

# ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 7090

## ABUSE, NEGLECT AND HARASSMENT PROTOCOL

*Revised, September, 2007*

### **A Introduction:**

As representatives of Rotary District 7090 and of individual Rotary Clubs, Rotarians are actively involved with members of the community including young people, the elderly, and people with disabilities. As an organization, Rotary District 7090 is committed to protecting the interests of participants in any and all Rotary activities at both the District and Club level. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners and other volunteers to protect vulnerable individuals with whom they come in contact through Rotary activities and to prevent any physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or harassment, and neglect. Fulfilling this duty protects the individuals and enhances the interests of Rotary Clubs and Rotarians in their volunteer efforts to improve the quality of life in our communities. Further, Rotary's reputation is maintained and the risk of liability, including legal liability is minimized.

### **B Policy Statement:**

It is the responsibility of every Rotarian to safeguard the welfare of every person with whom they come in contact during their activities as a Rotarian. Special attention is to be given to children, the elderly, the disabled and other vulnerable persons. This includes the prevention of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, harassment and neglect.

This policy is in keeping with the laws of the State of New York, the Province of Ontario, the United States of America, and Canada.

### **C Scope:**

These guidelines apply to all District 7090 Rotarians and volunteers who are or wish to become involved in District programs and apply to all adults over the age of 18 years who reside in the home of a host family. District programs include RYLA, Group Study Exchange, Youth Exchange, Slapshot, Interact, Rotaract, Earlyact, Foundation Scholarships and Peace Scholarships.

**D Guidelines on prevention of abuse, harassment and neglect:**

1. In accordance with their legal obligations, representatives of District 7090 will ensure to the extent possible that individuals who are involved in District programs, activities, and events are protected from abuse, harassment, and neglect.
2. District 7090 programs will be delivered in an environment of reasonable safety.
3. Appropriate screening will occur to prevent contact by vulnerable participants in District programs with individuals who are deemed, through those screening procedures to be inappropriate, or prohibited by law from working with such participants.
4. Where allegations of abuse, harassment, or neglect or other risks of harm are made concerning individuals who are involved in District programs, prompt notification and reporting to the appropriate individuals and authorities will occur. When such allegations occur, it is the responsibility of any Club involved and the District to ensure that anyone against whom such allegations are made is not involved in any programs involving youth, or any other vulnerable individual pending completion of the investigation and resolution of the matter.

**E Guidelines on prevention of harassment and sexual harassment:**

1. **Harassment:** The District will ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals involved in Rotary District 7090 programs including Rotarians themselves are not subject to harassment, which includes conduct that erodes the dignity of the individual, particularly based on the individual's color, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability. Types of behavior that constitute harassment include remarks and jokes that are unwelcome or reasonably could be expected to be unwelcome; displaying or distributing racist, pornographic or other offensive material; practical jokes based on race, sex, or other prohibited grounds; verbal abuse or threats; inappropriate or offensive gestures; and physical assault.

2. **Sexual Harassment:** In accordance with its legal obligations, the District will ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals who are involved in District activities are protected from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes making sexist jokes, leering, displaying sexually offensive material, using sexually degrading words to describe a person, making sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures, making unwelcome enquiries or comments about a person's sex life, making unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, requests for sexual favors, unwanted touching, verbal abuse or threats, and sexual assault.

**F Volunteer Assessment Form:**

Prior to participation in District sponsored programs, Rotarians, non-Rotarian volunteers and paid staff **must** complete the District 7090 Volunteer Assessment Form (attached to this protocol) as well as any other reference, police or criminal record checks that may be necessary from time to time in accordance with local requirements.

Screening will be required in every situation where Rotarians, non-Rotarian volunteers or paid staff intend to participate in District programs involving vulnerable individuals including children and youth, the elderly, or anyone under a physical or mental disability.

In situations where Rotarians' spouses, partners or adult children (over 18 years of age) participate in a host family setting, the spouses, partners and adult children must also submit the Volunteer Assessment Form.

The Volunteer Assessment Form must be received and indefinitely maintained on file in strict confidence. The Form will be maintained by the designated Rotary Club official, such as the Club Counselor. The recipient of the completed Form must confirm its execution and filing when requested by the DAPC or by the applicable District Program Chair.

**G District Harassment and Abuse Prevention Committee:**

1. The District Governor shall appoint a District Harassment and Abuse Prevention Committee to be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this protocol, and for the investigation of complaints. The DHAPC will consist of three members, with at least one from each side of the border, and each of whom should have experience in at least one of the following areas:
  - working with people at risk (such as children, the elderly, and people with disabilities) either in a professional capacity or as an experienced Rotary volunteer;

- legal/human rights;
  - human resources.
2. The appointment of the DHAPC will be made annually. It is expected that the DHAPC members will hold the office for 3 years, (or until replacements are appointed) with staggered terms.
  3. The DHAPC members must be familiar with both the Rotary International Child Protection System, other relevant Rotary International policies and the relevant federal, provincial/state and local legislation requirements.
  4. The DHAPC will maintain strict confidentiality in compliance with provincial/state and federal legislation and this protocol.
  5. The DHAPC shall be the first point of contact should any Rotary Club representative or program volunteer receive a complaint of abuse or harassment, and is responsible for ensuring that such complaints are dealt with in accordance with applicable law and in accordance with this District protocol, and that the interests of the affected person(s) are protected to the extent possible. The procedure for handling complaints has been designed to ensure prompt and complete investigation with appropriate options for resolution of the complaint in various ways, depending on the specific facts of the situation.

The procedure for handling complaints will include the following steps:

- immediately ensure the safety of any individual who allegedly is, or has been at risk.
- remove any person against whom allegations have been made from all activities involving vulnerable individuals (for example: children, youth, elderly, disabled).
- If the individual at risk is a minor or legally incompetent, notify parents, guardians, or persons responsible for the individual(s) at risk, unless such person is the alleged abuser.
- notify appropriate law enforcement and/or Rotary officials of the allegation.
- Commence an immediate investigation of the allegation, in conjunction with law

enforcement authorities if appropriate.

- Once all facts have been established, consult with family, legal, law enforcement, and Rotary officials to ensure most appropriate resolution of the complaint.
  - Provide all parties involved with contact information for appropriate local professional counseling.
  - Examine circumstances surrounding occurrence of the complaint, with the intent to minimize risk factors in the future.
6. The DHAPC will work with Rotary Clubs to inform all Rotarians in District 7090 of their obligation under this policy and relevant legislation and to ensure that appropriate training is made available as required.

## SCHEDULE A

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROTARY CLUBS IN DISTRICT 7090

1. *Adopt a policy statement on the prevention of abuse, neglect and harassment by adapting the Rotary District 7090 Abuse and Harassment Protocol to the specific requirements of the local Rotary Club.*

Note: Scope Clause could be adapted as follows:

“These guidelines apply to all Rotary Club of \_\_\_\_\_ members and volunteers who are or wish to become involved in Rotary Club programs or activities and apply to all adults over the age of 18 years who reside in the home of a host family.”

2. *Recognize the potential negative effect on the Club of comments or actions that are gender-based, even if meant in a joking or non-serious manner, and discourage such comments and actions accordingly.*
3. *Delegate responsibility for the protection of vulnerable people including children, youth, the elderly and persons under a disability to a designated member of the Rotary Club (“Club Counselor”) and provide access to such person (or an alternate) for confidential and safe contact.*

Note: The Club Counselor position should be publicized so that members, volunteers, and participants in Rotary programs will know how to contact the Club Counselor quickly. The Club Counselor is responsible for receiving complaints/concerns, raising awareness and training Club members in required procedures.

Note: Adults who abuse may exploit their role or situation to gain the submission and/or silence of the vulnerable individual. This is particularly true in residential settings. The Club Counselor or some other trustworthy person should be available to be contacted by the vulnerable person.

4. *Plan Club activities so as to minimize situations where abuse, neglect and harassment may occur.*

Note: This includes providing safe conduct from place to place and minimizing situations where Rotarians and other volunteers are alone in the company of vulnerable individuals. Risk assessments

should be done in relation to activities including such factors as age and level of vulnerability, group size, location and visibility, type of activity, supervision and monitoring, nature of relationship, physical safety etc. (See Risk Assessment Chart)

Note: Consider everyone involved in the activity or event. This will include, for example, all Rotarians, partners of Rotarians, Rotaractors and Interactors, and all volunteers and paid staff.

5. *Ensure that all Rotarians and other volunteers have clear roles.*

Note: depending on the nature of the event and the extent of involvement, Clubs should consider giving everyone involved a written description of their role and the tasks involved when dealing with vulnerable individuals. Such a description could identify the risks and opportunities to minimize risks. A copy of the abuse, neglect and harassment protocol could also be provided.

6. *Use event supervision as a means of protecting vulnerable individuals.*

Note: Rotary event supervisors should help ensure the protection of vulnerable individuals and should receive and understand the abuse, neglect and harassment policy. Intervention should occur on the part of the supervisor in the event of suspected problems followed by appropriate reporting.

7. *Prepare Rotarians and volunteers to work effectively with all vulnerable persons.*

Note: establish clear Club policies and procedures for events and programs where vulnerable participants are involved including assuring that the Volunteer Assessment Form and any additional required documentation has been completed and submitted in accordance with the Guidelines (See District Abuse, Neglect and Harassment Protocol, Section F).

8. *Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.*

Note: the following suggestions may help Clubs develop suitable procedures:

- Rotarians and volunteers should know that they have a responsibility to report anything that concerns them about the personal security of others and especially vulnerable

individuals involved in Rotary programs. The initial report should typically be to the Club Counselor.

- Rotarians should be trained to be sensitive to changes in behaviour or signs of physical injury that might indicate something is wrong
  - Clubs should promote an attitude that reporting suspicions and/or taking action is the right thing to do and that no reprisal will occur
  - Rotarians should not attempt to deal with a problem alone but rather should report complaints, allegations or suspicions to the Club Counselor who will determine further steps including reporting to authorities
9. *Ensure the validity of driver's license and adequacy of insurance prior to transporting Rotary program participants, to the extent possible.*
10. *Reinforce our moral and legal responsibilities in everything we do.*

Note: All Rotary Clubs, individual Rotarians, and volunteers are responsible for protecting the safety and security of everyone we encounter in the provision of service to our community. We have a special obligation to those individuals with greater vulnerability due to age, physical limitations, or mental limitations.

Rotarians are obliged to intervene if we become aware of information about the abuse of a person through their involvement with a Rotary Club activity.

Rotarians are obliged to do those things that protect and reinforce the physical and emotional safety and security of themselves and others. This includes operating a motor vehicle safely, ensuring the proper use of safety equipment, avoiding the use of illegal drugs, and avoiding the excessive consumption of alcohol while providing service to others.

Rotarians are obliged to take appropriate action when they observe other Rotarians or volunteers behave in ways that contradict the values contained in the District and Club policies.



DISTRICT 7090

ROTARY CLUB OF \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER ASSESSMENT FORM**

Revised September, 2007

**Policy Statement:**

It is the responsibility of every Rotarian to safeguard the welfare of every person with whom they come in contact during their activities as a Rotarian. Special attention is to be given to children, the elderly, the disabled and other vulnerable persons. This includes the prevention of physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

*Note: items marked "\*" need not be completed on this form where Youth Exchange Host Family Application form (available in the Youth Exchange Handbook and at [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)) is attached.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\*E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of Rotary since: \_\_\_\_\_ (if applicable)

\*List all other persons living in your home (names, ages, relationship to you):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Experience working with children, elderly or disabled people:  
(provide details, including whether family members or not)

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Details of relevant/helpful qualifications & training:  
(self and other persons living in home)

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\*Three Personal References who may be contacted in conducting this  
Assessment:  
(name, address, telephone number and relationship for each)

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**Declarations:**

**Answering truthfully, and to the best of your knowledge:**

Have you or anyone living with you ever been convicted of an offense in  
which children, young people, elderly or other vulnerable people were  
victims, or which involved activities of a sexual nature? If so, please  
provide details.

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Are you prohibited by any Court Order, agreement, or Bond from associating with or contacting any person? If so, please provide details.

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Are you licensed and insured to drive a vehicle? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Has your license to drive a vehicle been suspended during the past 18 months? If so, please provide details.

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The information contained in this Volunteer Assessment Form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Dated at \_\_\_\_\_, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

Recommendation for Approval by \_\_\_\_\_, dated \_\_\_\_\_

**This information will be kept confidential and not used to discriminate unfairly. It is required to protect those individuals who participate in Rotary programs and activities and will not be used for any other purpose.**

## RISK ASSESSMENT CHART

This chart and the examples could be used as a guide as you designate positions as low, medium and high risk. It is best to reduce the level of risk as much as possible. The information in this chart can assist you as you modify roles and responsibilities.

### DETERMINING LEVEL OF RISK

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Low Risk</u>	<u>Medium Risk</u>	<u>High Risk</u>
Age, level of vulnerability	able-bodied adult	teenager	child, infirm senior, disabled
Size of group	large	small	one-on-one
Location & Visibility	meeting room, public out-door event	room with open door or window, office, area visible to others	private home, room with closed doors, no windows, car, enclosed private spaces
Type of Activity	club meeting, public event	youth group meeting, childrens' class with 2 teachers/super, hospital/nursing home visiting	youth sleep-over, class with only 1 teacher/adult, 1-to-1 home visit
Supervision & Monitoring	super always present; always large group, documented meeting	occasional supervision, some document'n	little/no supervison, no documentation of meeting/event

<b><u>Factor</u></b>	<b><u>Low Risk</u></b>	<b><u>Medium Risk</u></b>	<b><u>High Risk</u></b>
Nature of Rel'n	short term, non-intensive, non-intimate	personal rel'n, extends over time	1-to-1 rel'nship high level of intimacy/influence
Degree of Authority	low	medium or high, dealing with others of similar status	high authority, large power differential
Physical Safety	rare risks	occasional risks	frequent risks
Financial	no financial involvement	infrequent fin'l involvement, small amounts, shared responsibility	frequent fin'l involvement, large amounts, functioning alone
Confidentiality	no confid'l info	occasional access to confid'l/ sensitive info	regular possession of confid'l/sensitive info
Reputations	no risk of damage	potential to misconstrue activity	significant risk of false accusations

## Harassment & Abuse Protocol

### Implementation Checklist for Clubs

Review District Protocol, amend if necessary, adopt for Club use. Consider requirement of Volunteer Assessment forms and Criminal record checks for all members, all new members, all members with "opt-out" by choice (for existing members)  
Board of Directors

Publicize Protocol at Club, consider hand-out, club assembly  
Club President

Appoint Club Counsellor Board of Directors/Club President

Arrange for secure storage of Volunteer Assessment forms  
Club Counsellor

Secure and review Volunteer Assessment Forms, Criminal Record checks, contact references  
Club Counsellor