­­May 6, 2014

District 5400 Youth Exchange   
Abuse and Harassment   
Prevention Policy

District Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 5400 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians’ spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

2. Definitions (optional)

**Volunteer.** Any adult involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities.

**Student.** Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Exchange,   
regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority.

**Sexual abuse.** Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex. This includes non-touching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

**Sexual harassment.** Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims.

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance

Each district Youth Exchange program is required to incorporate or establish itself as a similar formal legal entity (Ltd., etc.). Consider including this information in your abuse and harassment prevention policy. For example:

Rotary District 5400 Youth Exchange program is part of the incorporated Rotary District 5400, Inc., under the laws of the State of Idaho.

District program carries general liability insurance with coverage and limits appropriate for its geographic location.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

District 5400 will maintain for three years all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors.

**All volunteers** interested in participating in the District 5400 Youth Exchange program must meet the following requirements:

• Complete the Youth Volunteer Affidavit form and authorize the district to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices).

• Undergo personal interviews.

• Provide a list of references for the district to check.

• Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI policy prohibits any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment from working with youth in a Rotary context. 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 youth 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 youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position. District 5400 will notify Rotary International within 72 hours of all

allegations of abuse or harrassment.

• Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

**Host families** must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above:

• Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. Host families must demonstrate:

– Commitment to the safety and security of students

– Motivation for hosting a student consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange

– Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student

– Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student’s well-being

• Host families must complete a written application.

• Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include announced and unannounced visits, both before and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.

• All adult residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family who are permanent or part-time residents in the home.

\* No host family in District 5400 will be coerced Into hosting: all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students must not be made to feel that hosting is mandatory for their son or daughter to go on an exchange.

\* Long-term students will have multiple host families.

\* District 5400 will immediately move students into temporary housing with a committee member or alternate family that has gone through background checks in the case of an allegation against the host family.

\* District 5400 in its sole and absolute discretion shall have the right to remove a student from a host family's care and supervision at any time without notice or reason.

\* Volunteers shall be required to report all reportable incidents In accordance with the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

**Rotarian counselors** must meet the criteria for all volunteers, as well as the following:

• Counselors must not be a member of the student’s host family.

• 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. District 5400 counselors must sign an affidavit that they have read and understand Rotary Youth Exchange policies for the protection of youth.

5. Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in the District 5400 Youth Exchange program must meet these requirements

• Complete a written application and be interviewed to determine suitability for participation in the program.

• Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

**All parents or legal guardians of students** interested in participating in the District 5400 Youth Exchange program must be interviewed to determine the student’s suitability for participation in the program.

6. Training

District 5400 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants. District 5400 will conduct the training sessions.

Specifically, District 5400 will

• Adapt the Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leader’s Guide to incorporate specific district guidelines, information on local customs and cultural issues, and legal requirements

• Develop a training calendar that defines the participants, frequency of training required for each volunteer position, and training methods to be used

• Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:

– District governor

– District Youth Exchange committee members

– Club Youth Exchange committee members

– Rotarian counselors

– Host families

– Students (outbound and inbound)

– Parents and legal guardians of students

• Establish guidelines to ensure that all participants have received the requisite training

• Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

District 5400 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines. It is not for Rotarian or non-Rotarian volunteers to determine whether an allegation constitutes a reportable incident, but rather a third party, e.g. local law enforcement or Child Protective Services that the allegation needs to be immediately reported or that the district can consult with , and then such entity can make the determination of whether further investigation is required.

8. Follow-through and Review Guidelines

District 5400 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will ensure that each allegation is investigated thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with other investigations when conducting its own independent reviews.

9. Other District 5400 Responsibilities

• Establish procedures for reporting, investigating, and handling noncriminal offenses or historical cases that law enforcement chooses not to investigate.

• District 5400 Requires that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance at the following minimum level: $1,000,000.00., Covering travel medical illness and accident coverage. This must conform to Rotary Code of Polices Section 41.060.10.

• Provide each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hot lines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.).

• Complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the exchange begins.

• Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to Youth Exchange students. This will be handed out to all Rotary Youth Exchange students at orientation. It will include two non-Rotarian contacts. Furthermore it will include a list of local resources for medical, dental and mental health care and law enforcement professionals contact information, including suicide prevention hotlines, rape crisis hotlines, and local child protection agencies.

• Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.

• Report all serious incidents involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.

• Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures regularly.

10. Club Compliance

District 5400 will monitor all participating clubs within the district and ensure that they comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. Participating clubs must agree to carry out the following:

• Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 5400 and RI policies.

• Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.

• Report all serious incidents involving Youth Exchange students to the district immediately.

• Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants’ parents or legal guardians.

11. District 5400 will not participate in exchanges outside of the district structure. (so-called "backdoor" exchanges are prohibited.

|  |
| --- |
| Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth  Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarian 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 children and young people with whom they come into contact.  Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002 |

Youth Exchange Section – PD110

Rotary International

One Rotary Center

1560 Sherman Avenue

Evanston, IL 60201-3698 USA

E-mail: youthexchange@rotary.org

(May 2014)