

Speaking up at the RNLI: When to do it and how to do it

The RNLI has launched a new whistleblowing hotline run by a third-party organisation called Safecall. The service is available for volunteers (and staff) to use (see the full details further down).

Calling the whistleblowing hotline (or using the online reporting form) should take place when a person needs to raise an organisational concern. This is any illegal, unethical or bad practice that you may suspect, such as a suspicion of fraud, or a serious health and safety concern for example.

The way to raise a non-organisational concern is by chatting to your volunteer manager, or following the Volunteer Problem Solving Process.

The hotline has been set up as part of a wider piece of work which is looking at how people can raise concerns and speak up if they have a problem or think that something they've come across at the RNLI is not right. It's really important that all RNLI people feel that they are able to raise concerns and are aware of the options available to them. [Our values](#) encourage us to be courageous and operate in an environment where we respect each other. Speaking up is an important way of doing this. Everyone who volunteers at the RNLI agrees to behave by the Volunteer Code of Conduct and it's important that anyone who doesn't is held accountable.

Being able to contribute our opinions, ideas and concerns is very important and should be taken seriously. Being really clear on all the options available for people to speak up will help us deal with challenges in the best way and it makes us feel we can trust one another and the organisation.

It is important to try and raise any concerns openly so the matter can be discussed and fully explored, but there are ways to do so anonymously too if this is more comfortable for you.

Accessing support:

- **An open and respectful conversation**

Where possible it's always best to begin by having a respectful conversation with the person or persons involved before escalating a problem. Find out first if it is something that can be resolved through an open conversation.

- **Your Volunteer Manager**

We encourage you to raise any issues or concerns with your manager as quickly as possible, they will help you to clarify the nature of the issue and work with you on suggested solutions to rectify problems, rather than remain silent and risk the issue or problem escalating. Your volunteer manager is your day to day point of contact and best placed to listen and respond to you, helping you or signposting others who are best placed to progress your ideas or concerns.

- **Volunteer Adviser for your area**

We always encourage you to speak to your Volunteer Manager in the first instance. However, if this is not appropriate, you could contact your local

Volunteer Adviser. There are Volunteer Advisers in each region who will be able to guide you in the most appropriate way. Contact volunteering@rnli.org.uk for more information.

- **Inclusion and Diversity Manager, Safeguarding Officer, Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team.**

Sometimes we want to talk about things that are personal to us, seek guidance advice and support from people who are experienced and trained in helping others so that we can thrive, be ourselves and support others to do the same. We have a number of people that you can contact and talk to and who are on hand to help. Talk to your Volunteer Manager who can help put you in touch.

- **Our Mediation Team**

A mediation service is available to help people who are in conflict with each other sort out their differences quickly, respectfully and confidentially with the help of a trained mediator. To access this service, speak to your Volunteer Adviser on volunteering@rnli.org.uk

- **Volunteer Problem Solving Process**

Occasionally, a volunteer may have a problem or concern which needs to be addressed. Similarly, the RNLI may need to raise concerns and take action with a volunteer over their conduct, approach, suitability or availability for a role or other issue. This process is there to provide a clear approach and explains what to expect. Talk to your Volunteer Manager who can help put you in touch.

- **Raising Organisational Concerns Process (Whistleblowing)**

Organisational Concerns are different to workplace concerns. They are about issues or incidents that are so serious to the running of our organisation that we have a duty to take action. These can include situations such as someone's health and/or safety has been put in danger due to an action or inaction, a criminal offence being committed, a failure to obey the law, or a malpractice or wrongdoing that has been covered up. We have a whistleblowing process and procedure [to be included as a link once live on the Volunteer Zone] in place and have launched a whistleblowing hotline to make it easier for you to raise these issues. Here is how you can make contact:

Freephone confidential hotline number

- 0800 9151571 (UK)
- 1800 812740 (Republic of Ireland)

Online form web address

- www.safecall.co.uk/report