

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION STATEMENT

Riverlife Baptist Church 30 331 391 636 (“**Riverlife**”) recognises the need to act appropriately where allegations about illegal or improper conduct occurring at Riverlife are raised and to protect individuals who raise such allegations. Riverlife encourages any individuals that are aware of illegal or improper conduct to disclose this information to a Riverlife Disclosing Coordinator.

This Policy sets out the range of procedures that Riverlife have adopted to protect individuals who disclose information about illegal or improper conduct occurring at Riverlife.

WHO IS A WHISTLEBLOWER?

A **whistleblower** is a **relevant person** disclosing **relevant information** about improper conduct that they suspect on reasonable grounds has occurred or is occurring within Riverlife, including conduct by a Riverlife staff member or volunteer.

Relevant person means:

- a current or former Riverlife staff member;
- a current or former Riverlife volunteer;
- a contractor or supplier of goods and services to Riverlife, or their current and former employees, paid or unpaid; or
- a **family member** of one of the above.

Family member means a **spouse**, parent, child, sibling or other relative.

Spouse means the married, de facto or registered partner of an individual.

Relevant information means information disclosed to a **Riverlife Disclosing Coordinator** but excludes work-related grievances, which must be made under Riverlife’s Staff Conflict & Grievance Resolution Policy.

WHO IS A RIVERLIFE DISCLOSING COORDINATOR?

The following people are **Riverlife Disclosing Coordinators**:

- Riverlife Church Administrator;
- Riverlife Operations Manager; and
- Chair of the Riverlife Elders.

The names and contact details of the people who currently hold these positions are disclosed in Schedule 1.

WHAT PROCESSES WILL RIVERLIFE ADOPT TO PROTECT WHISTLEBLOWERS?

A **whistleblower** may disclose information about improper conduct to a **Riverlife Disclosure Coordinator** using any of the contact details outlined in Schedule 1. A **whistleblower** may choose to remain anonymous by mailing their disclosure to the mail contact outlined in Schedule 1.

Riverlife must treat any disclosures by a **whistleblower** with the utmost seriousness.

Riverlife must treat any disclosures by a **whistleblower** with the utmost confidentiality, unless

- the **whistleblower** has consented in writing to their identity being made known;
- to Riverlife's lawyers for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or legal representation;
- to the Australian Federal Police or Queensland Police; or
- to the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation if the disclosure concerns **Riverlife's** tax affairs.

No person at **Riverlife** may disclose or produce to a court or tribunal any information or documents which discloses the identity of a **whistleblower** or information likely to lead to their identity becoming known.

No person at **Riverlife** may cause or threaten any **detriment** to any person for a reason which includes that they or any other person:

- is or proposes to be a **whistleblower**; or
- is suspected or believed to be, or could be, a **whistleblower**,

where **detriment** includes (but is not limited to) dismissal, injury of a person in their employment, alteration of an employee's position or duties to their disadvantage, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, harm or injury including psychological harm, damage to property, damage to reputation, damage to financial position, taking action against a **whistleblower** to enforce a right or subjecting them to liability or action simply because they have made a disclosure.

When a disclosure is made which may fall under this policy, the following steps must be followed except where, in the opinion of the **Riverlife Disclosure Coordinator**, it would be inappropriate or unreasonable in the circumstances to do so:

- as soon as practicable after the disclosure has been received, the **Riverlife Disclosure Coordinator** responsible for the matter must determine whether the disclosure falls within the scope of this policy and, if so, appoint an investigator with no personal interest in the matter to conduct an investigation into the matters disclosed;
- any investigator that is appointed must have, in the opinion of the **Riverlife Disclosing Coordinator** responsible for the matter, the necessary skills, capabilities, competencies and qualifications to undertake the investigation;
- the investigator must conduct any investigation in an objective and fair manner, ensuring to provide any employee who has been adversely mentioned in information provided by a **whistleblower** an opportunity to respond to the allegations made in respect of them prior to any adverse finding being made;
- the outcome of the investigation must be reported to the Elders in writing and may be reported to the **whistleblower** and any persons affected as the **Riverlife Disclosure Coordinator** considers appropriate;
- the written report submitted by the investigator to the Elders must include the minimum content as outlined in the Whistleblower Investigator Report document;

- subject to the exceptions outlined in this policy or otherwise by law, the identity of a **whistleblower** (or information that is likely to lead to their identity becoming known) must be kept confidential at all times during and after the investigation (including in any reporting to the Elders or to any persons affected). All persons responsible for or involved in an investigation must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk that a **whistleblower** will be identified; and
- A **whistleblower** may raise any concerns or complaints regarding this policy or their treatment with the **Riverlife Disclosure Coordinator**.

Subject to the confidentiality obligations outlined in this policy, the Church Administrator must provide to the Elders or the Management Team quarterly updates on all whistleblower matters, including information on:

- the status of any investigations that are underway; and
- the outcomes of any investigations completed and actions taken as a result of those investigations.

CHANGES TO THIS WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION POLICY

Riverlife may amend this Whistleblower Protection Policy from time to time. We suggest that you visit our website regularly to keep up to date with any changes.

SCHEDULE 1 CONTACT DETAILS OF RIVERLIFE DISCLOSING COORDINATORS

Church Administrator

Name: Mark Hodgson
 Email: mark.hodgson@riverlifecyclechurch.org.au
 Phone: 0412 414 900

Operations Manager

Name: Scott Wilson
 Email: scott.wilson@riverlifecyclechurch.org.au
 Phone: 0436 444 643

Chair of Elders

Name: Rob Boegheim
 Email: rob.boegheim@riverlifecyclechurch.org.au
 Phone: 0418 774 520

Mail Contact:

Private & Confidential
 Riverlife Disclosing Coordinator
 Riverlife Baptist Church
 PO Box 29
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