

Notts County FC Supporters Association (NCFCSA)

Whistleblowing Policy

Policy Version: 1.0

Approved by: NCFCSA Committee

Review Date: Annually

1. Policy Statement

The Notts County FC Supporters Association (NCFCSA) is committed to conducting its affairs with honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage members, volunteers, committee members and others associated with NCFCSA to raise genuine concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice or unethical behaviour without fear of retaliation.

NCFCSA recognises that individuals may sometimes be the first to become aware of concerns that need to be addressed and encourages anyone with a genuine concern to report it promptly.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

Encourage the reporting of concerns in the public interest.

Provide a safe and confidential way to raise concerns.

Ensure concerns are investigated fairly and appropriately.

Protect whistleblowers from victimisation or retaliation.

Promote a culture of openness and accountability.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

Members of NCFCSA.

Committee members and officers.

Volunteers.

Individuals acting on behalf of NCFCSA.

Any person involved in NCFCSA activities.

4. What Should Be Reported?

Concerns that may be raised under this policy include, but are not limited to:

Financial Misconduct

Fraud or attempted fraud.

Theft or misuse of Association funds.

Falsification of financial records.

Improper financial management.

Legal or Regulatory Breaches

Criminal offences.

Failure to comply with legal obligations.

Breaches of data protection requirements.

Serious breaches of the Association's constitution or policies.

Health and Safety Concerns

Practices that may endanger members, volunteers or the public.

Failure to address known safety risks.

Unethical Conduct

Abuse of position or authority.

Serious conflicts of interest.

Corruption or bribery.

Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing.

Discrimination and Harassment

Serious breaches of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Bullying, harassment or victimisation.

5. What Is Not Covered?

This policy is not intended for:

Personal grievances or disagreements that do not involve wrongdoing.

Routine complaints about decisions made by the Committee.

Issues already covered by another Association procedure.

Such matters should be raised through the appropriate complaints or disciplinary process.

6. Raising a Concern

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible and should include:

The nature of the concern.

Relevant dates and locations.

Names of those involved (where known).

Any supporting evidence available.

Concerns may be raised:

In writing.

By email.

In person to the Chairperson, Secretary or another Committee member.

If the concern relates to the Chairperson, it should be raised directly with another Committee Officer.

Anonymous disclosures will be considered, although the ability to investigate may be limited where insufficient information is provided.

7. Confidentiality

NCFCSA will make every reasonable effort to protect the identity of a person raising a concern.

Information will only be shared where necessary to properly investigate the matter or where disclosure is required by law.

All parties involved in an investigation will be expected to maintain confidentiality.

8. Investigation Process

Upon receiving a concern:

The concern will be acknowledged as soon as reasonably practicable.

An initial assessment will be carried out.

A proportionate investigation will be undertaken where appropriate.

Findings will be reported to the Committee or relevant officer.

Appropriate action will be taken where wrongdoing is identified.

The whistleblower may be informed of the outcome where appropriate, subject to confidentiality and legal obligations.

9. Protection for Whistleblowers

NCFCSA will not tolerate victimisation, retaliation or detrimental treatment against any individual who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

Examples include:

Harassment or intimidation.

Exclusion from Association activities.

Unfair treatment.

Threats or pressure to withdraw concerns.

Any individual found to have victimised a whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

10. Malicious or False Allegations

Concerns raised in good faith will not result in any penalty, even if an investigation finds no wrongdoing.

However, knowingly making false, malicious or vexatious allegations may result in disciplinary action.

11. Record Keeping

The Association will maintain appropriate records of whistleblowing reports, investigations and outcomes.

Records will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and retained only for as long as necessary.

12. Responsibility

The NCFCSA Committee is responsible for:

Promoting awareness of this policy.

Ensuring concerns are handled appropriately.

Reviewing the effectiveness of the policy.

Maintaining a culture of openness and accountability.

All members and volunteers are encouraged to support these principles.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation, governance requirements or organisational needs.