

# Workplace Investigations

## Contributing Editors

*Phil Linnard at Slaughter and May*  
*Clare Fletcher at Slaughter and May*

## 12. Can the identity of the complainant, witnesses or sources of information for the investigation be kept confidential?

### Switzerland

Author: *Laura Widmer, Sandra Schaffner*  
at Bär & Karrer

As mentioned under Question 10, the employer's duty of care (article 328, Swiss Code of Obligations) also entails the employer's duty to respect and protect the personality (including confidentiality and privacy) and integrity of employees (article 328 paragraph 1, Swiss Code of Obligations) and to take appropriate measures to protect them.

However, in combination with the right to be heard and the right to be informed regarding an investigation, the accused also has the right that incriminating evidence is presented to them throughout the investigation and that they can comment on it. For instance, this right includes disclosure of the persons accusing them and their concrete statements. Anonymisation or redaction of such statements is permissible if the interests of the persons incriminating the accused or the interests of the employer override the accused' interests to be presented with the relevant documents or statements (see question 11; see also article 9 paragraphs 1 and 4, Swiss Federal Act on Data Protection). However, a careful assessment of interests is required, and these must be limited to what is necessary. In principle, a person accusing another person must take responsibility for their information and accept criticism from the person implicated by the information provided.<sup>[1]</sup>

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[1] Roger Rudolph, Interne Untersuchungen: Spannungsfelder aus arbeitsrechtlicher Sicht, SJZ 114/2018, p. 390.

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### Thailand

Author: *Ratthai Kamolwarin, Norrapat Werajong*  
at Chandler MHM

It is generally possible to keep the identity of the complainant, witnesses, or information sources confidential. There is no mandatory rule to disclose the identity of a complainant, witnesses, or sources of information. If the complainant, witnesses, or sources of information for the investigation know that their identities would not be disclosed, they will be more confident in cooperating with and supporting the investigations.

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## United States

Author: *Rachel G. Skaistis, Eric W. Hilfers, Jenny X. Zhang*  
at Cravath, Swaine & Moore

In general, except as provided above, depending on the seriousness of the complaint and investigation, the only persons who should be aware of it are the relevant individual in human resources or legal, and where different, the persons assigned to investigate. Although it may not be feasible to maintain absolute confidentiality in conducting an investigation depending on the nature of the allegations, investigators should exercise discretion at all times and, where possible, avoid identifying complainants, the subject of the investigation or witnesses by name where it is not necessary, and where doing so could be detrimental to the fact-finding process.

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### Contributors



#### Switzerland

Laura Widmer  
Sandra Schaffner  
*Bär & Karrer*



#### Thailand

Ratthai Kamolwarin  
Norrapat Werajong  
*Chandler MHM*



#### United States

Rachel G. Skaistis  
Eric W. Hilfers  
Jenny X. Zhang  
*Cravath, Swaine & Moore*