



## OUR INTERNAL REPORTING CENTRE

The protection and well being of our employees, our customers and our suppliers and subcontractors are very important to our company. At the same time, we are aware of our social responsibility. It is therefore important to us that we are fully compliant with the legal requirements placed on our company at all times. The more people who closely monitor our work processes, the quicker any irregularities will become apparent. However, it is important that we actually receive reports of such problems. We would therefore like to offer an easy way to provide us with information about possible violations.

## WHO CAN MAKE A REPORT?

For this purpose, you can register via the link below

- our **employees**,
- temporary workers assigned to us and
- In addition, all other natural persons who are in contact with our company in the course of their professional activities,

contact us with a report.

## HOW CAN I CONTACT THE REPORTING CENTRE?

Notifications can be submitted in text form at <https://dilo.sicherhinweisen.de>.

Alternatively, you can contact our hotline by **telephone** at **+49 (0)821 - 59 98 11 - 15**

**Anonymous reports** are **also** possible. If you wish, you can also make an appointment with our reporting centre for a personal meeting.

## HOW CAN YOU REPORT?

The content of such a report can be **certain** actual or potential **illegal actions**, but also an **illegal omission**. One example of this is an action that is prohibited under criminal law. Another example is an action that can be penalised with a fine and whose prohibition serves to protect the rights of employees. The **prerequisite** is that the relevant act or omission was committed as part of a professional, entrepreneurial or official activity in connection with our company and the whistleblower is aware of this offence. However, it is also sufficient if such an act or omission is very likely to occur in the future. It is also sufficient if the whistleblower - i.e. you - has reasonable grounds to suspect such an offence.

However, a report may contain an **attempt to conceal** such violations, provided that the whistleblower is aware of this attempt or has reasonable grounds for suspecting such an attempt.





## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY REPORT?

Our reporting centre will confirm **receipt of** your message within seven days at the latest. Your message will be **documented**, recordings or verbatim transcripts require your consent. We will then check whether your message relates to a relevant legal offence and whether it is valid. The Reporting Centre may ask you for further information. In any case, **it will keep in touch with you**. In addition, our Reporting Centre will take **appropriate follow-up measures** - this may mean closing the case due to lack of evidence, but of course also conducting an internal investigation or handing the case over to the competent authority. In principle, you will receive **notification** of planned and already taken follow-up measures and the reasons for these measures no later than three months after confirmation of receipt of your report. The documentation will generally be deleted three years after the proceedings have been concluded.

## HOW AM I PROTECTED?

We have entrusted PROTEQO GmbH with the operation of our reporting centre. This means that your reports do not initially reach anyone in our company, but are received by PROTEQO GmbH. This is an **independent** reporting centre.

PROTEQO GmbH will **protect your identity as** well as the identity of all other persons you name in your report. The **prerequisite** for your protection is that the reported information concerns offences that fall within the scope of the Act for Better Protection of Whistleblowers (HinSchG). However, it is sufficient that you had reasonable grounds to believe that this was the case at the time of the report. The identity of the named persons is generally only known to those who are responsible for receiving reports or for taking follow-up measures, as well as to the persons who support them in the fulfilment of these tasks. Your identity is also protected with regard to circumstances that allow conclusions to be drawn about your identity. **Exceptions** to the protection of identity apply, for example, in criminal proceedings at the request of the criminal prosecution authorities. **Access to the reports** is also **restricted**.

The HinSchG, which our reporting centre complies with, also provides for **protective measures for whistleblowers who** have properly contacted the reporting centre. The **prerequisite** is that the whistleblower had reasonable grounds to believe that the information they reported was true at the time of reporting. It is also a prerequisite that the information relates to offences that fall within the scope of the HinSchG. However, it is also sufficient in this respect that the whistleblower had reasonable grounds to believe that this was the case at the time of the report. These protective measures then include, **for example, the prohibition of reprisals**, e.g. the prohibition of unjustified dismissal in response to the report. Under certain conditions, third parties are also subject to these protective measures.

At the same time, the HinSchG **releases** you from contractual and legal **confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations** for reports to the competent reporting centre. The prerequisite is that you had sufficient reason to believe that the disclosure of the content of the respective information is necessary to uncover an offence. Another prerequisite is that you had sufficient reason to believe at the time of the report that the information you reported was true. It is also a prerequisite that the information relates to violations that fall within the scope of the HinSchG or that you had reasonable grounds to believe that this was the case at the time of the report.





## WHO ELSE CAN I TURN TO?

The HinSchG stipulates that you should prioritise reporting to the internal reporting office, provided that effective internal action can be taken against the violation and you do not fear reprisals. We would also like to **strongly encourage** you to first contact our reporting centre with your information. This is because any problems can of course be solved much more easily if we are made aware of them as quickly as possible - and the quickest way is via PROTEQO GmbH.

At the same time, however, you are free to contact **an external reporting centre**. This applies, for example, if an offence reported to our reporting office has not been remedied. You can therefore **report** to the external reporting centres **in particular everything that you could also report to our reporting centre**. The **procedure** after submitting your report is essentially the same for external reporting centres as for our reporting centre.

In the follow-up measures, however, the external reporting centre is of course not entitled to conduct internal investigations. Instead, it can request comprehensive information from the persons concerned, insofar as this is necessary to verify the validity of your report. In addition to a response after three months at the latest, you will also receive a notification from the external reporting centre about the results of the investigations triggered by your report once they have been completed. However, the external reporting centre can also close the procedure on the grounds of insignificance. It can also close it because your report concerns a matter for which proceedings have already been concluded under the HinSchG. The prerequisite for this is that your message does not contain any new facts and no other new circumstances justify a different procedure. In addition, the external reporting office must always forward your report to the office responsible for investigating, preventing and prosecuting the offence if it is not responsible or is overloaded. The external reporting centre will also inform you accordingly in all these cases of forwarding or closure.

In any case, **your protection** corresponds to that described above in the case of an external reporting office.

## EXTERNAL REPORTING CENTRES INCLUDE

- The **Federal Financial Supervisory Authority**. This is responsible in particular for reporting violations of supervisory law for banks, financial service providers and payment institutions. Further information on the external reporting office at the Federal Financial Supervisory Authority and in particular on its responsibilities can be found at [https://www.bafin.de/DE/DieBaFin/Hinweisgeberstelle/hinweisgeberstelle\\_node.html](https://www.bafin.de/DE/DieBaFin/Hinweisgeberstelle/hinweisgeberstelle_node.html).
- The **Federal Cartel Office**. It is responsible in particular for notifications of violations of the German or European ban on cartels and the German or European ban on the abuse of market power. Further information on the external reporting office at the Federal Cartel Office and in particular on its responsibilities can be found at [https://www.bundeskartellamt.de/DE/Kartellverbot/Hinweise\\_auf\\_Verstoesse/Hinweise\\_node.html#doc20161524bodyText1](https://www.bundeskartellamt.de/DE/Kartellverbot/Hinweise_auf_Verstoesse/Hinweise_node.html#doc20161524bodyText1).
- The **Federal Office of Justice**. This office is generally responsible for reporting violations of criminal law, administrative offence law, environmental protection law, consumer protection law or personal data protection law, unless the other external reporting offices are exceptionally responsible in accordance with Section 20 or Section 23 HinSchG. Further information on the external reporting centre at the Federal Office of Justice and in particular on its responsibilities can be found at [https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/DE/MeldestelledesBundes/MeldestelledesBundes\\_node.html](https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/DE/MeldestelledesBundes/MeldestelledesBundes_node.html).





They can contact the external reporting centres at least by telephone or in text form. It may also be possible to submit an anonymous report. However, you can also make an appointment for a personal meeting with external reporting centres. The external reporting centres work **independently** and separately from internal reporting centres.

It should be noted that there may also be **reporting procedures with European Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies** for certain cases. These include the reporting channels of the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF; [https://fns.olaf.europa.eu/main\\_de.htm](https://fns.olaf.europa.eu/main_de.htm)), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA; <https://www.esma.europa.eu/investor-corner/make-complaint#whistleblowers>) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

## WHAT DO I DO IF I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Of course, we cannot go into all the details of the legal regulations on reporting centres and reporting procedures here. **Special circumstances of the individual case** are also **often relevant**, e.g. not all unlawful acts or omissions fall within the scope of the HinSchG (Section 2 HinSchG). At the same time, there are certain grounds for exclusion from the application of the HinSchG (Section 5 HinSchG). Certain specific reporting procedures also take precedence over the reporting procedures described above via the internal or external reporting centres (Section 4 (1) HinSchG).

So if you are unsure whether an offence could be reported in your specific case, who you can contact with your report or what would happen after a report to a reporting office, you should seek **legal advice in case of doubt**, e.g. from a lawyer. However, the external reporting centres also offer comprehensive and independent information and advice on existing remedies and procedures for protection against reprisals.

