

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION ANNUAL PROTECTED DISCLOSURES REPORT 2023

Protected Disclosures Act 2014 as amended by the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022

The Department is committed to fostering an appropriate environment for addressing concerns relating to potential wrongdoing in the workplace and to providing the necessary support for staff that raise genuine concerns. The Act requires public bodies to establish and maintain reporting channels and procedures for dealing with protected disclosures and to provide written information relating to these procedures to workers. The Department has internal reporting channels and such procedures in place, details of which are published on gov.ie.

Four submissions were made in 2023 to the Department under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 (as amended by the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022).

The following information is provided in respect of 2023:

Detail requested under S.22	Detail
(a) the number of reports made to the public body, prescribed person or Commissioner;	4(+1 case b/f)
(b) in the case of the Commissioner, the number of reports transmitted to the Commissioner under section 8 of the Act;	2
(c) in the case of the Commissioner, the number of reports transmitted by the Commissioner under section 10C(1)(b) or 10D(1)(b)(ii) to another suitable person (within the meaning of section 10C or 10D, as the case may be);	n/a
(d) the number of reports transmitted to the public body, prescribed person or Commissioner, as the case may be, under sections 7, 10B, 10C and 10D;	0
(e) in respect of each report referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d), whether the relevant wrongdoing concerned was a breach;	No breach found in four cases. One case was not finalised at year end.
(f) the number of investigations and proceedings opened by the public body, prescribed person or	4 (The four cases outlined per(a) to (d) were

Commissioner in relation to the relevant wrongdoings concerned as a result of the reports referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d);	assessed, with one case still to be finalised)
(g) the number of investigations and proceedings opened, in the years preceding the year in respect of which the report is being made, by the public body, prescribed person or Commissioner in relation to the relevant wrongdoings concerned that remain open;	0
(h) the number of investigations and proceedings closed by the public body, prescribed person or Commissioner in relation to the relevant wrongdoings concerned as a result of the reports referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d);	4
(i) in respect of each closed investigation or proceedings referred to in paragraph (h), the outcome of the investigation or proceedings and the decision taken by the public body, prescribed person or Commissioner;	<p>Cases 1 & 2: Both had duplicated info provided under previous reports. No further action deemed necessary.</p> <p>Case 3 Outcome and decision was that no wrongdoing occurred, and no further action was deemed necessary.</p> <p>Case 4: Closed for PD purposes, no further action required. Info is now part of SIU intelligence re external fraud.</p>
(j) where relevant and in so far as it can be ascertained, the estimated financial damage and the amounts recovered following any investigation and proceedings referred to in paragraph (h);	Not relevant.
(k) such other information relating to the performance of the functions of public bodies, prescribed bodies or the Commissioner, as the case may be under this Act, as may be requested by the Minister.	n/a

Summary of Submissions under the protected disclosures procedures since introduction of the Act in 2014				
Year	B/f from prev. year	Received	Assessed & completed	C/f to next year
2014		1	0	1
2015	1	1	2	0
2016	0	1	0	1
2017	1	10	7	4
2018	4	16	20	0
2019	0	9	9	0
2020	0	1	1	0
2021	0	5	1	4
2022	4	4	7	1
2023	1	4	4	1
2024	1			
Total		52	51	

The effective date of this report is 31 December 2023 and was published in March 2024.