



Review

Key principles

- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Safety and welfare
- Professional care and competence
- Thoroughness
- Independence
- Planning and review
- Respect for all concerned
- Timeframes
- Working in partnership with others
- National authorities

Basic rules (principles) of conducting an investigation

- Investigating the allegations, not an individual
- “Presumption of innocence”
- The investigator is not the decision-maker
- The investigator does not make moral judgments relating to any of the parties of the complaint

Stages of investigations

1. Receive allegations
2. Decide whether to investigate
3. Plan the investigation
4. Gather and study background material and documentary evidence
5. Revisit investigation plan
6. Interview witnesses
7. Write investigation report
8. Conclude the investigation

Gathering Information

Gathering information: sources of information

- Testimony (including that of experts)
- Information about the subject of the complaint (SOC)
- Information about complainant; victim and witnesses documentation
- Previous complaints
- Research
- Examination of locations

Gathering information: documentation

- Written complaint
- Application for post and previous history
- Personnel/HR information
- Previous complaints against subject
- Information previously given in similar incidents about/by others
- Previous statements made by witnesses
- Information relating to policy and/or procedure
- Logs/rosters, stockpiles, photos, emails, etc.

Gathering information: info about SOC

- Timelines
- Personnel knowledge
- Employment status (during and prior to current post if possible)
- Personnel file
- Interview
- Behaviors

Interviewing Victims and Witnesses

Interview stages

Phase one – establishing rapport

- Clarify purpose
- Explain ground rules
- Engage witness

Interview stages

Phase two – free narrative account

- Victim's/witness's account of relevant events
- Investigator acts only as facilitator, not interrogator

Interview stages

Phase three – questioning

Use simple, appropriate questions that follow this sequence:

- Open ended
- Specific
- Closed
- Leading (last resort only!)

Interview stages

Phase four – closure

- Summary
- Answer any questions
- Advice on next steps
- Thank you
- Return to rapport and neutral topics

The Investigation Report

Scope/purpose of investigation report

- Address evidence that supports or refutes the complaint (where it exists)
- Evaluate evidence against specific stipulations of your organization's code of conduct regarding SEA
- Provide sufficient evidence to back conclusions and findings
- Disciplinary action should be decided by the senior HR staff or designated manager, not by the investigator

Structure of the report

- Executive summary (usually written last)
- Introduction
- Methodology
- Analysis of findings
- Outcomes and conclusions
- Recommendations

Personal reflection: your 3 greatest challenges

- Related to investigating allegations of SEA

Consider ...

- Knowledge, Skills, Abilities
- Confidence, Courage
- Work environment (politics, personalities)
- Support network

Next Steps for this group

