



EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Claimant: Dr A Williams

Respondent: Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Service

JUDGMENT having been sent to the parties on 10 March 2026 and written reasons having been requested by the claimant in accordance with Rule 60(4) of the Employment Tribunals Procedure Rules 2024, the following reasons are provided:

1. The parties attended the Nottingham Employment Tribunal on 27 February 2026 in order to deal with remedy. No further evidence was provided, although both parties gave oral submissions before the panel deliberated on the amounts to be awarded for the claimant's successful complaints.
2. Having been given the opportunity to try and agree any sums to be awarded, the parties agreed the sum of £8,503.32 for the wrongful dismissal (notice pay) complaint. However, they could not agree on the level of the injury to feelings' award for the whistleblowing detriment complaint.
3. The claimant contended that the injury to feelings should be in the mid Vento Guidelines and set the amount at £15,000 (having claimed £20,000 injury to feelings in the updated scheduled of loss for the totality of the detriment complaints). Following the decision to investigate the claimant, which was only made following her protected disclosure, all conduct after that was caused by that decision. However, alternatively, the reality is that the impact on the claimant, as a medical doctor, justifies a significant award in any event and the claimant still placed this at £15,000 or at least the top end of the lowest Vento band. The

claimant's representative referred the panel to particular paragraphs in the Judgment relating to the impact on the claimant, which were considered.

4. The respondent contended that Tribunal should consider what losses flow from the detriment the Tribunal found. The disciplinary proceedings were not unjustified, but the Tribunal accepted that the reason they were instigated was the disclosure to EMAS. There were no findings in respect of detriment regarding the dismissal. Disability discrimination and other detriments were not upheld. This was a less serious case, covered by the appropriate Vento band of between £1,100 and £11,200. The claimant's evidence in her witness statement does not focus on the initiation of the disciplinary investigation. Consideration should be given as to the everyday value of that award. The suggested level of award is £8,000.

Law

5. Awards for injury to feelings are compensatory. They should be just to both parties, fully compensating the Claimant, (without punishing the Respondent) only for proven, unlawful detriments for which the Respondent is liable. Awards that are too low would diminish respect for the policy underlying anti-whistleblowing legislation. However, excessive awards could also have the same effect. Awards need to command public respect.
6. Awards should bear some broad general similarity to the range of awards in personal injury cases. Tribunals should remind themselves of the value in everyday life of the sum they have in mind by reference to purchasing power.
7. It is helpful to consider the band into which the injury falls, Vento v Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police [2003] IRLR 102. In Vento the Court of Appeal said that the top band should be awarded in the most serious cases. The middle band should be use for serious cases which do not merit an award in the highest band

and the lower band is appropriate for less serious cases, such as where there is an isolated or one-off occurrence.

Conclusion

8. When assessing injury to feelings the Tribunal has to consider the effect of the detriment it has found to have taken place on the claimant herself.
9. There has to be some evidence of injury to feelings, and we have found reference to that within the claimant's witness statement and evidence at the liability hearing although note that this evidence has not been broken down into specific detriments causing particular injury to feelings. We would not expect that to have been done.
10. We have in particular taken into account the following:
 - a. The claimant clearly felt very stressed and panicked by the process [paragraph 51 w/s] and this was an early stage of the investigation being around 23 August 2023 having been told about the investigation on 21 August 2023.
 - b. The claimant's evidence was that she was struggling to absorb information around this time and could not recall or understand what was being said to her at the initial stages.
 - c. The claimant went off sick after being told about the investigation, showing the impact of the disciplinary investigation at the time.
 - d. The claimant's evidence [paragraph 83 w/s] was that the disciplinary process was causing her to have poor sleep and was affecting her mental health. She had "*constant shock, fear and worry about [her] future. Some days [she] would not get dressed; wash [herself] or even get out of bed due to [her] low mood.*"

11. Whilst item d clearly relates to more than the instigation of the disciplinary process itself, we accept that some of this must be attributable to the starting of that process, including being signed off from work from 5 November 2023 to 5 December 2023 [384].
12. We accept that the claimant felt embarrassed sad and heartbroken by being subjected to disciplinary proceedings, and that some of this should be reflected in the award made.
13. We accept that the investigation itself was justified, but that this was triggered by her disclosure 4 to EMAS.
14. We have not found that the dismissal was due to the disclosures the claimant made, and it appears to us to be wrong to include any award of hurt feelings caused by the dismissal in our injury to feelings award.
15. Rather, we focus on the instigation of the disciplinary investigation itself and the effect this had on the claimant.
16. We therefore consider that this case falls within the lower of the Vento bands.
17. We note that detrimental action against whistleblowers should always be regarded as a serious breach, but we must focus on the effect of the unlawful acts on the claimant.
18. In this case, we consider that an award of £8,000 for injury to feelings is justified and appropriate. The claimant has provided some evidence and we are satisfied that this amount, when considering the value in everyday life, validly reflects the injury caused to her.

Approved by:

Employment Judge Welch

Dated: 27 February 2026

Sent to the parties on

...31 March 2026.....

For the Employment Tribunal

.....

Note

Public access to employment tribunal decisions

Judgments (apart from judgments under rule 51) and reasons for the judgments are published, in full, online at www.gov.uk/employment-tribunal-decisions shortly after a copy has been sent to the claimant(s) and respondent(s) in a case.