



Northampton Saints Whistleblowing Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Northampton Saints is committed to conducting its activities with honesty, integrity, accountability and care. We encourage a culture in which people feel able to speak up promptly about concerns relating to wrongdoing, unsafe practice, safeguarding risks or other misconduct. This policy explains how concerns can be raised, how they will be handled, and the support available to anyone who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

This policy applies to all employees, workers, officers, agency workers, consultants, contractors, interns, volunteers, casual workers and any other individuals working for or on behalf of Northampton Saints. It does not form part of any contract of employment and may be updated from time to time.

2. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing, risks, malpractice or illegal or unethical conduct in relation to Northampton Saints' activities. A whistleblowing concern will usually involve a matter that is in the public interest rather than a personal employment complaint. Concerns may relate to conduct affecting colleagues, players, children, young people, adults at risk, supporters, contractors, visitors or the wider public.

- criminal offences, fraud, theft, bribery, corruption or financial irregularity
- breaches of law, regulation, safeguarding standards or professional obligations
- health and safety risks or conduct likely to endanger any person
- abuse, neglect, harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation
- safeguarding concerns involving children, young people or adults at risk
- deliberate concealment of wrongdoing or attempts to prevent concerns being raised
- serious misconduct that could damage the Club, its people or its reputation

This policy is not intended to replace other procedures for personal workplace concerns, such as grievances, disciplinary matters or complaints about terms and conditions. Those issues should usually be raised under the appropriate employment policy unless they also involve wider wrongdoing or risk.

3. Raising a concern

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible. In many cases, concerns can be raised with your Line Manager. If this is not appropriate, or if the concern relates to your manager, you may raise it with the Chief People Officer or directly with a relevant



safeguarding lead where the matter relates to the welfare or safety of children, young people or adults at risk.

Internal reporting contacts:

Safeguarding at Board level

Board Safeguarding Champion: Ella Bevan (Chairman)

Chief Executive: Julia Chapman (CEO)

Club Designated Safeguarding Lead and support

- Emily Goss Chief People Officer **Club Whistleblowing Officer**

emilygoss@northamptonsaints.co.uk 07483 078369

- Trudy Jones Head of Safeguarding

trudy.jones@northamptonsaintsfoundation.org 07518 836983

Departmental Safeguarding Leads

Community Safeguarding Lead

- Ben Lawrence Head of Community

benlawrence@northamptonsaints.co.uk 07772 297687

Academy Safeguarding Lead

- Max Dominy Foundation Phase and Coach Development Manager

maxdominy@northamptonsaints.co.uk 07841 768065

Match Day Safeguarding Lead

- Julia Wells Operations Manager

juliawells@northamptonsaints.co.uk 07979 944237

Commercial Safeguarding Lead

- Helen Hoban Ticketing Manager

helenhoban@northamptonsaints.co.uk

Players Safeguarding Lead

- George Hibberd Team Manager

georgehibberd@northamptonsaints.co.uk 07825 336225

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. You should provide as much detail as possible, including what happened, who was involved, when and where it occurred, whether anyone is at immediate risk, and any documents or witnesses that may assist.



You do not need proof or certainty before raising a concern, but you should have a reasonable belief that the information you are reporting is true.

We will normally acknowledge a concern within 72 hours where contact details are provided. A preliminary assessment will then be made to determine the appropriate next steps. We aim to provide an update within 28 days where reasonably possible, although timescales may vary depending on the nature and complexity of the concern and any external investigation.

4. Safeguarding concerns and immediate risk

If your concern relates to safeguarding, the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk is paramount. Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Club Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the departmental safeguarding lead team. If someone is in immediate danger, contact the emergency services on 999 without delay.

Northampton Saints may need to refer safeguarding matters to external agencies, including children's social care, adult social care, the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the RFU or other regulators, depending on the nature of the concern.

5. Confidentiality and anonymous concerns

We recognise that speaking up can feel difficult. If you raise a concern, we will handle it as sensitively and confidentially as possible. We will seek to protect your identity and will only share it where necessary to investigate the concern properly, to safeguard others, or where disclosure is required by law. Where possible, we will inform you before disclosing your identity.

Anonymous reports will be considered, but they are often harder to investigate and may limit our ability to ask follow-up questions or provide feedback. When deciding whether to investigate an anonymous concern, we will consider the seriousness of the allegations, the safeguarding risk, the credibility of the information and whether the matter can be sufficiently evidenced from other sources.

6. Investigation and outcome

Once a concern is received, Northampton Saints will decide what form of review or investigation is appropriate. This may involve an internal investigation, referral to HR, safeguarding review, disciplinary process, referral to the police or local authority, or notification to a regulator or governing body. Investigations will be conducted as fairly, promptly and proportionately as possible.



Where appropriate and lawful to do so, we will keep the person who raised the concern updated on progress. However, the detail we can share may be limited by confidentiality, data protection, employment obligations or the need to protect the integrity of an investigation.

If a concern is raised in good faith, no action will be taken against the individual simply because the concern is not substantiated. However, concerns that are knowingly false, malicious or raised for personal gain may be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary or conduct procedures.

7. Protection from detriment

Northampton Saints will not tolerate any retaliation, victimisation, bullying or disadvantage suffered because a person has raised a genuine concern in good faith. Any such behaviour will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action. Anyone who believes they have suffered detriment for speaking up should report this immediately to the Chief People Officer or, if more appropriate, to another senior leader or safeguarding lead.

8. External disclosures and support

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear internal route for reporting concerns and putting matters right. In some circumstances, however, it may be appropriate to make a disclosure to an external body such as a regulator, statutory safeguarding agency or law enforcement. Individuals are encouraged to seek advice before making an external disclosure where possible.

Useful external contacts:

- RFU Speak Up: SpeakUp@RFU.com
- Protect (independent whistleblowing charity): 020 3117 2520
- NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285
- Northamptonshire Children's MASH: 0300 126 7000
- Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 0300 126 7000
- West Northamptonshire adult safeguarding: 0300 126 7000
- North Northamptonshire adult safeguarding: 0300 126 3000

Allegations about a person who works with children should be referred promptly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in line with Northamptonshire safeguarding procedures and, wherever possible, within one working day of the concern coming to the Club's attention.



Details for the LADOs for Northamptonshire can be found here:

<https://northamptonshirescp.org.uk/working-with-children-professionals/designated-officer-lado>

9. Oversight and records

A confidential record of whistleblowing concerns, actions taken and outcomes will be maintained appropriately. Where a whistleblowing concern relates to safeguarding, it will also be recorded and managed through the Club's standard safeguarding recording process, while protecting confidentiality and anonymity as far as appropriate and lawful. Whistleblowing data may also be reported in anonymised form to senior leadership and/or the Board to support oversight, learning, safeguarding assurance and continuous improvement.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and at least annually to ensure it remains aligned with legal requirements, RFU guidance and Northampton Saints' operational safeguarding arrangements. It may also be reviewed sooner following any significant incident, change in legislation, regulatory update or learning arising from practice.