

CSA Releases Free Guide to Whistleblower Systems



'Whistleblowing' is the act of reporting suspected wrongdoing, mismanagement or unethical or illegal conduct in an organization, such as violations of the OHS laws. Whistleblowers are protected by law from reprisal. So if a worker reports his employer for, say, failing to provide necessary PPE, the employer can't discipline or fire him for doing so.

But despite such protections, potential whistleblowers don't always speak up when they have safety or other concerns. So the CSA Group recently published a new guideline to help organizations empower employees to report suspected issues at work within the framework of both corporate ethics and compliance as well as an OHS program.

'Promoting and maintaining ethical practices can help organizations create an innovative workplace where employees actively contribute to the advancement of the organization. This helps improve the overall performance of the company and creates a positive workplace,' said Gianluca Arcari, Executive Director, Standards and Vice President, CSA Group. 'CSA Group is proud that this new guideline can provide the basis for a culture that encourages employees to speak up and take an active role in supporting ethical practices at work.'

The new guideline on whistleblowing systems, which is available as a free download at [CSA Group Communities](#), was developed to help organizations establish and manage an effective mechanism for whistleblowing activities. The guideline:

- Provides a background on existing Canadian laws and codes related to whistleblowing (for example, read about the whistleblower protections under Canada's criminal law and environmental laws)
- Summarizes the key performance benefits associated with a whistleblowing system
- Highlights key planning considerations
- Defines the common critical elements of a whistleblowing system
- Provides recommendations for an appropriate implementation approach
- Identifies the target outcomes of a successful system
- Addresses the most critical issues in developing an effective system, including the challenge of protecting whistleblowers from reprisals.

The CSA also recommends that the guideline be used along with the standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace to set up a comprehensive OHS management system that promotes accountability and gives workers a voice and influence within their workplace.