



**Mark Daniel Maloney**

President, 2019-2020

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Dear Rotarians, Rotaractors, and friends,

Let me get right to the unfortunate news — the RI Board of Directors has decided to cancel the 2020 Rotary International Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. We are all part of the Rotary family, and your safety remains our highest priority. Like the more than 20,000 registrants who planned to attend this year's convention, I am very disappointed. However, this is the right and necessary decision to protect the health and safety of convention attendees, as well as those who call Honolulu home.

At this point, we are unsure that Rotary could adequately protect convention-goers from the risk of COVID-19 infection en route to, during, and after the convention. We are also unsure if restrictions on travel to the United States will be lifted by June. We have heard from a number of you who voiced concerns about gathering at the convention this year. I also heard from many who were hopeful that we could continue with the convention as planned. The Board was very diligent and considered all the facts before taking this decision.

At this time, we kindly ask that you do not contact RI Registration to inquire about your registration, ticket or housing cancellations as we work diligently to inform all attendees. Here is an overview of our plans for handling refunds and travel logistics.

**Convention refunds**

Anyone who registered for the convention will receive a full refund. This includes purchases made for the Rotaract and Youth Exchange preconvention events and ticketed meal events. We will send instructions on how to receive your refund soon. For those who had already canceled prior to today, you will also receive a refund of the \$50 processing fee.

You can help expedite the process by canceling your registrations online using your [My Rotary](#) account.

### **Rotary Foundation and United Nations events**

If you registered through Rotary International for Rotary Foundation events or *Rotary and the United Nations: Celebrating a 75-year Legacy of Humanitarian Cooperation*, you will receive a full refund. We will provide details soon.

### **Host Organization Committee ticketed event registrations**

If you are registered for a host-ticketed event, the Host Organization Committee will contact you soon. As you can imagine, our Rotarian and Rotaractor friends in Hawaii are dealing with a difficult and evolving situation, and in most cases, are working remotely as so many of us are right now. So please be patient.

### **Hotel Rooms**

If you booked an individual room within Rotary's official housing block, you will receive a follow-up communication and your credit card will not be charged. If you booked as a group within Rotary's official housing block and made a full or partial payment, you will receive a follow-up communication and instructions on receiving a refund.

### **Your ticketed travel**

Many airlines are updating their cancellation and change policies to accommodate travel restrictions put in place by countries. Please work with your airline or travel agency.

Planning the Honolulu convention was hard work, and I want to thank the 2020 Honolulu Convention Committee, the Host Organization Committee, the 2020 Honolulu Convention Promotion Committee, and Rotary staff for planning what would have been one of the best Rotary conventions yet.

The convention has always been an opportunity for us to generate new energy for Rotary and to draw inspiration as we come together to celebrate, learn, and grow. Now is our moment to demonstrate that *Rotary Connects the World* in innovative ways. Let's redouble our focus and energy on the work we do in our communities. We know the power and potential that lie within our simple acts of connecting. This is particularly true when we lend helping, hopeful hands to others, especially those dealing with the effects of isolation and fear. As we do this, so too can we continue to collaborate on big projects using all of the technology and expertise at our disposal.

We are exploring how we can share a convention-like experience with you through a virtual event, which could be a great example of us following the Rotary Action Plan goal of increasing our ability to adapt. We will have more to say on this in the near future.

I have no doubt that we will come through this and gather in the future to celebrate with an even deeper appreciation for our work, our experiences, and the many connections we

have made through Rotary.

Until then, thank you for your understanding of this difficult decision. Please know that we will make decisions as quickly as we can. As I am sure you can imagine, both Rotary members and staff are operating in a challenging situation. Please be safe as you continue to take action and do good throughout the world.

Aloha and kindest regards,

Mark Daniel Maloney  
President, Rotary International, 2019-2020