

Article 26.120. Harassment-free Environment at Meetings, Events, or Activities
(Excerpted from the Rotary Code of Policies, June 2022.)

Rotary is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of harassment. Harassment is broadly defined as any conduct, verbal or physical, that denigrates, insults, or offends a person or group based on any characteristic (age, ethnicity, race, color, abilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity).

All members and individuals attending or participating in Rotary meetings, events, or activities should expect an environment free of harassment and shall help maintain an environment that promotes safety, courtesy, dignity, and respect to all. Adults who work with youth are subject to policies outlined in the Rotary Code of Policies 2.120.

All allegations of criminal activity should be referred to appropriate local law enforcement authorities.

The club board, district, or zone leadership shall promptly address allegations of harassment and shall not retaliate against those making the allegation.

At the club level, allegations of harassment at Rotary meetings, events, or activities shall be reviewed by the club board and responded to within a reasonable time frame, typically one month. If the alleged offender is a member of the club board, he or she must recuse himself or herself from the discussion. The review and/or investigation shall be dependent on the circumstances including the severity and pervasiveness of the behavior. Concerns that allegations of harassment were not adequately addressed by the club may be referred with appropriate documentation to the district governor.

At the district level, allegations of harassment at Rotary events or activities shall be reviewed by the governor, or a committee appointed by the governor for this purpose, and responded to within a reasonable time frame, typically one month. If the district governor is the alleged offender, the immediate past district governor (or most recent past governor), directly or by appointment of a committee for this purpose, shall review and respond to the allegation. The general secretary shall be informed within two weeks of any allegations of harassment by district governors, governors-elect, and governors-nominee. The review and/or investigation shall be dependent on the circumstances including the severity and pervasiveness of the behavior. Concerns that allegations of harassment were not adequately addressed by the district may be referred with appropriate documentation to the RI director.

District leaders, including governors, assistant governors, and committee chairs, are encouraged to work with their clubs to create a harassment-free environment. District leaders should also work with their clubs to establish a code of conduct and policies for how to address and prevent harassment within their clubs, among their members, and with other participants in Rotary.

At the zone level, allegations of harassment at Rotary meetings, events, or activities shall be reviewed by the RI director, or a committee appointed by the RI director for this purpose, and responded to within a reasonable time frame, typically one month. If the RI director is the alleged offender, either another current or past RI director as appointed by the RI president shall review and respond to the allegation.

The RI president shall be informed within two weeks of any allegations of harassment by RI directors, directors-elect, and directors-nominee. Concerns that allegations of harassment were not adequately addressed by the zone may be referred with appropriate documentation to the RI president.

As it pertains to Rotary Action Groups and Rotary Fellowships, the Rotary Action Group and Rotary Fellowship leadership shall promptly address allegations of harassment and shall not retaliate against those making the allegation. Allegations of harassment at an action group or fellowship event or activity shall be reviewed by the action group or fellowship, or a committee appointed by the chair of the action group or fellowship for this purpose, and responded to within a reasonable time frame, typically one month. If the chair or other leaders of the action group or fellowships is/are the alleged offender, the immediate past chair (or most recent chair), directly or by appointment of a committee for this purpose, shall review and respond to the allegation. If the alleged offender is a member of the action group or fellowship's board, he or she is expected to recuse himself or herself from the discussion. The review and/or investigation shall be dependent on the circumstances including the severity and pervasiveness of the behavior. Concerns that allegations of harassment were not adequately addressed by the action group or fellowship may be referred with appropriate documentation to the RI president.

Club, district, and zone leaders must report severe and pervasive harassment and any resulting membership terminations to the general secretary. If a club or district fails to adequately address findings of harassment, the RI director shall notify the RI Board for appropriate action. Such action may include club termination or other appropriate sanctions.

Rotary Alumni Associations, Rotary Action Groups, and Rotary Fellowships must report allegations of harassment to the alleged offender's club president and district governor. If a Rotary Alumni Association, Rotary Action Group, or a Rotary Fellowship fails to adequately address findings of harassment, the RI president shall notify the RI Board for appropriate action. Such action may include termination or other appropriate sanctions. *(June 2021 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 177)*