

Report on Protected Disclosures received by the Data Protection Commission in 2023

The policy operated by the DPC under the terms of the Protected Disclosures Acts 2014 and 2022 is designed to facilitate and encourage all workers to raise genuine concerns about possible internal wrongdoing in the workplace, so that these concerns can be investigated following the principles of natural justice and addressed in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, substituted by Section 30 of the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022, requires public bodies to prepare and publish, by 1 March in each year, a report in relation to the previous year in an anonymised form.

Pursuant to this requirement, the DPC confirms that in 2023:

- **No** internal protected disclosures (from staff of the DPC) were received.
- **Twenty-Two** potential protected disclosures (set out in the table below) were received from individuals external to the DPC in relation to issues pertaining to data protection within other entities. These issues were raised with the DPC in its role as a ‘prescribed person’ as provided for under Section 7 of the Protected Disclosures Act (listed in SI 364/2020). Nine of the disclosures were accepted as valid protected disclosures.

Reference Number	Type	Date Received	Status	Outcome
01/2023	Section 7 (external, to ‘prescribed person’)	Q1 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.

02/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
03/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
04/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Not accepted as a valid protected disclosure, referred as a potential complaint.
05/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
06/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
07/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Accepted but could not progress. Insufficient detail provided, complainant did respond when further information was requested.
08/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q1 2023	Closed	Not accepted as a valid protected disclosure. Contents of submission outside the remit of the DPC.

09/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q1 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
10/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q2 2023	Closed	Submission was not a protected disclosure. DPC not the intended authority.
11/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q2 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
12/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q2 2023	Closed	Not accepted as a valid protected disclosure, directed to make a submission as a potential complaint.
13/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q2 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
14/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q2 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
15/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q3 2023	Closed	Insufficient detail provided, complainant did not follow up when requested.
16/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person')	Q3 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.

17/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q3 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
18/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q3 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
19/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q3 2023	Closed	Not accepted as a valid protected disclosure, referred as a potential complaint.
20/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q4 2023	Open	Accepted and referred for potential investigation. Ongoing at year-end.
21/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q4 2023	Closed	Not accepted as a valid protected disclosure. Complainant did not intend to submit a protected disclosure. Directed to website.
22/2023	Section 7 (external, to 'prescribed person'	Q4 2023	Under consideration	Engaging with complainant at year-end.