

District 5510 Youth Protection Policy

All Rotarians within District 5510 are expected to behave respectfully, courteously, and professionally towards youth in any Rotary programs in which they participate. District 5510 has adopted this Youth Protection Policy to fulfill this expectation and supplement the safeguards set forth in the Youth Protection for Youth Exchange Policy. All Rotarians and clubs within District 5510 are required to comply with this policy.

I. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following terms will have the following meanings:

“Abuse” and “abusive” includes physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or abusive behavior.

“Physical abuse” means the intentional use of force to the body that results in physical injury.

“Emotional abuse” means repeated or outrageous verbal attacks on a person’s sense of self, repeated rejection or humiliation, or repeated or extended exposure to environments or circumstances that reasonable cause feelings of fear, anxiety, intimidation, rejection, or abandonment.

“Sexual abuse” means the improper exposure to sexual contact, activity or behavior. It includes any sexual touching, intercourse, or exploitation.

“Harassment” means any abusive conduct by any individual that is directed at, and offensive to, another person or persons and which the individual knew or which reasonably should have known would cause offense or harm. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Abusive conduct that erodes the dignity of the victim, including without limitation on the basis of the victim’s color, race, national origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, or disability;
- Unwelcome, demeaning, and abusive remarks, jokes, and innuendos about the victim’s color, race, national origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, or disability;
- The use, display, or distribution of abusive materials, such as those that contain racist, sexist, or pornographic depictions or writings;
- Abusive and unwelcome touching, leering, sexual flirtations or advances, repeated phone calls or other communications, questions or comments about a person’s private or sexual life, or requests for sexual favors; and

- Abusive threats or offensive gestures.

“Protected youth” means any participant or volunteer, under 18 years of age, while participating in a program, activity, or event sponsored or run by the Rotary International, District 5510, or any club within District 5510. A protected youth is considered to be participating in such a program, activity, or event while being driven to or from it, while the protected youth is on site awaiting the start or after the conclusion of it, or during any other activity reasonably associated with, or taken in furtherance of, a Rotary program, activity, or event. Youth who turn 18 years old while involved in Rotary programs are still protected youth.

II. Rotarian Code of Conduct Towards Youth

All Rotarians and volunteers in Rotary programs within District 5510 are expected to take reasonable precautions and measures to safeguard protected youth from abuse and harassment during programs, activities, or events sponsored or run by the Rotary International, District 5510, or any club within District 5510. Rotarians within District 5510 must also take reasonable measures to remedy any abusive or harassing conduct or environments at any Rotary program, activity, or event. Rotarians and volunteers during such events should always treat protected youth with respect, and should model good, appropriate, behavior to protected youth. District 5510 Rotarians must comply with this Youth Protection Policy in all respects.

All Rotarians within District 5510 who interact with protected youth must either submit to background screening and receive prior approval or, in the alternative, comply with the District 5510 two-in-attendance requirement. The two-in-attendance requirement provides that Rotarians within District 5510 who have not submitted to background screening and received prior approval may only interact with protected youth at Rotary programs, activities, or events, if another adult is in attendance during the interaction. The two in attendance policy does not apply to extended contact with Youth Exchange Students. Please refer to the Student Exchange Youth Protection Policy.

In other words, District 5510 Rotarians who have not submitted to background screening and received prior approval must have another adult in attendance during interactions with protected youth, including without limitation during the following interactions with protected youth:

- Drives to or from Rotary-sponsored programs, activities, or events;
- Bathroom breaks during Rotary-sponsored programs, activities, or events; and
- Group meetings or planning sessions.

Unless a Rotarian or volunteer has submitted to background screening and received prior approval, he or she may not have one-on-one contact with a protected youth.

When participating in any overnight activity or event, no protected youth is permitted to sleep in a room or tent with a Rotarian, other than the protected youth's own parent or guardian.

III. Training

Rotarians within District 5510 must familiarize themselves with this Policy, and sign an acknowledgment, as adopted by the Youth Protection Officer, acknowledging receipt of this Policy no less than every 24 months. They also must attend annual training as established by the District 5510 Youth Protection Committee and the Youth Protection Officer. The District 5510 Youth Protection Committee will adopt and enforce reasonable training guidelines, in collaboration with the Youth Protection Officer, for all Rotarians within District 5510.

IV. Background Screening

Rotarians who interact with protected youth other than pursuant to the two-in-attendance requirement must first submit to background screening and approval. The District 5510 Youth Protection Committee will be responsible for approving appropriate screening applications, selecting contract screening companies, and adopting standards and protocols for background screening, in compliance with applicable law. The Youth Protection Committee also will be solely responsible for making approval determinations, or delegating responsibility for such determinations, pursuant to any criteria they deem appropriate, whether formal or informal, in compliance with applicable law.

V. Monitoring, Reporting, And Discipline

Each of the clubs within District 5510 shall be responsible for monitoring the programs, events, or activities that they sponsor or run to ensure that they are operated in compliance with this Youth Protection Policy. Each club shall select one Rotarian within the club to serve as a club youth protection official. Further, the clubs shall provide periodic reports, prepared by the club youth protection official, to the District 5510 Youth Protection Officer, pursuant to a schedule established by the Officer, concerning compliance with this Policy. The clubs must report any violations or perceived violations of this Policy to the Youth Protection Officer, as soon as reasonably practicable.

All Rotarians within District 5510 are also expected to report any violations or perceived violations of this Policy to the Youth Protection Officer as soon as reasonably practicable. All such reports shall be taken seriously. Reports of violations are encouraged; Rotarians will not be subjected to any retaliation or consequence for truthfully reporting actual or perceived violations. Retaliation against Rotarians who

report violations will not be tolerated. Any such retaliation should also be reported to the Youth Protection Officer for investigation. Any reports of violations of the Youth Protection Policy will be handled as confidentially as reasonably possible. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to ensure a proper investigation and compliance with legal requirements.

The Youth Protection Officer shall be responsible for conducting a preliminary investigation of any actual or perceived violation of this Policy, and should report his or her preliminary findings to the Youth Protection Committee and the District Governor. The Youth Protection Officer, the Youth Protection Committee, and the District Governor shall collectively determine whether to take additional measures, including without limitation further investigation by the Youth Protection Officer, hiring of a third-party investigator for a formal investigation, reporting a violation of criminal authorities, or imposing disciplinary action against the offending Rotarian or volunteer.

The Youth Protection Committee will be responsible for recommending discipline against an offending Rotarian or volunteer, subject to approval by the District Governor. The District Governor shall have exclusive authority under this Policy for the final determination of discipline and for imposing discipline, subject to oversight by the Rotary International and its policies. The Youth Protection Officer shall maintain a confidential record of discipline imposed under this Policy, and shall advise the Youth Protection Committee and the District Governor of prior violations and discipline, to help ensure consistency in enforcement.

VI. Youth Protection Committee And Youth Protection Officer

The District 5510 Youth Protection Policy shall be enforced and interpreted by the Youth Protection Committee. The Youth Protection Committee shall be comprised of Five (5) members and the Youth Protection Officer, who will be the Chair. Three members shall be existing or past club presidents, as selected by the District Governor; two members shall be other active Rotarians, one of each shall be selected by each of the existing club presidents serving on the Committee; Members shall be approved by a majority of the remaining members of the Committee, The two at large members shall provide expertise in any of the following areas: legal compliance, background screening methodology, youth protection, abuse or harassment protection, or other expertise deemed helpful by the Youth Protection Committee. Each Committee member shall serve a term of two years subject to availability and good behavior, but may be re-selected for additional two-year terms. No two (2) members of the Youth Protection Committee shall be members of the same Rotary club.

The Youth Protection Committee shall select and adopt appropriate bylaws for operation of the Committee, the staggering of Committee member terms of service, and selection and continuity of Committee members. Bylaws may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Committee, including that of a quorum.

The Youth Protection Officer shall serve as the Chairman of the Youth Protection Committee. The District Governor shall select the Chairman, who shall serve a three-year term, subject to availability and good behavior. The Chair of the Youth Protection committee shall not have a vote, unless the committee members present are of equal number, and in that case the Chair shall cast a vote to avoid a voting tie.

VII. Amendment

This District 5510 Youth Protection Policy may be amended by any of the following: (a) a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Youth Protection Committee, including a quorum of the Committee; (b) by directive, rule, or determination of the Rotary International. (c) by directive, rule or determination of the District 5510 Governor.