

## Annual Report on Protected Disclosures, Irish Prison Service 2018

### Introduction

Under Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 each public body is required to publish an annual report setting out the number of protected disclosures received in the preceding year and the action taken (if any). This report must not result in persons making disclosures being identifiable.

### Irish Prison Service Protected Disclosures policy 2018

The Irish Prison Service issued a new Protected Disclosures Policy on 1st July 2018. The Policy is aimed at supporting the Irish Prison Service's values, ensuring employees can raise concerns about relevant wrongdoing which come to their attention in connection with their employment, without fear of penalisation and providing a transparent and confidential process for dealing with concerns.

The principal objectives are to encourage staff to make Protected Disclosures at the earliest opportunity and to provide protection where such disclosures are made. The procedures are designed to ensure that all protected disclosures will be subject to an independent investigation followed by appropriate action, based on the investigation findings.

### Implementation of the Policy

To support the implementation of the policy the Irish Prison Service has committed to

- (1) *the Integrity at Work Programme Membership* and the *Integrity at Work Pledge* with Transparency International Ireland. Staff are made aware of the *Transparency International Ireland Speak Up Helpline 1800 844 866* for **independent guidance** on reporting a concern or making a protected disclosure.
- (2) A dedicated **Protected Disclosure Manager** for the Irish Prison Service has been appointed. A dedicated confidential email address [speakup@irishprisons.ie](mailto:speakup@irishprisons.ie) and Post Box Number has been set up.
- (3) The revised policy provides for enhanced **independent external assessment and investigation**. All assessments, investigations and reviews of protected disclosures made under the revised policy are conducted externally.

Table 1 is a summary of Disclosures received by the Irish Prison Service from 1 July 2018 and status of the disclosures at end December 2018. Four disclosures were received for examination under the protected disclosures policy of which one did not meet the requirements of the Protected Disclosures Act. This was closed following preliminary assessment and the matter raised was resolved under HR policy. Three are currently under investigation.

**Table 1: Disclosures received in 2018 by the Irish Prison Service**

<b>Number of Protected Disclosures made to the Prison Service in 2018</b>	<b>Action taken in response to such Protected Disclosures in a form which does not enable the identification of persons involved in protected disclosures</b>
4	Allegations received for examination under Protected Disclosures policy
1	Alleged disclosure closed following preliminary assessment. Matter was resolved under HR policy.
3	Disclosures put forward for investigation

Note: A further 11 Disclosures were received by the Department of Justice and Equality in 2018 relating to the Irish Prison Service.