Under the law, such employees or managers may also be liable to compensate the Whistleblower in accordance with legislation. Further information regarding the remedies available to Whistleblowers is outlined in the Procedure (Attachment 2 paragraph 6).
- 4.18 HPC will implement appropriate measures to protect and support Whistleblowers, including relocation or leave of absence. Further information regarding the protections and support available to Whistleblowers is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.31 to 4.34 and Attachment 2 paragraphs 3 to 5).
- 4.19 Where it is established by the Whistleblower Investigations Officer that the Whistleblower has no reasonable grounds for the Disclosure, or has made a false report of Reportable Conduct, Misconduct and/or an Improper State of Affairs or Circumstances, then he or she may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings, which may include dismissal. Any such disciplinary proceedings will be conducted in accordance within existing Human Resources policies and procedures.
- 4.20 HPC is committed to assessing the findings and recommendations of any investigation with a view to rectifying any wrongdoing as far as is practicable in the circumstances.
- 4.21 Where an actual or reasonable perceived conflict of interest arises between the substance of a Disclosure and any HPC employee with responsibilities under this Policy, a suitable alternate employee or Officer will take carriage of the matter as appropriate.

- 4.22 This Policy does not prevent a Whistleblower from reporting any matter to a regulator under an applicable law or prudential standard. Further information regarding disclosures to regulators (and public interest and emergency disclosures) is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.18 to 4.20).
- 4.23 Any employee found to have breached this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.

5 Reporting

- 5.1 HPC will implement appropriate reporting mechanisms to inform the Board of whether any Disclosures have been made on a regular basis. The findings of the Whistleblower Investigation Officer and Whistleblower Protection Officer will be reported to the Board, Board Audit Committee and appropriate HPC officers. Further information regarding the reporting of Disclosures to the Board is outlined in the Procedure (paragraphs 4.35 and 4.36).

6 Related Documents

- 6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Code of Conduct
Whistleblower Procedure

7 Version History

Version	Date	Amended by	Details of amendment
1	1 March 2023		Initial Document

