

NEWS RELEASE

Whistleblower Awareness Day: Strengthening integrity in public bodies: In it together

Québec City, March 24, 2021 – To make the public and public employees aware of the important role whistleblowers play in our society, the Public Integrity Partners Forum and the organizations



that oversee integrity in provincial and territorial jurisdictions are joining forces to create Whistleblower Awareness Day.

This Day, to be held on March 24 every year, is aimed at highlighting whistleblowers' contributions to strengthening integrity within

public institutions. Another purpose is to let the public know how they can go about it, and that they are protected against reprisal.

Making disclosure easier

Whistleblower Awareness Day is an opportunity to remind anyone who thinks they have witnessed public wrongdoing that they can contact the proper authority. When in doubt, they can contact the Québec Ombudsman, which will refer them to the right organization if it does not have jurisdiction.

The Public Integrity Partners Forum would also like to remind public institutions that they must do everything in their power to protect the identity of those who make such disclosures or who cooperate in audits or investigations stemming from disclosures. They must also ensure that whistleblowers are not victimized because they spoke out or collaborated.

Show your support

The Public Integrity Partners Forum urges the public to show its support for Whistleblower Awareness Day by visiting the websites and social media pages of disclosure organizations and by using the following hashtags: #soutienauxlanceursdalerte #24mars [#whistleblowersupport #march24]. We thank everyone who will help promote the role of whistleblowers and the institutions that help strengthen public probity.

For greater integrity within public bodies

In Québec, several organizations guard against public wrongdoing according to their purview. The Appendix describes the members of the Public Integrity Partners Forum, supporters of Whistleblower Awareness Day 2021.

Public Integrity Partners Forum

The Public Integrity Partners Forum harmonizes and coordinates activities to ensure public sector integrity, including those stemming from disclosures by whistleblowers. The members are the [Autorité des marchés publics](#) (AMP), the [Office of the Inspector General of Ville de Montréal](#) (BIG), the [Commission municipale du Québec](#) (CMQ), the [Commissaire à l'intégrité municipale et aux enquêtes](#) (CIME), the [Québec Ombudsman](#), and the [Permanent Anti-Corruption Unit](#) (UPAC).

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APPENDIX – MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC INTEGRITY PARTNERS FORUM

Public contracts

Autorité des marchés publics (AMP)

The AMP's mission is to oversee all public contracts, in particular compliance with the tendering and contract award process and to receive complaints from interested persons. Anyone may also confidentially communicate information concerning contracts when the public body concerned appears not to comply or not to have complied with the contractual rules in force. Call 1-888-772-7443 or go to amp.quebec

Office of the Inspector General of Ville de Montréal (BIG)

The mandate of the Inspector General of Ville de Montréal is to oversee the contracting process and the execution of contracts by Ville de Montréal or any legal person related to it. The Inspector General must take all necessary measures to protect the identity of persons who have communicated information to her. The law forbids reprisal against a person who has communicated information to the Inspector General. See bigmtl.ca

Anti-corruption

Permanent Anti-Corruption Unit (UPAC)

The Anti-Corruption Commissioner is a specialized government-mandated law enforcement unit tasked to prevent and fight corruption in the public sector. It does this by leading and coordinating the government-appointed investigation and audit teams that form the Permanent Anti-Corruption Unit. See upac.gouv.qc.ca

Integrity of Québec's public bodies (government departments, agencies and corporations, health network, education system):

Québec Ombudsman

The Québec Ombudsman is an impartial and independent ombudsman tasked to ensure that the rights of citizens are upheld in their dealings with public services. The Québec Ombudsman has been empowered to handle disclosures of wrongdoings relating to public services and reprisal complaints arising from disclosures. It can be contacted by phone at 1-800-463-5070. See divulgation.protecteurducitoyen.qc.ca

Municipalities and probity of municipal elected officials

Commission des municipalités du Québec (CMQ)

As an independent organization in the municipal arena, the Commission municipale du Québec contributes to improving municipal governance and management, as well as public trust in municipal institutions.

Anyone may, in strictest confidence, send the Commission information concerning possible breaches by elected municipal officials of the code of ethics and professional conduct of their respective municipalities. For more information, see cmq.gouv.qc.ca/divulgation

Commissaire à l'intégrité municipale et aux enquêtes (CIME)

Municipalities and other municipal bodies are subject to the *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*. On behalf of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, CIME is responsible for applying the Act. Its mandate is therefore to receive information from anyone who can prove that wrongdoing has occurred or is about to occur concerning a municipality or municipal body. See www.mamh.gouv.qc.ca/divulgation/

Québec Ombudsman

The Québec Ombudsman oversees the integrity of municipalities and municipal bodies in certain specific cases, in particular concerning laws of general application or situations related to provincial government departments. Since October 19, 2018, municipal bodies have been defined as public bodies and are therefore subject to the *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies*. See divulgation.protecteurducitoyen.qc.ca