

Whistleblower Policy

Table of contents

1. Policy statement	3
2. Purpose of the policy	3
3. Scope	3
3.1 Legislative framework - Corporations Act 2001	3
3.2 Application of Policy	4
4. Defined Persons	4
4.1 Disclosers eligible for whistleblower protection	4
4.2 Eligible recipients of disclosures	4
4.2.1 Other considerations for disclosers	5
4.3 The role of the Whistleblower Protection Officer	5
5. Eligible Disclosures (eligible whistleblower matters)	6
5.1 Eligible matters	6
5.2 Ineligible matters	6
5.3 Public interest and emergency disclosures	7
5.3.1 Public interest test	7
5.3.2 Emergency disclosure test	7
6. Making a disclosure (criteria to qualify for protection)	8
6.1 Guidance for persons making a disclosure	8
6.1.1 Additional information for the discloser	8
6.1.2 Anonymity and confidentiality	8
6.1.3 Maintaining confidentiality and support	9
6.2 Legal protections for persons making a disclosure	9
6.2.1 Protections for disclosers	9
6.2.2 Protection from detrimental acts or omissions	10
6.3 Support and practical protection for disclosers	10
7. The Investigation Process	11
7.1 Natural justice and procedural fairness	11
7.2 Stages of investigation	11
7.3 Support and protection for individuals who are the subjects of disclosure	11
8. Governance and reporting	12



8.1	Framework aspects.....	12
8.2	Legislative compliance	12
8.3	Regulatory guidelines	12
9.	Definitions	13
10.	Documents related to this policy.....	14
	Mater documents	14
	External documents.....	14
11.	Appendix A – Contact details for Mater's eligible recipients	15
12.	Document information.....	16
12.1	Earlier revisions	16
12.2	Key contacts.....	16



1. Policy statement

The Board of Directors of Mater Misericordiae Limited (the 'Board') is committed to upholding the highest standards of conduct and ethical behaviour from Mater people and encourages the disclosure of any details of suspected improper conduct or wrongdoing.

In specific circumstances, such a disclosure may be deemed an 'eligible whistleblower disclosure'. This affords legal protections to the eligible discloser and imposes legal obligations on the eligible recipient of the disclosure.

This policy defines those circumstances and briefly explains the processes followed at Mater when an eligible disclosure is made.

2. Purpose of the policy

This policy and its supporting documents are provided to:

- Encourage disclosure of wrongdoing.
- Support a culture of speaking with good judgement, which underpins Mater's commitment to integrity and good governance.
- Guide potential eligible disclosers to safely make a disclosure and access protections.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any eligible disclosure.
- Provide eligible disclosers with protection and support.
- Encourage a transparent and prompt response to eligible disclosures.
- Ensure protections and support apply to the extent possible even if the disclosure is made anonymously, or the disclosers are unaware of the policy.

3. Scope

3.1 Legislative framework - Corporations Act 2001

- i. The Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) ('the Act') at Part 9.4AAA, provides a whistleblower protection regime for Australia's corporate sector.
- ii. As a significant trading entity, registered as a charitable organisation under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, Mater is bound by the obligations in the Act.



3.2 Application of Policy

This policy applies to:

- i. Potential and actual eligible disclosers.
- ii. Potential and actual eligible recipients of an eligible disclosure.
- iii. Any other Mater person who may become aware of a potential or actual eligible disclosure.

Protections and obligations defined within this policy are applied whether the eligible whistleblower intended them to apply or not. This policy is intended for reference and use by Mater directors, employees, contractors, suppliers, associates of Mater and relatives of these groups.

4. Defined Persons

4.1 Disclosers eligible for whistleblower protection

A person is eligible to be a protected discloser if that person is or has been:

- i. an employee, temporary or permanent (including secondees and former employees).
- ii. an officer or director (including former officers and former directors).¹
- iii. a contractor affiliated with Mater.
- iv. a supplier of services or goods to Mater (whether paid or unpaid), this includes employees of a supplier.
- v. an associate of Mater, this may include any consumer of Mater's services, students, research participants or participants of fund-raising activities; or
- vi. a relative, spouse or dependent of any of the above.

4.2 Eligible recipients of disclosures

For a disclosure to be eligible for protection under this policy, the disclosure must be made to one of the following persons:

- i. a member of the Mater Board (including any subsidiary Board).
- ii. the Mater Group Chief Executive Officer (GCEO).
- iii. the Mater Company Secretary.
- iv. a 'senior manager' defined as an executive director that reports directly to the GCE, see Appendix A.²
- v. any internal or external auditor engaged by Mater (includes audit team members).
- vi. any actuary engaged by Mater.

¹ Taken to include non-executive directors and the company secretary.

² As defined in Section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)



- vii. the nominated Whistleblower Protection Officer (WPO).
- viii. another person nominated by the GCEO and identified in this policy (Appendix A).
- ix. a legal representative of the person making the disclosure, for the purposes of obtaining related advice.
- x. a formal hotline/whistleblower contact point for regulated bodies and other external parties – this might include the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, Australian Taxation Office or another entity.

4.2.1 Other considerations for disclosers

- i. A discloser may choose any eligible recipient listed in section 4.2 above.
- ii. A discloser may also have an obligation to make a report to a statutory body, for example, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Office of the Health Ombudsman (Queensland) or under the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld). In these cases, the individual/s should ensure that they comply with all such reporting requirements. The WPO can facilitate advice on these reporting obligations. The individual/s is encouraged to access one of the eligible recipients and make them aware of the matter.
- iii. In some cases, the disclosure may be assessed as 'reportable conduct' as defined under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld). The WPO must in this instance liaise with the GCEO, as Head of Entity, to ensure mandatory reporting requirements under the Reportable Conduct Scheme (Chapter 3 of the Act) are complied with.
- iv. Please see Appendix A for the contact details for nominated officers as eligible recipients at Mater.

4.3 The role of the Whistleblower Protection Officer

- i. Mater has nominated a Whistleblower protection officer (WPO). The WPO is designated by the Mater GCEO with the approval of the Board.
- ii. The evaluation of all whistleblower matters is to be overseen by the WPO. The WPO is to ensure that the processes implemented are consistent with this policy and all related procedures.
- iii. The WPO will advise the GCEO of any matters under investigation and make reports as described in section 8 below.
- iv. The WPO may initiate an investigation independently.
- v. Should the WPO be named in a disclosure, the Chair of the Board will assume WPO responsibilities.
- vi. The WPO will act independently from operational management in all eligible disclosure matters.



5. Eligible Disclosures (eligible whistleblower matters)

5.1 Eligible matters

- i. The Act specifies when a disclosure qualifies as an eligible whistleblower matter. Matters that fall outside the scope described below **do not** qualify the individual (the discloser) making the disclosure for whistleblower protections, nor oblige the receiver to act under this policy.
- ii. For a matter to satisfy whistleblower eligibility:
 - a) the person making the disclosure must have **reasonable grounds** for suspecting that **misconduct or dishonest / illegal / unethical behaviour has occurred**.
 - b) the concern must have **arisen within Mater** or one of the Mater entities.
 - c) the concern doesn't need to be about illegal activity, it might be a systemic issue that has relevance to the governance or regulation of the organisation.
 - d) the individual making the disclosure is not required to prove their allegations.
 - e) the **concern doesn't need to be proven**.
 - f) it might be triggered by concerns related to breaches of specific Commonwealth laws (as per section 9 Definitions).
 - Examples of eligible matters include; systemic issues of public interest that affect the quality and safety of Mater's services, misappropriation, theft or fraud, money laundering, involvement in bribery, financial irregularities, improper state of affairs (even where conduct is lawful), misuse of public resources, misuse of controlled substances, violence or threats of violence, criminal damage to property, posing a significant risk to public safety or the environment, or engaging in threatening or detrimental conduct against a discloser.

5.2 Ineligible matters

- i. Isolated personal work-related grievances are not eligible whistleblower matters. If a work-related grievance is accompanied by aspects consistent with 5.1 it may still qualify as a whistleblower matter. If a Mater person has a workplace grievance to raise, the processes within the Workplace Complaint Resolution (procedure) should be followed.
- ii. False or vexatious disclosures will not be considered as eligible whistleblower matters. A Mater person who makes a deliberate false or vexatious report may be disciplined and/or face liability for their actions.
- iii. Example of ineligible workplace grievances include; complaints about interpersonal conflict, concerns about management decisions that do not breach workplace laws, complaints related to the terms and conditions of employment.



5.3 Public interest and emergency disclosures

- i. A person having made an eligible disclosure can elect to make a public interest or emergency disclosure that also qualifies for protection.
- ii. The public interest or emergency disclosure must meet either the public interest or emergency disclosure test to ensure ongoing protection.
- iii. The disclosure may be made to a member of parliament or a qualified journalist provided the criteria below are addressed.
- iv. The person intending to make the disclosure should seek independent legal advice on whistleblower protection prior to proceeding with a public interest or emergency disclosure.

5.3.1 Public interest test

A disclosure made in the public interest may also qualify the individual for whistleblower protection if:

- i. The discloser has already made a qualifying whistleblower disclosure to an eligible recipient; and
- ii. 90 days have elapsed since the previous disclosure; and
- iii. The discloser does not have reasonable grounds to believe that action has been or is being taken in response to the disclosure; and
- iv. The discloser has reasonable grounds to believe that the disclosure is in the public interest; and
- v. The discloser has provided one of Mater's eligible recipients with notice of intent to make a public interest disclosure; and
- vi. The disclosure is made to a member of Parliament (Commonwealth or State) or a qualified journalist; and
- vii. The scope and volume of information provided in the public interest disclosure is limited, it should only provide the minimum necessary information to inform the recipient of the misconduct or improper state of affairs.

5.3.2 Emergency disclosure test

An emergency disclosure may qualify the discloser for protection if:

- i. the discloser has already made an eligible disclosure; and
- ii. the discloser has reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is associated with an imminent danger that affects the health or safety of one or more persons or to the environment in a substantial way; and
- iii. the discloser has provided one of Mater's eligible recipients with written notice that clearly identifies the previous disclosure and states that the discloser intends to make an emergency disclosure; and
- iv. the emergency disclosure is made to a member of Parliament (Commonwealth or State) or a qualified journalist; and



- v. The scope and volume of information provided in the emergency disclosure is limited, it should only provide the minimum necessary information to inform the recipient of the substantial imminent danger.
- vi. The discloser should ensure they have addressed their individual responsibilities for separate reporting as noted in 4.2.1 ii and iii above.

6. Making a disclosure (criteria to quality for protection)

6.1 Guidance for persons making a disclosure

- i. Before making a disclosure, the individual/s should confirm that they are an eligible discloser and the person they are disclosing to is an eligible recipient.
- ii. Contact details for Mater's eligible recipients are included in Appendix A. There are a variety of options available for making disclosures.
- iii. Whilst anonymity is fully supported, all disclosers are encouraged to consider providing their name and contact details. These details will be kept confidential. If the discloser is known to the investigators, this could facilitate confidential discussions and significantly improve the effectiveness of the investigation.
- iv. The person making the disclosure should provide as much information as possible. Evidence or information about how to obtain evidence will be valuable for the investigation.

6.1.1 Additional information for the discloser

- i. Mater will take all reasonable steps to ensure their identity is protected and they are not exposed to detriment.
- ii. The matter will be investigated appropriately, and confidential reports will be shared with the senior executive and board members responsible for governance.
- iii. The investigators would benefit from the opportunity to discuss the disclosure, but anonymity may be maintained.
- iv. The discloser may remain anonymous and still be eligible for protection.
- v. The discloser will not necessarily be absolved from the workplace or legal consequences of their involvement in any misconduct that is apparent in this disclosure or comes to light through investigation.
- vi. The discloser must be made aware that they must also maintain confidentiality.

6.1.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

- i. A discloser may make a disclosure anonymously and maintain their anonymity; this doesn't affect protections.



- ii. The discloser making the disclosure can refuse to answer questions they feel will reveal their identity.
- iii. If the discloser maintains anonymity, they are encouraged to stay in contact with the eligible recipient to support dialog and further questions. This will improve the quality of the investigation.
- iv. If a disclosure comes via email that is unidentifiable and remains that way, this should be treated as an anonymous disclosure.
- v. At any time after disclosure, the individual may choose to make their identity known and still maintain protections.
- vi. The discloser making the disclosure must also maintain absolute confidentiality about the matter.

6.1.3 Maintaining confidentiality and support

- i. All communications with an anonymous discloser should be through the eligible recipient or a person designated by the WPO.
- ii. The discloser seeking to maintain confidentiality, may be identified by a pseudonym or a reference number.
- iii. If the discloser is known to the eligible recipient, with the permission of the discloser, a support person is to be provided to maintain contact. This may be the initial recipient, it is not to be the investigator.

6.2 Legal protections for persons making a disclosure

6.2.1 Protections for disclosers

Protections provided to a discloser include the following:

- i. Unless specifically authorised under the Act, it is illegal for a person to identify a discloser or share information that may uncover the identity of a discloser.
- ii. A discloser may raise a complaint about breach of confidentiality by making another contact with an eligible recipient. Additionally, the discloser may raise a complaint with regulators like ASIC or APRA.
- iii. Provided there are no overriding legal reasons, a disclosure may be made anonymously and remain anonymous. Confidentiality must be scrupulously maintained.
- iv. These protections will be provided whether the disclosure was made internally or externally.
- v. Mater has an obligation to protect the discloser's identity. Every effort to ensure anonymity is required. The identity, if known, will only be shared with authorised persons. The WPO determines who is authorised in each case. The discloser may subsequently agree to be identified.
- vi. Details about the disclosure will also be protected. At all times, any information about the disclosure is classified as protected and access is to be restricted. The WPO determines the limits of circulation of this information.
- vii. Disclosure of details about the concern may occur if:



- a) the information does not identify the discloser.
 - b) the person disclosing has taken reasonable steps to deidentify the information to protect the discloser.
 - c) there are reasonable grounds to justify the release of the information to support completion of the investigation.
- viii. Where anonymity has been requested, the person making the disclosure must also maintain confidentiality and refrain from discussing the issue with anyone who is not authorised.
- ix. The discloser is also entitled to legal protections in relation to civil, criminal and administrative liabilities. Independent legal advice should be sought.
- x. The discloser may be entitled to compensation and other remedies.

6.2.2 Protection from detrimental acts or omissions

- i. A person must not engage in conduct that causes detriment to a discloser or another person because of the disclosure. Threats to cause detriment are also prohibited. Examples of detrimental conduct include, but are not limited to dismissal, demotion, harassment, and damage to reputation.
- ii. There are significant legal penalties associated with detrimental conduct as described at i above.
- iii. To the extent that it is within the power of Mater, the organisation will ensure that all measures that are reasonably practicable will be taken to ensure the discloser does not experience any detriment because of their disclosure. Mater takes responsibilities (to the extent of its control) for protecting the discloser from any detriment or reprisal in response to their disclosure.

6.3 Support and practical protection for disclosers

- i. In each instance of disclosure, the WPO will facilitate a risk assessment of possible detriment for the discloser; steps are to be taken to minimise the risk.
- ii. If the discloser is known to the WPO, the nominated support person is to make regular contact with the discloser to offer support.
- iii. Mater encourages the use of the confidential independent employee assistance schemes offered through Human Resources. These are to be offered and provided to the discloser.
- iv. A discloser may request consideration for relocation or leave during the investigation of a disclosure if anonymity is likely to be impossible.
- v. Mater recipients should immediately refer all eligible disclosures to the WPO.
- vi. Protections available to a discloser continues even where allegations are not substantiated.



7. The Investigation Process

7.1 Natural justice and procedural fairness

- i. All eligible disclosures are to be forwarded to the WPO, either directly from an eligible discloser, or via an eligible recipient.
- ii. Once made, a disclosure may not be withdrawn by the discloser.
- iii. Should the WPO be the subject of the disclosure, the Chair of the Board will assume WPO responsibilities.
- iv. Mater is required to investigate each eligible disclosure. Investigations will observe the rules of natural justice and the provisions of procedural fairness. Investigations will vary in their depth and complexity depending upon the nature of the disclosure, and will be carried out in a timely manner, with feedback to be regularly provided to the discloser.
- v. External experts may be engaged to conduct investigations. Any external party will also be bound by this policy.
- vi. All eligible disclosures are recorded in a protected register with restricted access.

7.2 Stages of investigation

The following key stages are followed by the WPO in conducting investigations:

- i. The WPO selects or appoints a suitable investigator and provides that investigator with terms of reference that include briefings on security of information, reporting and timeframes.
- ii. The investigation must be conducted in an objective and fair manner within the constraints of the nature of the disclosed matter.
- iii. The WPO determines when it is appropriate for the individual/s who are the subject of this disclosure to be made aware of the disclosure.
- iv. The WPO also coordinates providing appropriate feedback to the discloser if the individual is known to the WPO.
- v. The investigator must prepare a report of findings and present that to the WPO.
- vi. The WPO ensures the report is appropriately escalated for action.

7.3 Support and protection for individuals who are the subjects of disclosure

- i. The WPO should ensure that a suitable support person for individual/s mentioned in the disclosure is made available if required.
- ii. The identity of the individual/s who are the subject of disclosures must remain confidential throughout the process.
- iii. The support person must ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements within this policy, especially the aspects regarding confidentiality and protection of the discloser.



- iv. The support person must ensure the individual/s involved are offered access to confidential independent employee assistance services.
- v. The support person should be present when the individual/s are provided with information about the outcome.

8. Governance and reporting

8.1 Framework aspects

- i. This policy is to be made available for all Mater people in the Mater Policy and Procedures Library (internal) and on the Mater website for external persons.
- ii. Key Mater people will receive training on this policy, and regular communication updates will be provided as changes are made to the policy.
- iii. The WPO is required to prepare reports for the:
 - a. Mater GCEO.
 - b. Mater Group Leadership Team (GLT).
 - c. Compliance, Audit, Risk and Digital (CARD) Committee of the Board.
 - d. and the Chair of the Board.
- iv. Mater's Board is accountable for oversight of the whistleblower framework.
- v. Reports prepared for these governance bodies will contain information on protected disclosures received, progress on investigations and outcomes. At all times, the discloser protections must be maintained.
- vi. Over time the WPO should analyse disclosures for emerging risks, themes and trends to inform planning for future audit and improvement.
- vii. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, and the effectiveness of this framework will be audited from time to time.

8.2 Legislative compliance

- i. Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)
- ii. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- iii. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

8.3 Regulatory guidelines

- i. ASIC Regulatory Guide 270 Whistleblower Policies.



9. Definitions

Term	Definition
(the) 'Act'	Corporations Act 2001 (Cth).
Board	Board - includes the board of directors of Mater Misericordiae Ltd ACN 096 708 922
CARD Committee	Compliance, Audit, Risk and Digital Committee. This committee is the Board Committee authorised to review risk and audit responsibilities on the Board's behalf. CARD Committee replaced the Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee.
Discloser	The 'discloser' is an individual who is an eligible whistleblower, as defined in Part 9.4AAA of the Act.
Eligible whistleblower	An individual who has met the qualifying conditions for eligibility. ³
Mater or Mater Group	The entity Mater Misericordiae Limited ACN: 096 708 922 (Mater); this includes all subsidiaries of Mater.
Mater people	Mater people or a Mater person is anyone who carries out work for Mater. This includes employees, contractors, subcontractors and visiting medical officers. Additionally, this includes engaged employees of labour hire companies (e.g. nursing and midwifery agency staff), outworkers, apprentices and trainees, students, volunteers and persons conducting a business or undertaking who perform work for Mater. The term Mater people may refer to one or more individuals. The term 'Mater Person' is the singular of 'Mater People'. The Mater terms 'Mater People' and 'Mater Person' have the same meaning as the term 'worker' under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld).
Specific Commonwealth Laws	- Eligible matters for this policy are matters that constitute an offence against, or a contravention of, a provision of the: - Corporations Act 2001 (Cth); - Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001 (Cth); - Banking Act 1959 (Cth); - Financial Sector (Collection of Data) Act 2001 (Cth); - Insurance Act 1973 (Cth); - Life Insurance Act 1995 (Cth); - National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009 (Cth); - Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 (Cth) (SIS Act); or - an instrument made under an Act referred to in RG 270.54(a) (i-viii). - Additionally, eligible matters may also be defined as an offence or breaches against any other law of the Commonwealth that is punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more; or - Represents a danger to the public or the financial system; or - is prescribed by regulation.

³ See section 1317AAA of the Act



10. Documents related to this policy

Mater documents

- Workplace Complaint Resolution -02 PRO
- Code of Conduct Policy -01 POL
- Information Privacy Policy – State- wide-01 POL

External documents

- ASIC Regulatory Guide 270 Whistleblower policies 13 November 2019
- Brown, A J et al, Clean as a whistle: a five-step guide to better whistleblowing policy and practice in business and government. Key findings and actions of Whistling While They Work 2, Brisbane: Griffith University, August 2019.
- Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services: Whistleblower Protections 13 September 2017.
- Treasury Laws Amendment (Enhancing Whistleblower Protections) Act 2019 (Cth)



11. Appendix A – Contact details for Mater's eligible recipients

- These contact details must be made readily available to all persons with a relationship to Mater.
- Access must be available for anonymous and confidential disclosure both in and out of hours.

Eligible Recipient	Contact
Mater's Whistleblower Protection Officer • Ms. Denise Kerr	e: Denise.Kerr@mater.org.au
Mater's Group Chief Executive Officer • Ms. Julia Strickland-Bellamy	e: ceo@mater.org.au
Mater's Board representative for whistleblower matters • Mr. Patrick Brady – Board Chair	e: patrick.brady@mater.org.au
Mater's Group Executive Leadership	
• Ms. Alanna Jacoby – Chief of Mission	e: alanna.jacoby@mater.org.au
• Ms. Cathy Wilks - Chief People Culture & Learning Officer	e: Cathy.Wilks@mater.org.au
• Ms. Chris Went – Executive Director Mater Hospitals	e: Chris.Went@mater.org.au
• Mr. Christian Gordon – Executive Director Corporate Affairs	e: Christian.Gordon@mater.org.au
• Dr. Christopher Pyke – Chief Medical Officer	e: Christopher.Pyke@mater.org.au
• Ms. Denise Kerr - Corporate Governance & Company Secretary	e: Denise.Kerr@mater.org.au
• Ms. Fiona Hinchliffe – Executive Director Health Integration & Community Care	e: Fiona.Hinchliffe@mater.org.au
• Ms. Kerry Armstrong - Executive Director Development and infrastructure	e: Kerry.Armstrong@mater.org.au
• Dr. Mike Beckmann – Executive Director Mater Hospitals	e: Michael.Beckmann@mater.org.au
• Ms. Tanya Cain – Group Chief Financial Officer	e: tanya.cain@mater.org.au



12. Document information

12.1 Earlier revisions

Revision	Release date	Description
1.	17 Dec 2019	Release of version in the Mater Document Centre
1.	30 May 2022	Republished in the MPPL
2.00	12 April 2024	Updated Mater's eligible recipients. Approved by the Board on 04 April 2024
2.01	07 Jan 2025	Changes made to eligible recipients
2.02	07 Jan 2025	Administrative changes
2.03	28 Feb 2025	Minor changes made at the direction of the Company Secretary
2.04	22 Apr 2025	Amendments made to reflect changes in Executive team.
3.00	10 July 2026	Significant review and update made throughout text. Changes made to the WPO and identified eligible recipients. Tabled at Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee 26 May 2026 This version was also sent to Mater Legal on 12 June 2026.

12.2 Key contacts

Name	Position	Function
Ms. Denise Kerr	Corporate Governance & Company Secretary	Document Owner
Ms. Denise Kerr	Corporate Governance & Company Secretary	Review
	Members of GLT	Consulted
	Members of the CARD Committee (as FRACC) on 26 May 2026	Consulted
Mr. Justin Sharp	Legal Review requested 12 June 2026	Consulted
	Board	Authorised

Affirmation

This governance document is consistent with [Mater's Mission](#).
© Copyright Mater 2026 Misericordiae Limited. All Rights Reserved.

