



ABUSE AND HARASSMENT POLICY

District 5370 Policy Statement:

It is the responsibility of every Rotarian to safeguard the welfare of every person with whom they come into 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.

Rotary Clubs place great emphasis on their work with people in the community including young people, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons through Rotary's many programs including, but not limited to, RYLA, RYLE, RYPEN, mentoring programs and Rotary Youth Exchange. This volunteer effort is vital to the quality of life in our communities and to the good reputation of Rotary and Rotarians. For this good work to continue, it is important that our Rotary clubs protect the interests of everyone involved and create and maintain a safe and respectful environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of every person at risk with whom they come into contact, including children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons. Fulfilling this duty also safeguard the interests of Rotary Clubs and Rotarians by minimizing their risk of liability, including legal liability, should a participant in a Rotary activity become a victim of abuse.

Children are defined as being anyone under the age of 18. Vulnerable persons are people who, because of their age, disability or other circumstance, are more vulnerable than others.

Position Statement on the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment District 5370 will, insofar as possible:

1. In accordance with its legal obligations, ensure that children, the elderly, and people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons who are involved in Rotary District 5370 programs, activities and events, are protected from abuse, harassment and neglect.
2. Inform all adults involved in Rotary programs for vulnerable persons to complete and return their Vulnerable Persons Record Check response to our District Abuse Prevention Coordinator before associating themselves with any aspect of these programs.
3. Ensure that Rotary District 5370 programs are provided to young people, the elderly and people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons in a safe and caring environment



4. Prevent contact with persons who are either prohibited by law from working with children, the elderly or people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons or who are considered by Rotary District 5370 to be inappropriate persons to be working with children, the elderly or people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons.

5. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, additional safeguards must be put in place to ensure the protection of any vulnerable person with whom the individual may have future contact as well as for the protection of the accused. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in Rotary programs that include vulnerable persons. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.

6. Encourage and facilitate the timely reporting of incidents where children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons are at risk of harm.

7. Ensure the prompt notification of allegations of abuse, harassment or neglect by children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons where allegations involve Rotarians or persons involved with Rotary programs.

8. Report any allegations of abuse in compliance with provincial and territorial legislation.

District 5370 will not insofar as possible:

1. Permit a prohibited person to participate in any program related to children, the elderly, people with disabilities or other vulnerable persons.

2. Permit any person to become a counsellor or a mentor, or host a youth exchange student, whether as a host parent or as an adult living in the same home as the youth exchange student will live, without first determining the suitability of the person through the District's screening process.

Prohibited Person:

For the purpose of this policy, a Prohibited Person is anyone who:

1. Has been convicted of an offense which resulted in harm to an individual, including assault, sexual assault, sexual interference with a minor or failure to provide the necessities of life;

2. Has been convicted of any offense which, in the opinion of the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator, suggests an unacceptable risk of harm to a person in the care of that individual; or;

3. Is subject to a court order or decree prohibiting a person from being in contact with any other individual.



Scope:

These policies and procedures apply to all District 5370 Rotarians and non-Rotarian volunteers who wish to assume the role of District Committee, Club counsellors, mentors, or host families in club-sponsored programs. It also applies to all District 5370 Rotarians and non-Rotarian volunteers who will be participating in ANY Rotary Program that involves interaction with vulnerable persons. In the case of Youth Exchange these policies also apply to all adults over the age of 18 years who reside in the home of a host family.

Screening:

All adults as listed in the scope above must complete the District 5370 Volunteer Assessment Form. This form will then be scanned and emailed to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for review.

All adults as listed in the scope above must provide a Vulnerable Persons Record Check (VPRC) response that has been duly processed by the local police service.

All non-Rotarian adult volunteers who wish to be considered as host families will be required to complete an online application form, complete online training and other as required, provide 2 references and be willing to participate in an in-home interview by at least two Rotarians.

A Vulnerable Persons Record Check response is submitted directly to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for their assessment.

No Rotarian or other volunteer shall participate in the Youth Exchange Program until the online application and Vulnerable Persons Record Check (VPRC) response has been completed and accepted by the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator.

Volunteer Assessment Form:

The Volunteer Assessment Form will be provided by Club counsellors to all adult requiring screening in accordance with the screening criteria above.

District Abuse Prevention Coordinator: Appointed by 5370 District Governor

a. The District Governor shall appoint a District Abuse Prevention Coordinator (DAPC) who is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy. The DAPC shall have experience working with people at risk such as children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable persons either in their professional capacity or as an experienced Rotary Volunteer.

b. The appointment of the DAPC will be made annually. It is expected that the DAPC will hold the office for two to three years.



- c. The DAPC must be familiar with Rotary International Child Protection System, other relevant Rotary international policies, and the relevant federal, provincial and territorial legislature.
- d. The DAPC, with the assistance of the District Office, will review and maintain a database listing person who have submitted this form and when they were approved to participate in accordance with the requirements of this policy.
- e. The DAPC will maintain strict confidentiality of such forms in compliance with provincial, territorial and federal legislation and this policy.
- f. In the event the DAPC determines that an individual is not acceptable as a Club counsellor, mentor or host family due to the results of the VPRC, he or she shall advise the applicant that he/she is not acceptable, but shall not disclose any details of the reason behind the decision in order to ensure the privacy of the applicant.
- g. The District Governor shall be the first point of contact should any Club counsellor or other Rotarian receive a complaint of abuse or harassment, and is responsible for ensuring that such complaints are dealt with according to applicable law and the interests of the affected person are protected to the extent possible.
- h. The DAPC will work with Clubs to inform all Rotarians of their obligation under this policy and relevant legislation and to ensure that appropriate training is made available.

Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines:

Receive the report

- a. Listen attentively and stay calm.

Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.

- b. Assure privacy but not confidentiality.

Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment in order to make it stop and ensure that it doesn't happen to others.

- c. Get the facts, but don't interrogate.

Ask questions that establish facts: who, what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the vulnerable person's motives. Remember that your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.



- d. Be nonjudgmental and reassure.

Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It's especially important not to blame or criticize the vulnerable person. Emphasize that the situation was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature to come to you.

- e. Document the allegation.

Make a written record of the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Try to use the young person's words and record only what he or she told you.

Protect the Vulnerable person

- The District Governor will ensure the safety and well-being of the vulnerable person by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser.
- Reassure the Vulnerable Person that this is being done for his or her safety and is not a punishment.
- If the police do not activate an investigation the District Governor upon consultation with the District's legal counsel will coordinate an independent review of the allegations.
- Immediate professional non-Rotarian counselling will be made available to the Vulnerable Person.
- After the authorities have completed their investigations should there be criminal charges sited against the accused legal counsel will be provided for the Vulnerable Person.
- Should the allegation investigation involve Youth Exchange host family member and/or be inconclusive the District Youth Exchange Chair and/or Youth Chair will make the necessary arrangements to move the youth exchange student to a new host club in a different community.
- The accused will be prevented from associating with all Vulnerable Persons involved in any Rotary Programs and shall be reported the allegations to appropriate authorities.

FOR YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENTS:

- Contact the student's parents or legal guardian. If the student is away from home, then the student and his or her parents should decide whether to stay in country or return home. If the student stays in country, written authorization from the student's parents or legal guardian is required. If the student and the student's parents choose for the student to return home, consult



with police before making travel arrangements. If an investigation is pending, the police may not approve of the student leaving the country.

- Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment FIRST to the RCMP or City Police depending on the law enforcement jurisdiction you live in.
- SECOND the Club Youth Exchange Counselor will contact the District Youth Exchange Chair and/or Youth Chair who is responsible for seeking the advice of District legal counsel and appropriate agencies and interacting with them.
- The District Youth Exchange Chair and/or Youth Chair will also inform the District Governor of the allegations.
- The District Youth Exchange Chair and/or Youth Chair will also inform the District Chair of the country who sponsored/sent the exchange student.
- If the allegation involves the conduct of the Club Youth Exchange Counselor Rotarian, the District Youth Exchange Chair and/or Youth Chair is the FIRST Rotary contact.
- District 5370 will cooperate with police or legal investigations.

FOR OTHER VULNERABLE PERSONS:

- Contact parents or legal guardians if applicable
- Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment FIRST to the RCMP or City Police depending on the law enforcement jurisdiction you live in.
- The Chair of the organizing committee for this program will inform the District Governor of the allegations.
- District 5370 will cooperate with police or legal investigations

Confidentiality and Privacy

The rights of both the victim and the accused will be protected at all times which means they have a right to privacy. Only those individuals directly involved in the reporting and investigation will be briefed in confidence on the details of the allegations and investigation.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- (a) Privacy and confidentiality are essential for creating an environment where those who have experienced abuse or harassment feel safe in disclosing their experience and seeking support. The privacy and confidentiality of those involved in a disclosure of abuse or harassment



will be protected. However, it is important to note that there may be limits to the District's ability to do so, when:

- i. There is a likely risk of harm to self or others, or
- ii. Reporting or action is required or authorized by law.

(b) Whether or not the District can maintain the privacy and confidentiality of a disclosure will be determined on a case by case basis, in consultation with relevant Rotary and law enforcement officials.

(c) Whether in the context of a disclosure or a complaint, all parties will be informed of the limits of privacy and confidentiality. In cases where confidentiality cannot be maintained, those affected will be informed and supported throughout the process. In such cases, only necessary information will be disclosed, and only to those who need to know.

Position Statement on the Prevention of Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Rotary Clubs will, insofar as possible:

1. Ensure that individuals involved in Rotary District 5370 programs are not subject to harassment, which includes conduct that erodes the dignity of the victim, particularly based on the victim's color, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability. Types of behavior that constitute harassment include unwelcome remarks and jokes; 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. In accordance with its legal obligations, Rotary District 5370 will ensure that individuals who are involved in Rotary District 5370 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 inquiries 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.

Rotary Clubs will, insofar as possible:

1. Adopt a policy statement on the prevention of abuse and harassment by adapting the Rotary District 5370 Abuse and Harassment Policy

The Club Abuse and Harassment Policy is posted on the District 5370 website.

Every year the club president and Youth Exchange Officer will sign and return to our District 5370 office a Promise to Comply form which is the club's commitment to abide by this policy and ensure that the required training and orientation for counselor, students and host families is attended.



2. Delegate responsibility for the protection of persons at risk to a member of the club

Identify one member responsible for dealing with allegations or disclosure. Members and volunteers should know how to contact this individual quickly, including a named alternate. This person and his or her team is responsible

for raising awareness and training all members of the club for the procedures they should follow when concerned with the personal security of others.

3. Plan club activities so as to minimize situations where abuse may occur

Access to and from venues should be planned so that people at risk are not required to use a route to and from an event or venue that is unsupervised, lonely, dark or otherwise potentially open to danger.

Resources should be organized in such a way so that children have a supervisor that is gender appropriate. Avoid situations where one child is supervised by one adult.

4. Introduce a process where children can talk in confidence and safely with an independent person

It is known that adults who abuse may exploit their role or situation to gain the submission and/or silence of the child. This is particularly true in residential situations, such as hosting an exchange student. Clubs should identify someone suitable who has demonstrated trustworthiness to be available for children wanting to report abuse. This person should be given clear written guidelines explaining what action must be taken when abuse is disclosed.

In non-residential situations it may be more appropriate to ensure that children are aware they have the right to talk privately to someone responsible for their overall safety and welfare. It is important that children know who this person is and how to contact the individual.

5. Develop procedures for protecting all vulnerable persons and apply these to all Rotarians and volunteers

Club procedures will apply to everyone involved in the event or activity. This will include, for example, all Rotarians, any Rotarian's partner, all Rotaractors and Interactors, all volunteers and paid staff.

6. Ensure all Rotarians and other volunteers have clear roles

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. While this may only be a simple document, preparing it will help to make clear the priorities, the risks, and how the risks might be minimized. A copy of the policy statement to prevent abuse, and



instructions on what to do if abuse is discovered or suspected should be provided to each Rotarian and volunteer at each event.

7. Event supervision as a means of protecting vulnerable persons

Rotary event supervisors are responsible for protecting vulnerable persons and others from abuse and should receive and be expected to understand the material contained in this document. Supervisors should remain alert and monitor and assess a volunteer's relationships with vulnerable persons looking for signs that a particular vulnerable person is receiving exceptionally harsh or favourable treatment. Supervisors suspecting that abuse may be occurring are expected to intervene as required and report their concerns to the individual responsible for the overall conduct of the club and its members and volunteers.

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

Clear club policies, effective procedures for various events and programs, and regular proactive education programs for all Rotarians and volunteers – all supported with written materials – will provide a healthy, prevention- oriented approach for this serious responsibility we all share.

It is the policy of District 5370 that all persons 18 or older coming into contact with vulnerable persons are required to have a Vulnerable Persons Record Check (VPRC) form processed by the local Police Service. Keep in mind these checks generally report convictions for criminal offences, and they do not include charges that did not result in a conviction, nor do they disclose personal behaviours that may put vulnerable persons at risk. A pro-active, prevention-oriented program is a superior approach for all clubs.

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

The following suggestions may help clubs develop suitable procedures:

- Rotarians and volunteers should know they have a responsibility to report anything that concerns them about the personal security of others.
- 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. It should be clear that anyone doing so will not be discriminated against in the future.
- Rotarians should not attempt to deal with a problem alone. All complaints, allegations or suspicions should be reported to the District Chair of the program within which the club is working who will notify the District Governor and the District Governor will be responsible for deciding at what stage and in what circumstances the authorities will be informed.



- Debriefing sessions following a reported incident are excellent for improving procedures and identifying new training requirements
- Rotarians and volunteers often are required to drive their personal vehicle in the delivery of service. Procedures should be established to ensure driver's licenses are valid and insurance adequate for the proposed activity.
- In some instances, it may be necessary for a Rotarian to lift a vulnerable person. Training in proper lifting techniques should be provided to all Rotarians and volunteers.
- Rotary clubs may find it useful to provide each Rotarian and volunteer with a wallet card outlining the Club's policy regarding the protection of children, the elderly, the disabled and other persons at risk. This card could also contain a check list detailing what to do if abuse is discovered or suspected.

10. Reinforce our legal and moral responsibilities in everything we do

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 are 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 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 our District and Club policies.

District Abuse Prevention coordinator/committee:

Volunteer Selection and Screening

1. District Office will maintain in perpetuity an electronic database of all Rotarians/Volunteers who have submitted a Volunteer Police Record Check and been cleared to participate in all Rotary Programs that include Vulnerable Persons
2. Youth Exchange Agreements will only be considered with RI certified Districts upon acceptance of one another's exchange requirements and expectations.



3. All volunteers interested in participating in the Rotary programs for Vulnerable Persons must meet the following requirements:

- a. Submit their VPRC to the District Abuse Prevention coordinator
- b. Be willing to have a personal interview.
- c. Be willing to provide a list of references for the District and/or Rotary Clubs to check.
- d. Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program, Youth Protection Policies and other vulnerable persons programs.

4. Youth Exchange Host families or volunteers billeting Youth for Rotary programs - must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above:

- a. Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students.
 - b. All hosting is strictly voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host students
 - c. Host families must demonstrate commitment to the safety and security of the student
 - d. Have the financial ability to provide adequate accommodations for the student
 - e. Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being
 - f. Host families must complete an online application and online training
 - g. Home visits must be conducted for each family, host visits must be both announced and unannounced (short notice)
 - h. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.
 - i. All adult residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines.
5. Rotarian counselors must meet the criteria for all volunteers, as well as the following:
- a. Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family.

- b. Counselors must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

6. Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in the Youth Exchange program must

- a. Complete an online application and be interviewed first by the club and then participate in a parent/student interview by the District Youth Exchange committee to determine suitability for participation in the program.
- b. Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.
- c. All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the Youth Exchange program must be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the program.

7. Training

- a. All Youth Services programs (youth exchange, RYLA, RYPEN, RYLE) will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all participants



- b. Develop a training calendar that defines the participants, frequency of training required for each volunteer position.
 - c. Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Services program participants:
 - District governor
 - District Youth Services committee members
 - Club Youth Services committee members
 - Rotarian counselors
 - Youth Exchange students and Outbound students and their parents.
 - Host families
 - Establish guidelines to ensure all participants have received the requisite training
8. Youth Exchange Additional Responsibilities
- a. Ensure all Inbound Youth Exchange students arrive in Canada with adequate medical insurance.
 - b. Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the district's Youth Exchange program structure (so-called backdoor exchanges)
 - c. Each Inbound student as part of their Fall Orientation and contained in their Welcome to Canada Handbook is provided with a list of local services in their community.
 - d. Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to Inbound students.
 - e. Provide a listing to inbound students of names and phone numbers for the student's Rotarian counsellor, host club president, host district chair, host governor, sending district chair, sending governor, sending club president and two non-Rotarian resource persons (one male and one female)
 - f. The District Youth Exchange Chair's and/or Youth Chair's cell phone is on and available 24/7
 - g. Appoint an independent lawyer, therapist, or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
 - h. Report all criminal allegations to RI within 72 hours.
 - i. Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.
 - j. Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures regularly.
 - k. Each Inbound and Outbound student is required to submit a quarterly report that includes information on current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions.
 - l. Inbound students will be hosted by a minimum of three successive host families.
 - m. Prohibit volunteers from having contact with students until a background check has been conducted and clearance for unsupervised contact with students has been issued by District 5370 Abuse Prevention Officer.



District 5370 Policy requires an online application in the YEAH database to be completed by Club Counselors, mentors, and all adults living in the same home as a family who will host a young person who is involved in a Rotary Youth Exchange program.

Rotary District 5370

Rotary Club of _____

VOLUNTEER ASSESSMENT FORM

Policy Statement:

It is the duty of every Rotarian and Volunteer to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children, elderly, disabled or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact.

Your name:

Your address:

Your telephone number:

Your email address:

Date of birth:

Member of the Rotary Club since:

Who else lives with you (names and ages):

Name _____

Age _____

Do you have any previous experience of working with children, elderly or disabled people?

Please give details, including whether family members or not:

Please give details of any qualifications or training you or your spouse/partner have that might be relevant or helpful:

Have you or anyone living with you ever been convicted of an offence in which children were victims, or which involved activities (including internet use) of a sexual nature? Please describe. This information will be kept confidential and not used to discriminate unfairly. The information is required to prevent the abuse of children and will not be used for any other purpose:



Are you prohibited by any Court Order, agreement or Bond from associating with or contacting any person, including any child?

Please give us details of 2 people we can contact who will give you a reference: (This person should not be a friend, relative or Club member)

CONSENT

I certify that all of the statements in this affidavit, and in any attachments hereto, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have not withheld any information that would affect this affidavit unfavorably. I understand that District 5370 Youth Programs will deny a volunteer position to anyone convicted of a crime of violence.

I give my permission to District 5370 to verify information given in this affidavit, including searches of law enforcement and published records (including driving records and criminal background checks) and contact with my former employers and with references provided. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for a volunteer position working with youth and participating in youth programs. I also understand that as long as I remain a volunteer, this information may be checked again at any time.

I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history and, if I dispute the record as received, a procedure is available for clarification.

WAIVER

IN CONSIDERATION of my acceptance and participation in the youth programs, I, to the full extent permitted by law, hereby release and agree to save, hold harmless, and indemnify all members, officers, directors, committee members, and employees of the participating Rotary clubs and District 5370, and of Rotary International ("Indemnitees"), from any or all liability for any loss, property damage, personal injury, or death, including any such liability that may arise out of the negligence of any of the Indemnitees or may be suffered or claimed by me as a result of an investigation of my background in connection with this affidavit.



I further agree to conform to the rules, regulations, and policies of Rotary International, the District 5370 youth programs and its affiliates.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above affidavit, consent, and waiver and that I sign this form voluntarily.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Interview conducted by:

_____ on _____,
20____. Date

Interviewer's Signature

Home Visited Conducted by:

_____ on _____,
20____. Date

Interviewer's Signature

Recommended for Approval:

_____ on _____,
20____. Date

Counselor's Signature

