

Perceptions of corruption in local government

During 2025, the CCC conducted research to measure perceptions of corruption in Queensland across the public sector, local government, Queensland Police Service, and community. This is a snapshot of key findings from council employees.



973 council employees completed the survey.



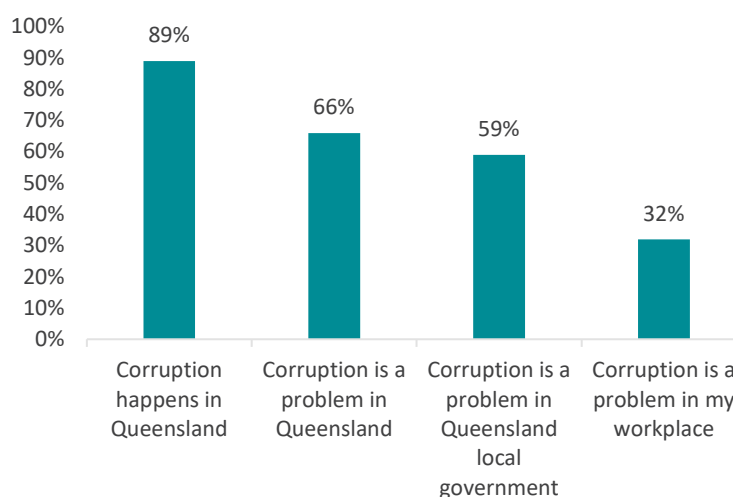
55% have witnessed or think they've witnessed corruption in the past 5 years.

Prevalence of corruption

There is a widespread belief held by council employees that corruption happens in Queensland, and a majority agree that it is a problem within the state.

- Nine in ten (89%) council employees agree or strongly agree 'corruption happens in Queensland', however, only 66% consider it a problem.
- 59% agree or strongly agree that corruption is 'a problem in local government', with 32% agreeing 'corruption is a problem in my workplace'.
- 56% of council employees consider their workplace susceptible to corruption.
- Council employees aged 18-39 years are significantly more likely to have witnessed corruption (64%) compared to employees 40 years and over (43%).

Council employee perceptions of corruption



The results from this survey are helping to inform and target the CCC's prevention and engagement activities with the local government sector. Councils are also encouraged to use the findings to enhance their corruption control systems, processes and practices for detecting, reporting and preventing corruption.



Perceived corruption risks in local government

Council employees ranked the following behaviours as 'definitely or probably' a corruption risk in the workplace.



86% non-compliance with policies and procedures



80% mishandling and misuse of confidential information.

- Council employees are most likely to identify non-compliance with policies and procedures and mishandling and misuse of confidential information as corruption risks in their workplace.
- At least half of council employees are at least 'fairly' concerned about each of the corruption behaviours assessed in the survey, with corruption committed by Elected Officials (80%) and corruption in recruitment for senior government executive positions (78%) attracting the highest proportion of 'very' or 'fairly concerned' responses.
- Bullying and harassment, conflicts of interest, political influence, improper lobbying, and biased or unethical procurement decisions are all identified as a workplace risk by at least seven in ten employees, with around four in ten identifying them as 'definitely' a risk.

Identifying and reporting corruption

Most council employees would recognise corrupt behaviour and there is a strong intention to report it. However, when it comes to the workplace culture encouraging reporting corruption, there is less likelihood.



68% would know if they were to witness corruption.



73% would report corruption.

- Whilst employees consider that their workplace culture promotes honesty and integrity, it does not always encourage reporting corruption.
- There is reasonable agreement that the workplace supports anti-corrupt behaviour and encourages people to act with honesty and integrity (68%).
- Just over half (58%) agreed their workplace culture supports this, and one in four (24%) disagreed. One third (34%) indicated they felt their report was ignored.
- Of those who have reported corruption in the past 5 years, the channels most used are supervisor/manager (57%) or HR/ethical standards unit (34%).

Barriers to reporting corruption

A fear of retaliation was the main concern in reporting corruption in the workplace.



51% had concerns about reporting corruption in their workplace.



32% mentioned a fear of backlash and retaliation as a main concern.

- Other common concerns included the negative impact on their career (15%), a lack of confidence that action will be taken (15%) and a lack of confidentiality/anonymity (11%).
- Commonly reported barriers are the perception of not having sufficient information to back up an allegation (47%), and the perception that senior management wouldn't act on the report (40%).
- Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and/or Pacific Islander employees (60%) and those with a disability/carer's role (56%) were significantly more likely to anticipate personal repercussions (47%) or fear they may lose their job (44%) due to reporting corruption.

Visit our website for the [council employee report](#) and to view the [interactive dashboard](#) or email corruption.engagement@ccc.qld.gov.au for further information.



Crime and Corruption Commission
QUEENSLAND

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