

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE REGULATIONS

As in force at 1 January 2014

Table of provisions

1	Citation.....	1
2	Commencement.....	1
3	Definitions.....	1
4	Making public interest disclosure whether orally or in writing	1
5	Acknowledgment of receipt of disclosure.....	2
6	Commissioner to keep contact with discloser.....	3
7	Request for relocation.....	3
8	Prescription of person or body as referral body.....	4
9	Witness expenses	4
10	Guideline for reasonable time.....	4

ENDNOTES

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

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PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE REGULATIONS

Regulations under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

1 Citation

These Regulations may be cited as the *Public Interest Disclosure Regulations*.

2 Commencement

These Regulations commence on the commencement of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008*.

3 Definitions

In these Regulations:

investigation means an investigation under Part 3 of the Act.

recipient means any of the following to whom a public interest disclosure is made:

- (a) the Speaker;
- (b) the Commissioner, including if a disclosure is referred;
- (c) a responsible chief executive.

referred means referred to the Commissioner under section 12 of the Act.

4 Making public interest disclosure whether orally or in writing

- (1) This regulation prescribes the procedure for making a public interest disclosure as mentioned in section 11 of the Act.
- (2) For a public interest disclosure to be made orally to a recipient, the discloser must:
 - (a) speak in person with the recipient (that is, both the discloser and recipient must be physically present for the disclosure); or

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- (b) speak to, or leave a message for, the recipient by telephone or using some other form of electronic communication (other than a form that is in writing).
- (3) For a public interest disclosure to be made in writing to a recipient, the discloser must address the disclosure to, or otherwise mark it for, the recipient's attention and:
 - (a) send the disclosure to a postal or email address for the recipient; or
 - (b) deliver the disclosure to, or leave it for, the recipient at an office used by the recipient for his or her official business.
 - (4) If a recipient reasonably suspects a public interest disclosure is about to be made, or is being made, the recipient must, with the discloser's agreement, take reasonable steps to ensure privacy during the disclosure.

5 Acknowledgment of receipt of disclosure

- (1) This regulation applies to a public interest disclosure made to a recipient but does not apply if the disclosure is made anonymously or a postal or email address was not given by the discloser as part of making the disclosure.
- (2) Within 14 days after the day of the receipt of the public interest disclosure by the recipient, the recipient must acknowledge its receipt by written notice to the discloser sent to a postal or email address given as part of making the disclosure.

Note for subregulation (2)

If the Speaker receives a public interest disclosure, the Speaker must acknowledge receipt within 14 days after the day of receipt by the Speaker. If the Speaker refers the disclosure and the Commissioner receives it, the Commissioner must acknowledge receipt within 14 days after the day of the receipt by the Commissioner.

- (3) If the recipient referred the public interest disclosure, the notice acknowledging receipt must state that fact and the date of the referral.
- (4) If a person giving information to the Speaker, the Commissioner or a responsible chief executive purports to be making a public interest disclosure but the information is not a public interest disclosure, the Speaker, Commissioner or chief executive must acknowledge its receipt by giving notice under this regulation to the person as if the information were a public interest disclosure.

6 Commissioner to keep contact with discloser

- (1) The Commissioner must keep contact with the discloser of a public interest disclosure, by giving information to the discloser about the status of the investigation relating to the disclosure, at times the Commissioner considers reasonable in the circumstances.
- (2) Subregulation (1) does not apply if the discloser has expressly stated he or she does not wish to have that contact.
- (3) If the discloser asks the Commissioner for information about the investigation's status, the Commissioner must give information about the status to the discloser within 28 days after the day of the request.
- (4) The Commissioner is not required to give information under subregulation (1) or (3) unless satisfied it is reasonable to do so.
- (5) Without limiting subregulation (4), it is not reasonable to give information if:
 - (a) the information has already been given to the discloser or is publicly available; or
 - (b) giving the information requested would endanger the safety of any person or prejudice the conduct of an investigation.

7 Request for relocation

- (1) This regulation applies if, under section 18 of the Act, a public officer requests relocation but he or she is not relocated by agreement within 28 days after the day of the request.
- (2) The responsible chief executive must give the public officer a written notice stating:
 - (a) the reason why relocation has not taken place; and
 - (b) if the reason is that the chief executive is not satisfied there are reasonable grounds for the request – the following:
 - (i) the reasons why the chief executive is not satisfied;
 - (ii) a statement that the public officer may apply under section 19 of the Act for a review of the decision.
- (3) Despite subregulation (2), the responsible chief executive is not required to give information if giving it would prejudice the conduct of an investigation or endanger the safety of any person.

8 Prescription of person or body as referral body

(1) For section 22(1)(d) of the Act, the following are prescribed:

- (a) the Commissioner for Public Employment;
- (b) the Work Health Authority;
- (c) the Children's Commissioner.

(2) In this regulation:

Children's Commissioner means the Children's Commissioner mentioned in section 9 of the *Children's Commissioner Act*.

Commissioner for Public Employment, means the person holding or occupying the position of the Commissioner for Public Employment under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

Work Health Authority means the Work Health Authority continued under the *Work Health Administration Act*.

9 Witness expenses

(1) This regulation applies to a person required to attend for examination under section 27 of the Act except if he or she is:

- (a) a public officer under investigation; or
- (b) a public officer who continues to receive his or her ordinary pay while attending for examination and whose leave entitlements are not affected by the attendance.

(2) The person is entitled to be paid the actual expenses reasonably incurred by the person for each of the following:

- (a) travel to and from the place the person is required to attend;
- (b) accommodation and sustenance while required to be absent from his or her usual place of residence.

10 Guideline for reasonable time

(1) The purpose of this regulation is to provide a guideline for the Commissioner in relation to what is a reasonable time as mentioned in section 34 of the Act.

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- (2) The Commissioner must consider that for a discloser a maximum period of 28 days is likely to be a reasonable time for doing something unless another period is agreed to as being a reasonable time in the circumstances.

ENDNOTES
1 KEY

Key to abbreviations

amd = amended	od = order
app = appendix	om = omitted
bl = by-law	pt = Part
ch = Chapter	r = regulation/rule
cl = clause	rem = remainder
div = Division	renum = renumbered
exp = expires/expired	rep = repealed
f = forms	s = section
<i>Gaz</i> = <i>Gazette</i>	sch = Schedule
hdg = heading	sdiv = Subdivision
ins = inserted	SL = Subordinate Legislation
lt = long title	sub = substituted
nc = not commenced	

2 LIST OF LEGISLATION***Public Interest Disclosure Regulations (SL No. 26, 2009)***

Notified	22 July 2009
Commenced	31 July 2009 (r 2, s 2 <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2008</i> (Act No. 38, 2008) and <i>Gaz</i> G25, 24 June 2009, p 2)

Public Interest Disclosure Amendment Regulations 2011 (SL No. 45, 2011)

Notified	2 November 2011
Commenced	2 November 2011

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Implementation Act 2011 (Act No. 38, 2011)

Assent date	14 December 2011
Commenced	1 January 2012 (<i>Gaz</i> S78, 30 December 2011)

Children's Commissioner Act 2013 (Act No. 33, 2013)

Assent date	18 December 2013
Commenced	1 January 2014 (<i>Gaz</i> S72, 23 December 2013)

3 LIST OF AMENDMENTS

r 8 amd No. 45, 2011, r 3; Act No. 38, 2011, s 31; Act No. 33, 2013, s 80