

DISTRICT 7910 YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

Karin M. Gaffney

District Governor, 2017-2018

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Youth Protection Officer

District 7910 Youth Protection Policy

- THIS POLICY EXCLUDES THE ESSEX PROGRAM WHICH SHALL COMPLY FULLY WITH UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, AND ESSEX RULES AND REGULATIONS.

District 7910 Youth Protection Policy

- **Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth**
- District 7910 strives to create a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses 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.

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- **Definitions**
- **Volunteer-** Any adult involved with Rotary youth activities who interacts directly with youth, whether supervised or unsupervised.
- **Youth program participant-** Anyone who participates in a Rotary youth program, whether child or adult.

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- **Club Compliance**

- The district governor is responsible for supervision and control of all youth activities in the district. District 7910 will monitor all participating clubs and ensure that they comply with youth protection certification requirements.

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- Volunteer Selection and Screening

All Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers interested in working with youth program participants must meet RI and district eligibility requirements.

RI prohibits the membership and participation of any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment.

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- If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and the law enforcement investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth participants with whom the accused may have future contact, as well as the accused.
- A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated as a youth program volunteer. Reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to his or her former position is not guaranteed.

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- **Training**
- District 7910 and member clubs may provide youth-protection training and information on youth programs.
- The District Youth Protection officer will oversee the training sessions.

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- **Allegation Handling and Follow-Through**
- District 7910 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and shall handle them in accordance with Rotary International Reporting Guidelines.
- The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protection services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with official investigations when conducting its own independent review.
- District 7910 will appoint a youth protection officer to evaluate and review files, policies, and allegations regularly.

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- **Rotary International Reporting Guidelines**

All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines.

The safety and well being of young people must always be the first priority.

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- **Definitions**
- **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, or of the same or opposite sex.
- **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.

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- **Some examples of sexual harassment include:**
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, or comments about an individual's sexual activity or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

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- **Who should determine if it is abuse or harassment?**
- Upon hearing allegations, adults should not determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Instead, after ensuring the safety of the student, the adult should immediately report all allegations to the appropriate child protection or law enforcement authorities. In some countries, this reporting is required by law.

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- **Allegation Reporting Guidelines**
- Any adult to whom a Rotary youth program participant reports an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment must follow these reporting guidelines:
 - **1. 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.

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- **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 young 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 young person. Emphasize that the situation was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature to come to you.

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- **E. Document the allegation.** Make a written record of the conversation, including the date and time, as soon as you can, after the report.
- **2. *Protect the young person.***
- Ensure the safety and well-being of the youth program participant by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact from the alleged abuser or harasser.

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- ***3. Report the allegations to appropriate authorities-child protection or law enforcement.***
- Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment-first to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and then to the club and district leadership for follow-through.
- In District 7910, the appropriate law enforcement office is the local police department.
- In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the lead person from the Rotary Club sponsoring the event, who is responsible for seeking the advice of appropriate agencies and interacting with them. If the allegation involves this Rotarian, the district youth program chair or district governor should be the first Rotary contact.
- District 7910 will cooperate with police or legal investigations.

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- District 7910 has researched local, state, and national laws related to sexual abuse and harassment prevention and notes the following legal requirements of which all adult volunteers participating in the program must be aware.
- ***It is expected that all Rotary Clubs of District 7910 that engage in activities involving young people under 18 years of age, would have their adult volunteers properly screened for child safety. This should include reading the District 7910 Youth Protection Policy and training power point as well as a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check.***
- *(A CORI application is included on the last page of this power point presentation. A completed form should be forwarded to the District 7910 Youth Protection Officer at: tmgasbarro@gmail.com)*
- ***4. Avoid gossip and blame.***
- Don't tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Be careful to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during an investigation.
- District 7910 maintains the privacy of any accused person.

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- ***5. Do not challenge or contact the alleged offender***
- **In cases of abuse, the interrogation must be left to law enforcement authorities.**
- In cases of harassment, the district governor is responsible with follow through and will contact the alleged offender after the young person has been removed to a safe environment.
- The district governor may designate this task to a district youth protection officer or district review committee.

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- For more information please contact the following persons:
- **District Governor 2017-2018**
- **Karin M. Gaffney**
- **978-387-5369 Cell**
- **karinmgaffney@gmail.com**

- **Youth Protection Officer**
- **Anthony A. Gasbarro**
- **774-345-0100**
- **tmgasbarro@gmail.com**

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6/16/2017

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Request Details

Account Type: Children's Programs and Volunteer Organizations

*Purpose:

Subject

*Name: *Last Name *First Name Middle Initial Suffix Former Last Name(s): Former Last Name 1 Former Last Name 2 Former Last Name 3 Former Last Name 4 *Date of Birth: (MMDDCCYY) *Last Six SSN: *** - (111-22-3333 as 223333)Sex: Race: Father's Name: Last Name First Name Mother's Name: Last Name First Name Maiden Name
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