

HOW THE CSIR FRAUD AND ETHICS HOTLINE WORKS



1. How do I disclose wrongdoing within the CSIR?

The preferred method for reporting any criminal, unethical or deceitful behaviour by management, employees or service providers of the CSIR is to inform your manager or supervisor directly. If you do not feel comfortable informing your manager or supervisor, or if you have already done so and no action has been taken, then you should approach any support function representative to whom your complaint relates.

2. When do I make use of the CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline?

When you have exhausted all internal channels or if you do not feel comfortable or safe disclosing the information to your direct manager, superior or support representative, you can then submit your complaint to the CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline.

3. How do I make use of the website?

Should you wish to disclose any wrongdoing via the website, please access the CSIR Whistleblower Hotline button on the intranet and the internet sites. After doing so, you will be prompted to answer questions relating to the wrongdoing that you wish to report, as well as whether or not you wish to remain anonymous. Please provide us with as much information as possible because detailed information is essential for investigating a complaint.

4. What happens once I have provided the information?

The CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline is managed by Vuvuzela Hotline (Pty) Ltd, an external service provider that is completely independent of the CSIR. Once you have submitted your complaint, Vuvuzela will forward the information to a designated CSIR representative(s) for further handling and investigation. The information you provide is sanitised by Vuvuzela prior to being sent to the CSIR. What this means is that any detail that could reveal your identity is removed (unless you specifically authorise Vuvuzela to reveal your identity in the report that is forwarded).

5. How can I be sure that my identity is protected?

Your identity is protected in terms of the requirements of the Protected Disclosures Act 2000 (Act 26 of 2000) (PDA). However, it is strongly advised to disclose your identity if you are reporting any form of harassment case, as your identity will be key in the investigation process.

6. How do I know that anything will be done about the information that I might forward?

The CSIR and its management are committed to the CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline process and its success. This commitment ensures that all complaints are followed up on. The CSIR has made this facility available to its staff and stakeholders, as it wishes to promote a culture of honesty and respectful conduct within its working environments. Be assured that all complaints will be investigated. Generally, an investigation is confidential and takes some time to complete, so in most cases, information relating to the investigation will not be available to the person who submitted the complaint.

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7. What happens if someone does not like someone else and uses the line to spread harmful stories (malicious call)?

The CSIR strongly discourages malicious reports. The Vuvuzela contact centre agents and report analysts are trained to identify malicious calls. These calls are filtered and flagged as being malicious before being forwarded to the CSIR. Remember that a complaint is merely an allegation of wrongdoing, and that proper evidence and proof must be obtained before any action can be taken against the person reported. In order to afford the complainant protection, the disclosure must satisfy the requirements of a proper disclosure, as per the PDA.

8. The importance of good faith reporting?

Reports of wrongdoing must be made in good faith. This means that the complainant must not abuse the facility by knowingly and purposely providing false or misleading information.

9. Why do the call centre agents ask me questions when I call the CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline?

The call centre agents are trained to obtain the information required to conduct an investigation. Callers usually possess valuable information that they may not be aware of; the call centre agents will ask probing questions to guide you through the reporting process and to obtain the relevant information from you.

10. Can the complainant follow up on investigations?

Complainants can follow up on investigations. Each complaint is allocated a unique reference number, which the complainant can utilise at a later stage to determine whether or not feedback on the matter reported is available. Any investigation conducted into a complaint is generally confidential and may take time to complete; thus, in some instances, the information relating to the investigation may not be available to the complainant.

11. How do I track a complaint or add more information?

If you submitted your complaint via one of the other CSIR Fraud and Ethics Hotline means of contact and require feedback, kindly contact the Vuvuzela Hotline call centre telephonically and provide your unique reference number.
