

# **D-LINK (INDIA) LIMITED**

## **VIGIL MACHANISM/WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

D-Link (India) Limited (“D-Link”) is committed to the highest standards of ethics and integrity and believes in the conduct of affairs in a fair and transparent manner by adopting highest standards of professionalism, integrity, honesty and ethical behaviour and adherence to laws.

This is demonstrated by the various policies of D-Link, which establishes the standards for professional and personal conduct for employees of D-Link and spells out the corrective measures for addressing any deviance from the laid-down standards.

The basic objective of this is policy is

- a) to provide a vigil mechanism for directors, employees, and all stakeholders of the Company to report concerns about unethical behaviour, actual or suspected fraud or illegality or violation of the company’s code of conduct or ethics policy
- b) to provide an opportunity to the Director(s) or employee(s) or stakeholder(s) and give them an avenue to raise concerns and to access in good faith the Audit Committee,
- c) to maintain the highest possible standards of ethical, moral and legal business conduct and the company’s commitment to open communication, in case they observe unethical and improper practices or any other wrongful conduct in the Company,
- d) to provide all necessary safeguards for protection of Director(s) and employees from reprisals or victimization and to prohibit managerial personnel from taking any adverse personnel action against those Director(s) or employees as a result of the Director(s) or employees’ good faith disclosure of alleged wrongful conduct to an audit committee.

Any Director(s) or employee or stakeholder who discloses and subsequently suffers an adverse personal action as a result is subject to the protection of this Policy.

## **2. Applicability**

All stakeholders, directors, employees and any union/ association of employees of the Company are covered under this policy.

## **3. Policy**

No adverse action shall be taken or recommended against a Director(s) or an employee or any stakeholder in retaliation to his disclosure in good faith of any

unethical and improper practices or alleged wrongful conduct. This policy protects such Director(s), employees and stakeholders from unfair termination and unfair prejudicial employment practices.

No manager, director, department head, or any other Director(s) or employee with authority to make or materially influence significant personal decisions shall take or recommend an adverse personnel action against a Director(s) or an employee or any stakeholder in knowing retaliation for disclosing alleged wrongful conduct to an audit committee.

However, this policy does not protect a Director(s) or an employee or a stakeholder from an adverse action which occurs independent of his disclosure of unethical and improper practice or alleged wrongful conduct, poor job performance, any other disciplinary action, etc. unrelated to a disclosure made pursuant to this policy.

#### **4. Definitions**

- a) **Abuse of authority:** Action or decision which is outside the scope of the alleged violator's position, scope of duties, or level of authority as authorized by the company. However, even actions or failure to take actions which are within the alleged violator's authority may constitute abuse of authority if the violator's motive or purpose is to harass, intimidate, or treat the Director or employee unreasonably or capriciously under the applicable facts and circumstances.
- b) **Adverse action:** An employment-related act or decision or a failure to take appropriate action by a manager or higher-level authority, which affects a Director(s) or an employee negatively.

The following are adverse actions:

- (i) Termination of employment
- (ii) Demotion
- (iii) Suspension
- (iv) Written reprimand
- (v) Retaliatory investigation
- (vi) Decision not to promote
- (vii) Receipt of an unwarranted performance rating
- (viii) Withholding of appropriate salary adjustments
- (ix) Imposition of involuntary transfer or reassignment;
- (x) Elimination of the employee's position, or a decrease in or lack of sufficient

- funding, monies, or work load;
- (xi) Denial of awards, grants, leaves, benefits, or training for which the Director(s) or employee would normally be eligible.
  - (xii) Other significant change in job responsibilities or working conditions which are inconsistent with the director's or employee's position, salary or grade.
- c) **Alleged wrongful conduct:** Alleged Wrongful Conduct shall mean violation of law, infringement of Company's Code of Conduct or ethical policies, mismanagement, misappropriation of monies, actual or suspected fraud, substantial and specific danger to public health and safety or abuse of authority by any Employee, save and except abuse of authority and/or wrongful conduct dealt with Code of Conduct, Any other action or inaction that could have significant impact on the operations, performance, value and the reputation of the Company.
- d) **Audit Committee:** means the audit committee constituted by the Board of Directors of the Company.
- e) **Company:** Company means D-Link (India) Limited
- f) **Employee:** An employee means every employee or director of the Company.
- g) **Code:** code means D-Link (India) Limited Code of Conduct.
- h) **Compliance Officer:** Compliance Officer means, "Company Secretary" of the Company.
- i) **Conflict of interest:** When an employee or director is in a position to influence a Company activity or decision in ways that could lead to any matter or form of personal gain to the employee or director or for his/her family member, or when the employee has a personal vested interest in the activity or decision.
- j) **Whistle Blower:** An individual who makes a protected disclosure under this mechanism.
- k) **Protected Disclosure:** .means a concern raised by way of oral or written report made in good faith that discloses or demonstrates factual information that may evidence unethical or improper activity which may be either contrary to the laid down policies of the Company or may be contrary to the acceptable standards of integrity and ethics.

- l) **Director:** means a director appointed to the Board of a company;
- m) **Misappropriation:** Action or decision which is outside the scope of the alleged violator's spending or budgetary authority, or even when the action or decision is within budgetary authority, the action would be considered by a reasonable person to be grossly excessive, wasteful, or an improper use of public funds.
- n) **Mismanagement:** Action or decision which exceeds the scope of the alleged violator's responsibilities, or even if the action is within responsibilities, the action would be considered by a reasonable person to be grossly excessive or unfair.
- o) **Personnel action:** An employment-related action or decision which affects an employee or director positively or negatively.
- p) **Policy:** means, “Whistle Blower Policy / Vigil Mechanism Policy prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2013 and SEBI Listing Regulations 2015.”
- q) **Violation of law:** A violation of local, state, or central law or regulation that is applicable to the Company or its employees and directors.
- r) **Investigator:** means those persons authorised, appointed, consulted or approached by Audit Committee of the Company and External investigators.

## 5. Interpretation

Terms that have not been defined in this Policy shall have the same Meaning assigned to them in the Companies Act, 2013 and/or SEBI Act and/or any other SEBI Regulation(s) as amended from time to time.

## 6. Guidelines:

### a) Safeguards

**Harassment or Victimization:** Harassment or victimization of the Whistle Blower will not be tolerated and could constitute sufficient grounds for dismissal of the concerned employee or director.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality of whistle blower shall be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Every effort will be made to protect the whistle

blower's identity, subject to legal constraints.

**Anonymous Allegations:** Whistle Blower must put their names to allegations as follow-up questions and investigation may not be possible unless the source of the information is identified. Concerns expressed anonymously SHALL NOT BE usually investigated BUT subject to the seriousness of the issue raised and credibility of supporting evidence/ information provided the Audit Committee can initiate an investigation independently.

**Malicious Allegations:** Malicious allegations by employees or director may result in disciplinary action.

#### **b) False Allegations of Wrongful Conduct**

An employee or director who knowingly makes false allegations of alleged wrongful conduct to an audit committee shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with Company rules, policies, and procedures.

#### **c) Legitimate Employment Action**

A Whistle Blower against whom an adverse personal action has been taken for legitimate reasons or cause under Company rules and policies may not use this policy as a defence. It shall not be a violation of this policy to take adverse personal action against a Whistle Blower whose conduct or performance warrants that action separate and apart from that of him making a disclosure.

#### **d) Making a Disclosure**

An employee or director or stakeholder who observes or notices any unethical & improper practices or alleged wrongful conduct in the Company shall report the same to Audit Committee through e-mail addressed to any of the members of the audit committee at the following email addresses ; [shares@dlink.co.in](mailto:shares@dlink.co.in) / [legal@dlink.co.in](mailto:legal@dlink.co.in)

They can also send the disclosure to the Chairman of the Audit Committee at the following address:

The Compliance officer  
D-Link (India) Limited  
Plot No 0U2B, Verna Goa 403722

If the employee or director or stakeholder is unwilling or unable to put an

oral disclosure in writing, the Investigator who investigates the disclosure will prepare a written summary of the employee's or director's disclosure and provide a copy to the employee or director or stakeholder. No later than 15 days after receipt of the summary, the employee or director or stakeholder may submit a written supplement to the Investigator who prepared the summary. Failure to submit a supplement within 15 days will constitute acceptance of the summary as an accurate statement of the disclosure made by the employee or director or stakeholder. The Investigator will conduct an investigation into the allegations of the disclosure and will take necessary corrective action, as warranted. Throughout this process, the confidentiality of the discloser will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigator will notify the discloser and other affected employees or directors in writing of the determination. The manager, the discloser, and the alleged violator shall retain a copy of the determination. The investigation shall be conducted by a Investigator who does not have a conflict of interest in the matter being investigated.

Where the Investigator determines the employee's or director's or stakeholder's allegations do not meet the definition of disclosure under this policy, the Company officer shall refer the employee or directors or stakeholder to other available Company grievance or appeal processes to address the employee's concerns.

**e) Employee/ Stakeholders Accountabilities –**

- a. Bring to the early attention of the company any improper practice they become aware of. Although they are not required to provide proof, they must have sufficient cause for concern.
- b. Avoid anonymity when raising a concern.
- c. Co-operate with investigating authorities, maintaining full confidentiality.
- d. The intent of the policy is to bring genuine and serious issues to the fore and it is not intended for petty complaints. Malicious allegations by employees or directors may attract disciplinary action.
- e. A complainant has the right to protection from retaliation. But this does not extend to immunity for complicity in the matters that are the subject of the allegations and investigation.
- f. In exceptional cases, where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation carried out by the Ombudsperson, she/he can make a direct appeal to the Audit Committee.

**f) Accountabilities – Audit Committee**

- a. Conduct the enquiry in a fair, unbiased manner.
- b. Ensure complete fact-finding.
- c. Maintain strict confidentiality.
- d. Decide on the outcome of the investigation, whether an improper practice has been committed and if so by whom.
- e. Recommend an appropriate course of action - suggested disciplinary action, including dismissal, and preventive measures.
- f. Minute Committee deliberations and document the final report.

## **7. Procedures**

The whistle blowing procedure is intended to be used for serious and sensitive issues. Serious concerns relating to financial reporting, unethical & improper practices or alleged wrongful or illegal conduct shall make a disclosure to the Audit Committee as soon as possible but not later than 60 consecutive calendar days after becoming aware of the same.

Audit Committee shall appropriately and expeditiously investigate all whistle blower reports received. In this regard, Audit Committee, if the circumstances so suggest, may appoint an investigator to investigate into the matter and prescribe the scope and time limit, therefore.

Audit Committee shall have right to outline detailed procedure for an investigation. Where the Audit Committee has designated a senior executive or a committee of managerial personnel for investigation, they shall mandatorily adhere to scope and procedure outlined by Audit Committee for investigation.

The Audit Committee or officer or committee of managerial personnel, as the case may be, shall have right to call for any information/document and examination of any employee or director of the Company or other person(s), as they may deem appropriate for the purpose of conducting investigation under this policy.

A report shall be prepared after completion of investigation and the Audit Committee shall consider the same. After considering the report, the Audit Committee shall determine the cause of alleged Adverse action and may order for appropriate course of action, which may inter-alia, include:

- a) Order for an injunction to restrain continuous violation of this policy;
- b) Reinstatement of the employee or director to the same position or to an equivalent position;
- c) Order for compensation for lost wages, remuneration or any other benefits, etc.
- d) Disciplinary action, including dismissal, if applicable, as well as



preventive measures for the future.

Subject to legal constraints, she/he will receive information about the outcome of any investigations. All discussions would be minuted and the final report prepared. The decision of Audit Committee shall be final and binding. If and when the Audit Committee is satisfied that the alleged unethical & improper practice or wrongful conduct existed or is in existence, then the Audit Committee may –

- a) recommend to Board to reprimand, take disciplinary action, impose penalty / punishment order recovery when any alleged unethical & improper practice or wrongful conduct of any employee or director is proved.
- b) recommend termination or suspension of any contract or arrangement or transaction vitiated by such unethical & improper practice or wrongful conduct.

## **8. Notification:**

All departmental heads are required to notify & communicate the existence and contents of this policy to the employees of their department. Every departmental head shall submit a certificate duly signed by him to the Compliance Officer that this policy was notified to each employees of his department. The new employees shall be informed about the policy by the Human Resource (HR) department and statement in this regard should be periodically submitted to the Compliance Officer. This policy as amended from time to time shall be made available at the Web site of the Company.

## **9. Annual Affirmation**

The Company shall annually affirm that it has not denied any personnel an access to the Audit Committee .The affirmation shall form part of Corporate Governance report as attached to the Annual Report of the Company.

## **10. Dissemination**

The Company has developed appropriate mechanisms to advise all employees and directors of the existence of this policy, including but not limited to making the policy available on the Company's intranet site and by sending the copy of the policy to all departmental heads for further communication to their employees. This policy as amended from time to time shall be made available at the Web site of the Company.

## **11. Company's Power**

While the Company has made best efforts to define detailed procedures for implementation of this Policy, there may be occasions when certain matters are not addressed or there may be ambiguity in the procedure set out above. Such difficulties or ambiguities will be resolved in line with the broad intent of this Policy. The Company may also establish further rules and procedures, from time to time, to give effect to the intent of this Policy and to further the objective of good corporate governance.

## **12. Residual Power**

If there is any doubt on any of the definitions or if any clarifications are required on this Policy, the Audit Committee shall be the final authority in resolving such doubts and/or to issue clarifications or for deciding any matter hereunder. In the event of any inconsistency between this Policy with any legal provisions, the provisions of the law shall override this Policy.

## **13. Amendment**

The policy was effective May 19, 2014 and last amended on May 29, 2021. The Audit Committee/ Board of Directors reserves its right to amend or modify this policy in whole or in part, at any time without assigning reason whatsoever. Any amendment shall be with approval of the Board.

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