

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY

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1. OBJECTIVE

- a) To ensure Informants who make a Public Interest Disclosure are protected in their disclosure to the PID Officer of information they provide and to further provide mechanisms whereby they can raise their concerns without the fear of reprisal or victimisation. In other States of Australia, this policy can be interchangeable with Whistleblowing legislation.
- b) Under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003* (PID Act), any person can make disclosure if they believe something is wrong with the way a public authority, public officer or public sector contractor is acting, or may be going to act, which is of public interest.

Definitions

Informant: is a natural person who may be a member of the community, Elected Member of Council, City employee or City contractor who provides a disclosure under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*

PID Officer: A person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Karratha to undertake the responsibilities and actions so prescribed under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*.

2. PRINCIPLES

The City of Karratha does not tolerate corrupt or other improper conduct, including mismanagement of public resources, in the exercise of the public functions of the City of Karratha by its elected members, employees and contractors.

The City of Karratha is committed to the aims and objectives of the PID Act. It recognises the value and importance of contributions of elected members, employees and contractors to enhance administrative and management practices and strongly supports disclosures being made by Informants as to corrupt or other improper conduct.

The City of Karratha will take all reasonable steps to provide protection to Informants who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for the making of a public interest disclosure.

The City of Karratha does not tolerate any of its elected members, employees or contractors engaging in acts of victimisation or reprisal against those who make public interest disclosures.

When a person makes an appropriate disclosure of public interest information to a proper authority, the PID Act:

- protects the person making the disclosure from legal or other action;
- provides for the confidentiality of the identity of the person making the disclosure and a person who is the subject of a disclosure (section 16 of the PID Act); and
- provides remedies for acts of reprisal and victimisation that occur substantially because the person has made a disclosure.

3. CONSEQUENCES

The City of Karratha under no circumstances condones wrong-doing or misconduct. The policy and procedures associated with Public Interest Disclosures allows for Informants to report organisational misconduct without any negative consequences. These negative consequences may include, but are not limited to inadvertent or intentional consequences relating to their personal or professional life.

This policy also signifies the expected high standards of conduct at the City of Karratha. If these high standards are not adhered to, internal procedures are in place to protect Informants whom wish to expose any misconduct, behaviours or practices that may be harmful to the organisation.

This policy represents the formal policy and expected standards of the City of Karratha. Appropriate approvals need to be obtained prior to any deviation from the policy. Elected Members and Employees are reminded of their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct to give full effect to the lawful policies, decisions and practices of the City.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Informants must ensure the disclosure they are wishing to make is as accurate as possible and that the information they hold may be, or is, true. Furthermore the information must be in the public interest to be disclosed.

Informants must not be reckless or misleading in their disclosure. Provision is provided within the PID Act for disclosures found to be malicious in its attempt or aim.

Informants must follow due procedures in disclosing the information they hold to the proper authority or they will not be protected under the PID Act.

PID Officer shall ensure that:

- The informant's identity is kept confidential;
- The PID Lodgement Form is kept confidential; and
- Action is taken to investigate the claim in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Procedures approved by the Council having regard to the approved methods provided through the PID Act.

5. REFERENCES TO RELATED DOCUMENTS

- City of Karratha Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Department of the Attorney General - PID Lodgement Form
- Department of the Attorney General - Information Brochure

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Responsible Officer:	Manager Governance and Organisational Strategy

This Policy takes effect from the date of adoption by Council and shall remain valid until it is amended or deleted.