

Technical Alert

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New guidance on the application of professional standards to whistleblowing

The Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board (APESB) has today released new guidance to support accountants when dealing with whistleblowing and related confidentiality concerns.

Whistleblower laws in Australia aim to protect the confidentiality of individuals who blow the whistle and ensure they are not victimised for doing so. Professional accountants' roles in various businesses, public sector entities and serving clients in public practice make it more likely that they will encounter situations involving whistleblowing, whether as the recipient of information or as the party who discovers actual or suspected breaches of laws and regulations.

The *Whistleblowing & Confidentiality - APESB Technical Staff Publication* provides guidance on applying APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* and other APESB pronouncements to situations that may lead to whistleblowing. The publication contains eight hypothetical scenarios which cover both Members in Business and Members in Public Practice, including auditors.

The case studies do not provide a guide to the application of the whistleblower protection legislation. Members involved in circumstances that may lead to whistleblowing are strongly encouraged to seek legal advice or speak to their respective Professional Body to understand their legal and professional obligations.

The publication is available to download on the APESB website: www.apesb.org.au.

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