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**Directive S2023-01****Addendum I****General Guidelines for Addressing Ethically Problematic Situations at IOCB**

The handling of ethically problematic situations at IOCB takes place at three levels. Firstly, a whistleblower should approach their manager about the matter in question. If for any reason the whistleblower does not wish to do so, they may contact an Ethical Proxy. Particularly in cases where there is a strong suspicion of a violation of the Code of Ethics, the matter may be submitted, in writing, to the Ethics Commission.

**Research group leaders, department managers**

If a problematic situation arises or there is suspicion of unethical or illegal conduct, first and foremost the relevant research group leader or department manager must be notified, granted this is feasible in the given case and there is no concern that doing so will place the group leader or manager in a conflict of interest. The group leader or manager may propose a solution or instruct the whistleblower on what steps to take next. The group leader or manager may also contact an Ethical Proxy and, in serious cases, elevate the matter to the Ethics Commission.

**Ethical Proxies**

The post of Ethical Proxy is an elected function held by no more than two IOCB employees. Their job is to act as mediators in conflicts and uncomfortable situations in the workplace. A matter may be submitted to an Ethical Proxy for review in person or by email. The goal of such a review is to reach a reconciliation agreement. In cases where there is a strong suspicion of a violation of the Code of Ethics, the Ethical Proxy elevates the matter to the Ethics Commission. For more information about Ethical Proxies, see Directive S2022-06.

**Ethics Commission**

Serious violations of the Code of Ethics, namely those concerning gross scientific malpractice (plagiarism, fabrication, falsification of data, etc.), will be submitted to the Ethics Commission. Matters may be submitted to the Ethics Commission by a group leader or department manager, an Ethical Proxy, or (in justified cases) directly by the whistleblower. A whistleblower whose submission for review to the Ethics Commission is found to be credible and serious is entitled to protection under labour law. If the Ethics Commission finds a submission to be deliberately false with the intention of causing harm to an individual or group of individuals, the whistleblower will face employment consequences. For more information about the Ethics Commission and its rules of procedure, see the following Directive S2023-02.