



# ABANS HOLDINGS LIMITED

## VIGIL MECHANISM/WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

(Revised on August 07, 2024)

**Abans Holdings Limited**

**CIN:** L74900MH2009PLC231660

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## VIGIL MECHANISM/WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

### I. PREFACE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 177(9) of the Companies Act, 2013 (the Act) read with Rule 7 of the Companies (Meetings of Board and its Powers), Rules, 2014 and the Corporate Governance requirements under the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (Listing Regulations), every listed company, companies which accept deposits from the public and companies which have borrowed money from banks and public financial institutions in excess of fifty crore rupees are required to establish a vigil mechanism for the directors and employees to report genuine concerns or grievances about unethical behaviour, actual or suspected fraud or violation of the Company's Code of Conduct.

The Company has adopted a Code of Conduct ("the Code"), which lays down the principles and standards for governance of the actions of the Directors and employees. Any actual or potential violation of the Code, howsoever insignificant or perceived as such, is a matter of serious concern for the Company. Such a vigil mechanism shall provide for adequate safeguards against victimization of persons who use such mechanism and also make provision for direct access to the chairperson of the Audit Committee in appropriate and / or exceptional cases.

This Policy is framed keeping in mind the best interests of the Company's stakeholders and the Corporate Governance requirements under Listing Regulations and also the Companies Act, 2013 (the Act), as amended from time to time.

### II. OBJECTIVE

The Company is committed to adhere to the highest standards of ethical, moral and legal conduct of its business operations. To maintain these standards, the Company encourages its employees who have concerns about suspected misconduct to come forward and raise and express their concerns without fear of punishment, victimization or unfair treatment. A Vigil Mechanism/Whistle Blower Policy provides a channel to the employees and Directors to report to the management concerns about unethical behaviour, actual or suspected fraud.

### III. DEFINITIONS

**"Audit Committee"** shall mean a Committee of Board of Directors of the Company, constituted in accordance with the provisions of Section 177 of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Listing Regulations.

**"Board"** means Board of Directors of the Company.

**"Company"** means "Abans Holdings Limited".

**"Director"** means every Director of the Company.

**"Employee"** means every employee of the Company (whether working in India or abroad), including the directors in the employment of the Company.

**"Independent Director"** means a director referred to in Section 149 (6) of the Companies Act, 2013.

**"Investigators"** mean those persons authorized, appointed, consulted or approached by the Ethics Counselors/Chairman of the Audit Committee and include the auditors of the Company and the police.

**"Key Managerial Personnel"** (KMP) means

- a) Chief Executive Officer or the Managing Director or the Manager;
- b) Company Secretary and
- c) Chief Financial Officer.

**“Policy or This Policy”** means, “Vigil Mechanism / Whistle Blower Mechanism Policy”

**“Protected Disclosure”** means any communication made in good faith that discloses or demonstrates information that may evidence unethical, improper or fraudulent activity.

**“Subject”** means a person or group of persons against or in relation to whom a Protected Disclosure is made or evidence gathered during the course of an investigation.

**“Vigilance Officer”** is a person or nominated/appointed to receive Protected Disclosures from whistle blowers, maintaining records thereof, placing the same before the Audit Committee for its disposal and informing the Whistle Blower the result thereof.

**“Whistle Blower”** is a Director and / or an employee who makes a Protected Disclosure under this Policy and also referred in this policy as complainant.

#### **IV. INTERPRETATION**

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

#### **V. SCOPE**

This Policy is an extension of the Code of Conduct. The Whistleblower’s role is that of reporting Protected Disclosure with reliable information. They are not required or expected to act as investigators or fact finders, nor would they determine the appropriate corrective or remedial action that may be warranted in a given case.

Whistleblowers should not act on their own in conducting any investigative activities, nor do they have a right to participate in any investigative activities other than as requested by the Vigilance Officer or the Chairman of the Audit Committee or the Investigators. Protected Disclosure will be appropriately dealt with jointly and / or severally by the Vigilance Officer, the investigator and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

The Policy neither releases employees from their duty of confidentiality in the course of their work nor is it a route for taking up grievance about a personal situation.

#### **VI. ELIGIBILITY**

All Directors and Employees of the Company are eligible to make Protected Disclosures under the Policy in relation to matters concerning the Company.

#### **VII. PROCEDURE**

All Protected Disclosures should be reported in writing by the Whistle Blower as soon as possible, not later than 30 days after he becomes aware of the same and should either be typed or written in legible handwriting in English addressed to Vigilance Officer.

The Protected Disclosure should be submitted under a covering letter signed by the Whistle Blower in a closed and secured envelope and should be superscribed as “ Confidential - Protected disclosure under the Whistle Blower policy” or sent through email with the subject “ Confidential - Protected Disclosure under the Whistle Blower Policy”. If the complaint is not superscribed as mentioned above, the Protected Disclosure may be dealt with as if it were a normal disclosure.

All Protected Disclosures should be addressed to the Vigilance Officer of the Company.

The contact details of the Vigilance Officer/Chairman of the Audit Committee are as under:-

**Name and Address –**           **Name:** Mr. Kumud Chand Patnaik  
**Designation:** Chairman of the Audit Committee (wef 13.02.24)  
**Address:** 36, 37, 38A, 227 Nariman Bhavan, 3rd Floor, Backbay  
Reclamation, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021  
**Email Id:** ac.chairman@abansholdings.com

In order to protect the identity of the complainant, the Vigilance Officer will not issue any acknowledgement to the complainants and they are advised neither to write their name/address on the envelope nor enter into any further correspondence with the Vigilance Officer. Anonymous / Pseudonymous disclosure shall not be entertained by the Vigilance Officer.

On receipt of the protected disclosure, the Vigilance Officer shall detach the covering letter bearing the identity of the Whistle Blower and process only the Protected Disclosure.

## **VIII. INVESTIGATION**

All Protected Disclosures under this policy will be recorded and thoroughly investigated. The Vigilance Officer will carry out an investigation either himself/herself or by involving any other officer of the Company / Committee constituted for the same /an outside agency (under condition of confidentiality) before referring the matter to the Audit Committee of the Company.

The Audit Committee, if it deems fit, may call for further information or particulars from the complainant and at its discretion, and consider involving any other/additional Officer of the Company and/or Committee and / or an outside agency for the purpose of investigation.

The investigation by itself would not tantamount to an accusation and is to be treated as a neutral fact finding process. The investigation shall be completed normally within 90 days of the receipt of the Protected Disclosure and is extendable by such period as the Audit Committee deems fit.

## **IX. DECISION AND REPORTING**

If an investigation leads to a conclusion that an improper, fraudulent or unethical act has been committed, the Chairman of the Audit Committee shall recommend to the Board of Directors of the Company to take such disciplinary or corrective action as it may deem fit. Any disciplinary or corrective action initiated against the Subject as a result of the findings of an investigation pursuant to this Policy shall adhere to the applicable personnel or staff conduct and disciplinary procedures.

The Vigilance Officer shall submit a report to the Audit Committee on a regular basis about all Protected Disclosures referred to him/her since the last report together with the results of investigations, if any.

A complainant who makes false allegations of unethical, fraudulent or improper practices or about alleged wrongful conduct of the Subject to the Vigilance Officer shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the rules, procedures and policies of the Company.

## **X. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The complainant, Vigilance Officer, Members of Audit Committee, the Subject and everybody involved in the fact finding process shall, maintain confidentiality of all matters under this Policy, discuss only to the extent or with those persons as required under this policy for completing the process of investigations and keep the papers in safe custody.

## **XI. PROTECTION**

No unfair treatment will be meted out to a Whistle Blower by virtue of his/ her having reported a Protected Disclosure under this policy. Adequate safeguards against victimization of complainants shall be provided. The Company will take steps to minimize difficulties, which the Whistle Blower may experience as a result of making the Protected Disclosure.

The identity of the Whistle Blower shall be kept confidential to the extent possible and permitted under law. Any other employee assisting in the said investigation shall also be protected to the same extent as the Whistle Blower.

## **XII. DISQUALIFICATIONS**

While it will be ensured that genuine Whistle Blowers are accorded complete protection from any kind of unfair treatment as herein set out, any abuse of this protection will warrant disciplinary action. Protection under this Policy would not mean protection from disciplinary action arising out of false or bogus allegations made by a Whistle Blower knowing it to be false or bogus or with a mala fide intention.

Whistleblowers, who make any Protected Disclosures, which have been subsequently found to be mala fide, frivolous, baseless, malicious, or reported otherwise than in good faith, will be disqualified from reporting further Protected Disclosures under this Policy. In respect of such Whistleblowers, the Company/Audit Committee would reserve its right to take/recommend appropriate disciplinary action.

## **XIII. ACCESS TO CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Whistle Blower shall have right to access Chairman of the Audit Committee directly in exceptional cases and the Chairman of the Audit Committee is authorized to prescribe suitable directions in this regard.

## **XIV. RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS**

All Protected Disclosures in writing or documented along with the results of investigation relating thereto shall be retained by the Company for a minimum period of seven years.

## **XV. AMENDMENT**

This Policy will be uploaded on the website of the Company namely, [www.abansholdings.com](http://www.abansholdings.com). The provisions of this Policy can be amended/modified by the Board of Directors of the Company from time to time and all such amendments/modifications shall take effect from the date stated therein.

Revised and approved by the Board in its meeting held on August 07, 2024