

New responsibilities and powers of Principal Officers

New and amended responsibilities and powers from 1 July 2023

FORMER RESPONSIBILITIES	NEW RESPONSIBILITIES
Take reasonable steps to protect public officials who belong to the agency from detriment or threats of detriment, relating to public interest disclosures by those public officials.	Take reasonable steps to protect public officials who belong to the agency against reprisals in relation to PIDs that have been, may have been, are proposed to be, or could be made to the agency.
	Take reasonable steps to encourage and support disclosers, including potential disclosers, and those who provide assistance in relation to PIDs.
	Take reasonable steps to provide ongoing training and education to public officials about the PID Act, and any training necessary to support officials to carry out their functions under the Act.
Ensure there are sufficient authorised officers readily accessible to public officials who belong to the agency and public officials are aware of their identity.	No change
Establish internal procedures for facilitating and dealing with public interest disclosures relating to the agency. Procedures must comply with procedural aspects of the PID Standard. Procedures must deal with assessment of the risks that reprisals may be taken in relation to a discloser.	Establish internal PID procedures for facilitating and dealing with public interest disclosures relating to the agency. Procedures must comply with the PID Standard. Procedures must deal with assessment of the risks that reprisals may be taken in relation to disclosures that relate to the agency.
Ensure disclosures are properly investigated	No change
Prepare an investigation report and take appropriate action in response to recommendations made, or any other matters raised, in the report.	Prepare an investigation report and take appropriate action, as soon as reasonably practicable, in response to recommendations made in the report.
Notify the discloser of the completion of an investigation under the PID Act and provide a copy of the investigation report.	Notify the discloser and the Ombudsman (or the IGIS) of the completion of an investigation under the PID Act and provide a copy of the investigation report.

	Ombudsman or IGIS may review handling of a disclosure and recommend an agency take particular action. In response, must provide notice to the recommending agency of action taken or proposed to be taken in response. If no action is proposed to be taken, the notice must provide a reason why.
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Note:

The principal officer of an agency may conduct investigations under the PID Act. The principal officer of an agency is also an authorised officer of that agency, meaning they can receive disclosures. A principal officer can delegate any or all of their functions or powers to a public official who belongs to the agency.

For further information see
www.ombudsman.gov.au.

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