



Whistleblower Policy

Policy #:	GOV-002	
Applies to:	All YWCA Staff & Volunteers	
Final Approval Authority:	Board of Directors	
Policy Input Provided By:	Leadership Team	
Date to be reviewed:	2026	
Version Control:		
Version	Date	Change Description
1.0	January 2014	Policy Created
2.0	June 7, 2023	Major Revisions

Policy Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to promote transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within YWCA Edmonton. It encourages individuals to report any wrongdoing, protects whistleblowers from retaliation, and ensures thorough investigation and remediation of reported incidents. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and stakeholders of YWCA Edmonton.

Policy Statements:

1. YWCA Edmonton is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty, and accountability. All individuals associated with the organization are expected to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the performance of their duties.
2. YWCA Edmonton encourages employees and others to come forward with serious concerns about actions that contravene ethics or the law, without fear of victimization, subsequent discrimination, or retaliation.
3. Any identified wrongdoing within YWCA Edmonton or involving its employees, volunteers, or contractors will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and remedied.
4. This policy does not cover internal complaints related to difficulties with leaders or others, which should be addressed through the appropriate conflict resolution policies or procedures.

Policy Procedures:

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and stakeholders of YWCA Edmonton. Wrongdoing may include but is not limited to:

- Unlawful acts, whether civil or criminal
- Questionable accounting or auditing practices
- Practices likely to cause harm or damage to any person or property
- Breach of the YWCA Edmonton Code of Conduct or failure to comply with policies
- Failure to rectify or report matters likely to cause significant avoidable cost or loss
- Unethical or improper conduct or abuse

Reporting & Investigative Process:

1. Individuals with a complaint or concern should first try to contact their supervisor, manager, or the executive responsible for the relevant department. However, the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and the suspected wrongdoing may determine alternative reporting channels.
2. YWCA Edmonton provides a third-party communications program for anonymous reporting through the following methods:
 - a. Online reporting: YWCA Edmonton implemented a 3rd party confidential reporting system for whistleblowing complaints in January 2024.
 - b. Email: YWCA Board President: president@ywcaedm.org and/or YWCA CEO k.oneill@ywcaedm.org
 - c. Mailing address: YWCA Edmonton
10402 124 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5N 1R5
3. All complaints will be responded to in an appropriate and timely manner. Upon receiving a complaint, an acknowledgment of receipt will be provided within five (5) business days.
4. The notification and investigative process will be determined based on the circumstances of each complaint. The level of contact with the complainant will depend on the nature of the issues raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the information provided.
5. Complaints lacking specific details (dates, times, documents, names of witnesses, etc.) or provided anonymously may be challenging to assess, investigate, and follow up appropriately.
6. Some concerns may be resolved through agreed-upon actions without the need for investigation. Urgent actions will be taken if necessary, prior to conducting an investigation.
7. Investigations may be conducted by management, the Board of Directors, auditors, or through the disciplinary process. In some cases, matters may be referred to the police or subject to an independent inquiry.
8. The Chair of the Human Resources Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee will be notified of all complaints and will report to the Board of Directors as deemed necessary.
9. YWCA Edmonton will inform whistleblowers of the outcomes of investigations, subject to legal constraints.

Confidentiality:

1. YWCA Edmonton is committed to maintaining confidentiality during the investigation. Every effort will be made to keep complaints confidential, while ensuring a thorough investigation.
2. Whistleblowers who choose to remain anonymous through the third-party reporting channels will be provided with a case number and specified times to call or log in for updates on the investigation.

Prevention of Retaliation & Harassment:

1. YWCA Edmonton strictly prohibits retaliation or detrimental actions against individuals who have reported genuine concerns. Any attempt to retaliate will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action.
2. Employees who deliberately make false or malicious allegations may be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal for cause, as it undermines the integrity of the reporting process.

Review & Communication:

1. This policy will be communicated to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and stakeholders of YWCA Edmonton during their orientation to the organization.
2. The policy will be periodically reviewed to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with legal requirements.

Prevention of Retaliation, Victimization, or Harassment:

YWCA Edmonton will not tolerate any form of retaliation, victimization, or harassment towards individuals who report a serious and genuine concern. Any attempt to retaliate or apply any form of detriment to whistleblowers will be considered a violation of this policy and will be treated seriously. YWCA Edmonton is committed to creating a safe environment for individuals to come forward without fear of reprisal.

False and Malicious Allegations:

YWCA Edmonton upholds the highest standards of honesty and is dedicated to maintaining its reputation. Any complaint received will be thoroughly investigated with substantial and adequate resources. It is important to note that YWCA Edmonton takes false or malicious allegations seriously and views them as a breach of trust and integrity.

Making deliberately false or malicious allegations will be considered a grave disciplinary offense. YWCA Edmonton will initiate appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for cause, against employees found to have made such allegations knowingly or with malicious intent. This is to ensure the integrity of the reporting process and maintain trust within the organization.