



# ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

ADOPTED AUGUST 25, 2018

## FOREWORD

This Youth Protection Policy (“RYE YPP”) addresses practices and obligations specific to District 5050’s Rotary Youth Exchange program (“RYE”). It compliments District 5050’s separate Youth Protection Policy (“YPP”). The District’s YPP is available on the District 5050 website under the Youth Service tab. Where this policy is inconsistent with the YPP, this policy controls. Where this policy is silent, the YPP controls.

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### 1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International’s Code of Policies sets forth the following Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth:

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians’ spouse, and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

*Policy No. 2.130.1 (April, 2018 edition).*

To this end, District 5050’s RYE program evaluates students and volunteers; provides student and volunteer training; reviews criminal history checks for all volunteers; and provides regulatory compliance and other technical assistance to RYE students, clubs and volunteers. It recognizes that successful youth protection initiatives require sustained and committed effort by all who have contact with youth. The Youth Protection

Policy also identifies specific RYE practices that are structured to both adhere to Rotary International’s Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth and with U. S. and/or Canadian youth exchange laws and regulations.

## **2. Definitions**

**Club** - A club refers to a District 5050 club that is participating in RYE. Each club shall have a Youth Exchange Officer (“YEO”) who is responsible for the administration of the RYE program at the club level. Each club shall also have a Youth Services Chair (“YSC”), as required by the District’s YPP. Each club may also have a Youth Services or Youth Exchange Committee, according to the custom and practice of the club.

**Compliance Officer** – The District RYE Committee includes one Canadian and one U. S. volunteer who serve as the RYE Compliance Officers. These volunteers oversee the RYE program’s compliance with this RYE YPP, with the District YPP, and with U. S. and Canadian regulations and laws. The Compliance Officers also provide guidance and education to clubs participating in RYE, including guidance and education regarding the RYE YPP.

**Contact, Casual** – Many Rotary programs involve and support youth. Adults who have regular contact with youth through RYE and/or have ongoing direct responsibilities for youth through the RYE program are expected to be “approved volunteers.” This does not include teachers or coaches – individuals who have regular contact with youth as students, not as RYE participants. It does include the adults in a student’s host family, the student’s RYE counselor and YEO, and potentially others.

However, not every contact between an adult and a youth requires the adult to be an “approved volunteer.” An adult who has incidental or episodic contact with RYE youth are not required to be an “approved volunteer” if their interactions constitute “casual contact,” as set forth in this definition. Casual contact is defined as contact that occurs when an adult provides incidental transportation for the youth or periodically invites the youth to an event such as dinner, a sporting event, a movie, or a weekend activity.

An adult who has casual contact with an RYE student must have permission from the RYE student’s host parent and/or the student’s RYE counselor before the contact occurs. Guidance may be sought from an RYE Compliance Officer, the current District Committee Chair, the past District Chair, or the Chair-Elect when there are questions about what may constitute “casual contact.”

**Counselor** – A counselor is an approved volunteer who is assigned to have regular contact with and support a specific RYE LTEP student. A counselor may not be a member of the student’s host family. The RYE Committee also recommends that counselors not hold any other role of authority regarding a student’s exchange (e.g., a school principal, club president, district RYE committee chair). Counselors must be able to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise that relate to their RYE student, including instances of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment.

**Crisis Management Team** – District 5050 maintains a Crisis Management Team pursuant to the District’s YPP. The team is activated by the District’s Youth Protection Officer upon receipt of an allegation of abuse or harassment. See District 5050’s Youth Protection Policy for details (available on the District 5050 website under the “Youth Service” tab).

**District Rotary Youth Exchange Committee (“District RYE Committee”)** – The District RYE Committee is responsible for managing District 5050’s RYE program. The District Committee evaluates volunteers and potential host families, provides training for volunteers, and provides training and cross-cultural opportunities for RYE students.

**District Youth Protection Officer** – The District’s YPP requires the District to have a U. S. District Youth Protection Officer (“YPO”) and a Canadian YPO. The YPOs are members of the District’s Youth Services Committee.

**District Youth Services Committee** – District 5050 has a Youth Services Committee that administers the District’s Youth Protection Policy (“YPP”).

**Host Community** – For purposes of the RYE Travel Policy and the RYE YPP, a RYE student’s host community is defined as the area within the boundaries of District 5050, Vancouver, B.C. and Seattle, WA.

**Long Term Exchange Program (“LTEP”)** – The RYE Long Term Exchange Program (“LTEP”) refers to a Rotary cross cultural exchange program that is approximately 11 months long. LTEP students typically live with three different host families and attend school in their host family district. LTEP students receive student visas to travel to District 5050. The RYE YPP applies to all inbound LTEP students and the volunteers with whom they interact.

**NAYEN** – NAYEN is the North American Youth Exchange Network. It facilitates collaboration between Youth Exchange programs in Canada, the U. S. and Mexico. NAYEN provides training and support for RYE programs in North America.

**Short Term Exchange Program (“STEP”)** - The RYE Short Term Exchange Program (“STEP”) refers to a Rotary cross-cultural exchange program that matches youth to Rotary families for homestay experiences that are several days to several weeks long. A STEP student typically stays for two to six weeks with a Rotary family in another country who has a same age son or daughter. The STEP student then returns to District 5050 with their host brother or sister and hosts that youth in their home for an equivalent amount of time. STEP students travel on a tourist visa and do not attend school in the host country. STEP host families and counselors must be approved in accordance with this RYE YPP. The abuse and reporting requirements of the RYE YPP also apply to the STEP. Unless specifically noted, other aspects of the RYE YPP do not apply to the STEP.

**Travel, Casual Overnight** – RYE LTEP students may take advantage of planned and unanticipated overnight opportunities during their RYE year. Such opportunities tend to enhance a student’s cross-cultural experience, increase their understanding of their local community, and support the success of their RYE year. Casual overnight opportunities include, but are not limited to, trips up to 72 hours long for school-sponsored events; travel with non-Rotary youth groups (such as a church youth group); and camping, backpacking, and skiing trips with Rotary and non-Rotary families. Such travel is permitted with an adult who is not an “approved volunteer” when the following circumstances are met:

- The host parent(s) and the RYE student’s counselor jointly agree that:
  - ✓ The activity is one in which the RYE student and the unscreened adult(s) will not be in a one-to-one situation with the youth, but will always be within sight or sound of at least one other responsible adult;
  - ✓ There is a good faith basis to believe that each unscreened adult is responsible and trustworthy;
  - ✓ Each unscreened adult accepts responsibility for treating the RYE student the same way a conscientious parent would attend to the care and welfare of their own child;
  - ✓ The RYE student wants to attend the activity;
  - ✓ The RYE student provides his/her host parent(s) and counselor with the names of and contact information for all adults who will participate in the overnight travel, as well as the names of all participating individuals under the age of 18.
  - ✓ The RYE youth receives advance permission for out of host community travel, if applicable, in accordance with the District 5050 RYE Travel Policy (Appendix 1); and
  - ✓ The proposed activity does not present a significant risk of abuse or harassment.

Examples of types of casual overnight travel that do not meet these standards include overnight travel to attend a music concert; overnight travel to attend a beer, wine, or cannabis festival; overnight travel to visit a university; overnight travel where all participants are under 18 years old.

RYE students may participate in the overnight travel plans of their host families and other approved volunteers. If the overnight travel will be out of the student's host community, the student must comply with the District 5050 RYE Travel Policy (Appendix 1).

**Travel, Local** – Local travel for RYE students is considered travel within the boundaries of District 5050, to Vancouver, B. C., and to Seattle, WA.

**Travel, Out of Area** – Out of area travel for RYE students is travel that takes the student outside of the boundaries of District 5050, Vancouver, B. C., and/or Seattle, WA.

**Travel Policy** – RYE maintains a separate travel policy for out of area travel. RYE students, host families, YEOs, and counselors are responsible for maintaining compliance with the travel policy. The Travel Policy is attached as **Appendix 1**. It is also available on the District 5050 RYE website.

**Volunteer** – An adult involved with RYE who interacts directly with RYE youth, whether supervised or unsupervised. These volunteers include, but are not limited to, YEOs; counselors; members of the RYE District Committee; host family members who are over the age of 18; and Rotarians and non-Rotarians who work with students during activities or outings, or who transport students to events.

**WESSEX** – WESSEX is the Western States Student Exchange, Inc. It is a consortium of Rotary Youth Exchange programs along the west coast of North America. District 5050 is a member of WESSEX. WESSEX provides guidance regarding certain aspects of the District 5050 RYE program.

**YEAH** – YEAH is a database management system. District 5050's RYE committee and club volunteers use it to process and manage student and volunteer information. "YEAH" stands for Youth Exchange Administration Hub.

**Youth** – Youth refers to an RYE student and any person under the age of 18 years old.

**Youth Exchange Certification** – Rotary International requires each Rotary District to annually certify compliance with its Youth Exchange policies. A copy of this certification is available from the District RYE Committee Chair.

**Youth Exchange Officer** – A youth exchange officer ("YEO") is the Rotary volunteer who organizes and manages the RYE program at the club level. YEOs must be approved volunteers.

**Youth Services Chair** – Pursuant to the District's YPP, each club shall have a Youth Services Chair ("YSC").

### **3. Incorporation, Legal Status & Liability Insurance**

The District 5050 Youth Exchange Program (i.e. "RYE") is part of a District 5050 Nonprofit Corporation, State of Washington UBI No. 602724259 and British Columbia Extra Provincial Society No. XS-0052237.

RYE is registered as an International Student Exchange Agency with the State of Washington's Secretary of State's Office.

For Canada, insurance coverage is provided under the District 5050 Non-Profit Liability coverage through Coast Capital Insurance Services Ltd. Contact information is at 844-802-7616.

For the U. S., coverage is provided through the U. S. Rotary Club and District General Liability Insurance Program.

RYE carries liability insurance with appropriate coverage and policy limits. This policy protects the organization from third-party claims and litigation alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers.

#### **4. Clubs Participating in RYE**

If a club chooses to participate in RYE, the club must comply with this RYE YPP. The District RYE Committee shall train club volunteers on the requirements of the RYE YPP and other aspects of the RYE program. The District RYE Committee also monitors clubs for compliance with the RYE YPP and Rotary's Youth Exchange Certification requirements. The District RYE Committee in turn reports directly to the District Governor, who is responsible for the supervision and control of all District 5050 youth activities.

Accordingly, all clubs that participate in Rotary Youth Exchange must provide the District RYE Committee with a copy of the following for review and approval by August 31 of each year:

- A signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 5050 and RI policies. **Appendix 2.**
- Confirmation that a volunteer will have not more than casual contact with RYE youth until the volunteer is an "approved volunteer," which requires the following:
  - ✓ The volunteer must submit a written application through the YEAH system;
  - ✓ References consistent with this policy must be received and approved through the YEAH system;
  - ✓ The volunteer must successfully complete the Youth Protection Awareness training program and the training must be documented in YEAH;
  - ✓ A criminal history check must be conducted, reviewed, approved and documented in YEAH by a member of the District RYE Committee; and
  - ✓ [for U. S. volunteers only] the volunteer must successfully complete the U. S. Department of State Local Coordinator training program and the training must be documented in YEAH.
- Confirmation that no student will be placed with a host family until the following has occurred:
  - ✓ The host family has submitted a written application through the YEAH system;
  - ✓ All host family references that are consistent with this policy have been received and approved through the YEAH system;
  - ✓ A criminal history check has been conducted for each member of the host family 18 years old or older, and that a criminal history check has been reviewed, approved and documented in YEAH by a member of the District RYE Committee;
  - ✓ Each person 18 years old or older in the family has successfully completed the Youth Protection Awareness training program and the training has been documented in YEAH;
  - ✓ A host family interview and home inspection has occurred and documented in YEAH; and
  - ✓ A host family orientation has been completed and documented in YEAH.

#### **5. Volunteer Selection, Screening & Approval**

All Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers interested in working with youth program participants must meet RI and district eligibility requirements. See the District YPP for additional volunteer eligibility requirements and limitations. In an effort to promote youth protection, the District RYE Committee also reserves the right to deny an applicant's volunteer application even if the applicant meets the minimum requirements to become an "approved volunteer."

All Youth Exchange Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers who have more than casual contact with RYE students must become an "approved volunteer." To become an "approved volunteer," an applicant must:

Provide the information necessary for a YEO or other approved volunteer to complete the Criminal History Check form attached as **Appendix 3**.

Complete an on-line volunteer application (available on the District 5050 RYE website):

- Provide a list of personal references with contact information as part of the volunteer's on line application (applicants are discouraged from including family members as references and more than one Rotarian);
- Complete a criminal history check that is reviewed and approved in accordance with this RYE YPP;
- Complete the on line Youth Protection Awareness training;
- U. S. non-host family volunteers must also complete the on line Department of State Local Coordinator Training. This training must be renewed annually.
- Comply with RI and District guidelines for RYE;
- RYE host families have additional volunteer screening and approval requirements. They include:
  - Undergoing a comprehensive interview and home inspection that evaluates the family's suitability, demonstrating:
    - ✓ Commitment to the safety and security of students
    - ✓ Appropriate motives for hosting a student that are consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
    - ✓ Suitable accommodations for the RYE student
    - ✓ Financial ability to continue to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student
    - ✓ Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental guidance to promote the student's well-being
  - Completing an annual Host Family Orientation; and
  - Undergoing home visits with and without notice, both before and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.

Note: All adult (age 18 and older) residents of the host home must meet all selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family or household staff who are full-time or part-time residents of the home. Host families are not required to complete the U. S. Department of State Local Coordinator training.

## **6. Training.**

The District RYE program shall provide youth protection training and information to all RYE students and volunteers who will have more than casual contact with RYE youth. The District RYE Committee and NAYEN sponsor the training sessions. Specifically, District 5050 shall conduct specialized training for those involved in RYE, including:

- The District Governor
- District Youth Exchange Committee members
- Club YEOs, counselors and other interested volunteers.
- Host families
- LTEP students (outbound and inbound)
- STEP students (outbound only)

## **7. Allegation Handling & Follow-through**

District 5050 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will address them in accordance with the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines contained in District 5050's Youth Protection

Policy, including providing notice to the Crisis Response Team. The current YPP is available on line at the District 5050 website under “Youth Service.”

RYE will also cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with official investigations when conducting its own independent review.

## APPENDIX 1: TRAVEL POLICY



### TRAVEL POLICY

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

### YOUTH EXCHANGE

Rotary Youth Exchange ("RYE") students in District 5050 may travel within their host communities when they have permission from their host family. Travel may be by personal car, public transportation, or other means approved by the host family. The student's host community includes all of District 5050, Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA.

If a student would like to travel outside their host community for up to 72 hours with their host family or for a Rotary sponsored event, the following must occur prior to the student's travel:

the student's parents/guardians must be given written details about the travel, including:

- location(s) to be visited
- type of transportation to be used
- accommodation arrangements
- general itinerary
- the organizer's contact information (name & cell phone or email)
- the student's parents/guardians must approve in writing (may be by email or text)

**THE STUDENT'S HOST FAMILY SHALL COMPLETE & MAINTAIN THE TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM**

If a student would like to travel outside of their host community for up to 72 hours without their host family and not for a Rotary sponsored event (e.g., to visit a friend, to attend a school sponsored event, to go skiing, or to go backpacking), the following must occur prior to the student's travel:

the student's parents/guardians, host family, and counselor must be given written details about the travel, including:

- location(s) to be visited
- type of transportation to be used
- accommodation arrangements
- general itinerary
- the organizer's contact information (name & cell phone or email)
- the student's parents/guardians must approve in writing (may be by email or text)
- the student's host family must approve in writing (may be by email or text)
- the student's RYE counselor or YEO must approve in writing (may be by email or text)

**THE STUDENT'S COUNSELOR OR YEO SHALL COMPLETE THE TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM & UPLOAD IT TO YEAH**

If a student would like to travel outside of their host community for more than 72 hours, the following must occur prior to the student's travel:

the student's parents/guardians, host family, and counselor must be given written details about the travel, including:

- location(s) to be visited
- type of transportation to be used
- accommodation arrangements
- general itinerary
- the organizer's contact information (name & cell phone or email)
- the student's parents/guardians must approve in writing (may be by email or text)
- the student's host family must approve in writing (may be by email or text)
- the student's RYE counselor or YEO must approve in writing (may be by email or text)

**THIS CATEGORY OF TRAVEL MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SCREENING. PLAN ACCORDINGLY.**

**THE STUDENT'S COUNSELOR OR YEO SHALL COMPLETE THE TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM & UPLOAD IT TO YEAH**

If any of the above-described travel is outside of the boundaries of the host country (Canada or the contiguous 48 states of the U. S.), then, in addition to the other permission requirements outlined above,

the chair, vice chair, or chair-elect of the District 5050 RYE Committee must approve the travel in writing (may be by email or text).

**THIS CATEGORY OF TRAVEL WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SCREENING. PLAN ACCORDINGLY**

**THE STUDENT'S COUNSELOR OR YEO SHALL COMPLETE THE TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM & UPLOAD IT TO YEAH**

## **APPENDIX 2: CLUB COMPLIANCE FORM**

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED ANNUALLY BY JULY 31<sup>ST</sup>  
BY ALL DISTRICT 5050 CLUBS PARTICIPATING IN RYE**

The undersigned Youth Exchange Officer and President of the Rotary Club of \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that each has received and read the District 5050 RYE Youth Protection Policy and certifies as follows:

1. That the club will abide by the RYE Youth Protection Policy;
2. That the club will follow the District Youth Protection Policy's Abuse Allegation Response Guidelines (available on the District 5050 website under the "Youth Service" tab);
3. That the YEO and Counselor will be fully approved volunteers before this year's RYE LTEP inbound student arrives;
4. That the YEO and Counselor's approved status will not lapse until after the end of the current Rotary year;
5. That the YEO and Counselor will be fully approved volunteers before any RYE STEP student exchange occurs;
6. That the YEO and Counselor's approved status will not lapse until after the RYE STEP exchange has been completed.
7. That volunteers who will have more than casual contact with RYE students will become approved volunteers before having more than casual contact with an RYE student;
8. That the YEO will not permit a student to be placed with a host family until the host family is in a fully approved status; and
9. That the YEO and each Counselor will attend training necessary to understand, implement and manage the RYE YPP within their club.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name:  
Youth Exchange Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name:  
Club President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **APPENDIX 3: CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK INFORMATION SHEET**

The following information must be obtained by the YEO or another approved volunteer before the RYE Committee can complete a criminal history check for any volunteer.

In the U. S., the information should be provided by email to the RYE U. S. Compliance Officer.

In Canada, the information should be provided to the RYE Canadian Compliance Officer.

Volunteer's Name (first, middle, last) \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's DOB (dd/mm/yr) \_\_\_\_\_

Any other name(s) or nickname(s) used by the volunteer within the last 10 years \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Rotary Club \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years as a member of the Rotary Club \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years residing in the State of Washington \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years residing in the Province of British Columbia \_\_\_\_\_