

## **District 9685**

# **Bullying and Harassment Policy**

### **Rotary International's Framework to address Bullying and Harassment**

Rotary International (RI) President Shekhar Mehta for and on half of the RI Board wrote to all Rotarians in April 2022 confirming that Rotary is dedicated to enhancing our Rotary experience by supporting what is important to you, our fellow members. Rotarians have consistently told RI that they wanted Rotary to be a place that celebrates diversity, that fully represents our communities, and that offers all members equitable opportunities to thrive, including a place free of bullying and harassment.

Rotarians have recognised that embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will allow us to do more meaningful work while engaging with people who know they'll be valued for the qualities that make them unique. These sentiments were reinforced last year (2021) by the more than 31,000 members around the world who responded to the RI first DEI survey. Theme 4 of the DEI Survey specifically dealt with discrimination and harassment awareness within Rotary. This District 9685 Policy seeks to address this awareness issue.

### **Our DEI Code of Conduct**

What we say and how we behave matter.

Although free expression is important, we must take responsibility for how our words and actions may affect others. The RI Board has approved a new DEI Code of Conduct to help Rotary members create and maintain an environment that is collaborative, positive, and healthy for everyone.

Simply put, the DEI Code of Conduct asks you to:

- Use respectful language
- Be supportive
- Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Celebrate diversity

All Rotary leaders, from Club Presidents and District Governors, Assistant Governors to RI Directors and TRF Trustees, are expected to apply the DEI Code of Conduct uniformly to help members recognise the impact that their words and actions can have on other people.

If you experience behaviour that does not align with the DEI Code of Conduct, you have ways to respond as set out in this District 9685 Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Who to Contact:**

- If the situation can be resolved through discussion, please talk to the person directly. Often, the person who said something or acted in a way that made others feel excluded, marginalised, or targeted did not do so intentionally. Although there might be mistakes, missteps, and uncomfortable conversations along the way, having this dialogue will lead to a better and stronger Rotary.
- If a discussion with or writing to the alleged offender is not appropriate, then contact your Club President for initial assistance.
- If the situation involves someone in your Club leadership role or another Club, contact your Assistant Governor or District Governor directly. The District Conflict Management Officers are also available for referral and assistance.
- If the situation involves someone in your District leadership role or another District, contact Rotary's Club and District Support staff at:

RI Regional Office (Zone 8)  
Rotary Centre  
Level 1, 25/1 Maitland Place  
Norwest NSW 2153  
Australia  
Tel: 02 8894 9800  
Fax: 02 8894 9899  
E: [risppo@rotary.org](mailto:risppo@rotary.org)  
Office Hours: M - F 8.30 am – 5pm

who will review the information and follow up appropriately.

- If you are in danger or your safety is in doubt, contact your local Police and notify Rotary's Club and District Support staff.

### **DEI Survey Theme 4 discrimination and harassment awareness within Rotary**

- More than 25% of the survey of the 31,000 respondents said they don't know how to report discrimination or harassment at Rotary.
- Some members also noted the lack of a central place to report, collect, or address instances of this behaviour.
- Members said some incidents go unreported and some inappropriate behaviour incurs no consequences.
- The goal of the DEI Code of Conduct is to be clear about how Rotary members are expected to conduct themselves in order to create and maintain collaborative, positive, and healthy environments.
- This means we expect all members to use respectful language, be supportive, foster a welcoming and inclusive environment, and celebrate diversity.

- In any instance when a member acts in an unsupportive or unwelcoming manner, or anytime you experience or witness behaviour that doesn't align with the DEI Code of Conduct, you can contact those listed in the **Who to Contact** section of this Policy.

### **Introduction – This Policy Applies to All of Us**

Rotary International District 9685 is committed to providing a safe and harmonious Club environment which enhances the achievement of Rotary International goals. In this environment, all members and participants in Rotary associated activities have the right to be treated fairly and with respect. Accordingly, bullying and harassment in Rotary will not be tolerated. The policy applies to all Clubs and members in the District together with all volunteers and those known as Friends of Rotary engaged in Rotary activities.

This involves ensuring that Club Presidents, Officers of Rotary District 9685, members, Friends of Rotary and participants;

- Understand what constitutes bullying and harassment in Rotary and that they act promptly to discourage any such behaviour of which they become aware.
- Make sure all members and participants in Rotary associated activities, who report to them, are aware of what constitutes bullying and harassment and are aware of what to do if they believe they are being harassed.
- Fully understand their responsibilities in relation to a claim of bullying and harassment by a member or participant in Rotary associated activities.
- Be offered and encourage undertaking appropriate training in conflict management and in particular what constitutes bullying and harassment.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and industrial standards.
- Know who to contact for further assistance or guidance regarding bullying and harassment. See **Who to Contact** in this Policy.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any individual engaging in such conduct. This attitude has been formulated considering Rotary International's:

- Legal responsibilities
- Interest in maintaining a productive Rotary environment
- Commitment to the principles of equal opportunity
- Rotary International's image.

### **Definitions:**

**Bullying** is defined as repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers or volunteers (see below) and the behaviour creates a risk to the health and safety of the worker or workers. It includes physical and psychological risk and abuse.

The following behaviours could be considered bullying;

- Abusive, aggressive, insulting and intimidating conduct
- belittling or humiliating comments (including on social media and including comments of a racist, homophobic or transphobic nature)

- victimisation
- spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- practical jokes or initiations/hazing
- exclusion from events (including behaviour that belittles and or humiliates)
- unreasonable expectations
- consistent allocation of demeaning or meaningless tasks
- leaving offensive messages via email, telephone, social media or other communication devices.

**‘Repeated’** means persistent unreasonable behaviour, but can refer to a range of behaviours over time. Single incidents of unreasonable behaviour are not bullying, but may still be unacceptable under other parts of this policy.

**‘Unreasonable’** means behaviour that a reasonable person, in the circumstances, would consider to be unreasonable, including behaviour that is humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

The above examples do not represent a complete list of bullying behaviours. They are indicative of the type of behaviours which may constitute bullying and are therefore unacceptable.

A single incident of unreasonable behaviour does not usually constitute bullying. However, it should not be ignored as it may have the potential to escalate into bullying behaviour, and if of sufficient seriousness, can be bullying and/or workplace violence.

A person’s intention is irrelevant when determining if bullying has occurred. Bullying can occur unintentionally, where actions which are not intended to victimise, humiliate, undermine, or threaten the person actually have that effect.

Bullying can result from several different factors in the workplace or volunteer activity including poor work relationships. This can be characterised by poor communication or negative relationships between people, excessive criticism or the exclusion or isolation of individuals.

**Category 3 Offence:** a person commits a Category 3 Offence (Work Health and Safety Act 2011) if they have a health and safety duty and failed to comply with that duty. There are penalties applicable under the Act in terms of work-related bullying or bullying and harassment (if an allegation is upheld in a court of law and it is determined that all reasonable and practical steps taken to mitigate the risks).

**Cyberbullying** behaviour might include:

- abusive texts and emails
- hurtful messages, images or videos
- imitating others online
- excluding others online
- humiliating others online
- spreading nasty online gossip and chat
- creating fake accounts to trick someone or humiliate them

**Discrimination:** treating people less favourably based on particular personal characteristics including; gender, sexual preference, marital status, race, religion, cultural or cultural heritage, ethnicity, age, disability, pregnancy or the likelihood thereof, or other personal characteristics.

**District:** means Rotary International District 9685 as defined by Rotary International from time to time.

**Emotional, psychological or verbal abuse** — the use of fear, humiliation, or verbal assault to control the behaviour of another.

- Examples include; rejecting the person, preventing them from developing normal social relationships, and making derogatory statements about their race, religion, abilities, intellect, tastes, or personal appearance.

**Financial abuse** is when someone takes away your access to money, manipulates your financial decisions, or uses your money without consent. Once you know this, there are ways to get help and regain your independence. Financial abuse is a type of family or group relational violence. It often happens alongside other types of violence, such as physical or emotional abuse. It can leave you feeling vulnerable, isolated, depressed and anxious. It can also take away your independence.

**Guide:** [“Guide for Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying”](#). Issued by Safe Work Australia May 2016.

**Harassment** is any improper conduct by an individual that is directed at and offensive to another person or persons and which the individual knew, or ought reasonably to know, would cause offence or harm. It comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that belittles, demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment or any act of intimidation or threat. It is important to note that bullying and harassment may occur physically, verbally or via online comments (referred to as cyber bullying).

Other bullying and harassment examples include:

- making rude, abusive or insulting comments or using actions about a person’s disability which are insulting or humiliating, such as suggestive pictures, jokes or computer screensavers
- making comments or using actions which create a hostile environment
- using overbearing or abusive behaviour with a person
- racially oriented ridicule, e.g. derogatory references to physical features, skin colour or cultural and religious observances or imitating someone’s accent
- derogatory remarks about a person’s age, mental and physical capabilities in appearance
- circulating cartoons or literature displaying offensive materials on walls, online or in computer screens or devices
- It is also unlawful to harass someone on the basis of a ‘protected attribute’ (for more information on protected attributes, see below).

Any conduct, gesture or contact that is likely to cause offence or humiliation to any person or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived by that person as a condition or threat of any opportunity within Rotary.

**What harassment is not:**

Conduct involving the proper exercise of responsibilities or authority relating to the provision of advice, counselling, discipline and other supervisory/leadership functions, does not constitute harassment.

**Identity theft** - occurs when someone uses another person's personally identifying information, like a person's name, Social Security number, or credit card number or other financial information, without permission, to commit fraud or other crimes.

**Image-based abuse** is when someone shares, or threatens to share, intimate images without the consent of the person in the photo.

**Image-based abuse includes photos or videos of:**

A nude person, A person whose breasts or genitals are visible, A person engaged in a sex act, A person showering or bathing 'upskirting' and 'downblousing': taking photos up someone's skirt or down their top A person's face digitally added to a pornographic or sexualised image.... It includes images that were taken with and without a person's consent

**Physical abuse or attack:** means the direct or indirect direct application of force or harm by a person to the body of, or the clothing, or equipment worn by another person.

**Policy:** Rotary International District 9685 Bullying and Harassment Policy 'The Policy'.

**Protected attributes**, which cannot be a reason for treating someone less favourably, include:

- Gender
- gender identity, intersex status or gender expression
- sexual orientation
- marital or relationship status, pregnancy, breastfeeding, parental status or family or carer's responsibilities
- race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- religious belief or activity
- physical or mental disability
- age
- union membership or activity
- political opinion or activity
- medical record

**Reasonable management action:** conducted in a reasonable manner does not constitute workplace bullying and harassment.

**Repeated behaviour:** refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range or pattern of behaviours over a period of time (for example, verbal abuse,

unreasonable criticism, isolation and subsequently being denied opportunities, i.e. a pattern is being established from a series of events).

### **Reproductive abuse**

- Reproductive abuse can also be called reproductive violence or reproductive coercion
- It happens when you are stopped from making your own choices about your reproductive system
- You should never feel pressure to do something you are confused or unsure about

**Rotary:** means Rotary International

**Sexual harassment** is any unwanted or unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, display of offensive material or other behaviour which creates a sexually hostile environment. The act, while not intended to, may still result in offence, humiliation or intimidation. An act may constitute sexual harassment even if it was not intended to offend, humiliate or intimidate.

Sexual harassment is not behaviour which is based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, if the interaction is consensual, welcome and reciprocated.

### **What are the new consent laws in NSW?**

What are the new laws (1<sup>st</sup> June 2022) and what is affirmative consent? The new laws **require parties to give and obtain consent “at the time of the act”**. A person is not considered as having consented unless they say or do something to indicate that consent has been given.

**Stalking** in NSW or intimidation is an offence under [section 13 of the Crimes \(Domestic and Personal Violence\) Act 2007](#). An offence is committed if a person stalks or intimidates another person with the intention of causing the other person to fear physical or mental harm. Attempting to commit the offence of stalking or intimidation is also considered to be an offence with the same penalties as if the offence was actually committed.

**Spiritual abuse** is sometimes called Religious abuse

- It happens when someone uses spiritual or religious beliefs to hurt, scare or control you
- Spiritual abuse can be a form of domestic and family violence

**Threat:** a statement or behaviour that causes a person to believe that they are in danger physically or emotionally/psychologically.

**PCBU:** means a Person or Business Conducting an Undertaking.

In Rotary, this is any person holding office, any person 'in charge' of activity.

**Unreasonable behaviour:** means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine or threaten another person.

**Worker:** is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- an employee of Rotary or a District or a Rotary Club
- a member of a Rotary Club
- a visitor to a Rotary Club meeting, activity or event
- a volunteer working on a Rotary project
- a volunteer known and working as a Friend of Rotary
- Rotarians, Rotaractors and our volunteers qualify as a 'worker' even though they are volunteers – under the NSW Work Health and Safety Act legislation.

**Work related violence:** can be any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.

Work-related violence covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that create a risk to the health and safety.

Examples include:

- Any form of assault, such as biting, spitting, scratching, beating, kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing or throwing objects
- Any form of indecent physical contact
- 1. Intimidating behaviour that creates a fear of violence, such as stalking or threatening to do any of the above.

### **District's Responsibility under the Work Health and Safety Act of 2020 (NSW)**

Under the New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act of 2020, a District (as an organisation) is considered to be a person or business conducting an undertaking (PCBU). [Safe Work Australia](#) has issued a document '[Guide for Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying](#)' and this policy conforms with that document issued in May 2016.

As such, all Rotarians, Rotaractors on the boards or committees of District, Clubs and Rotaract are accountable under The Act, and in Accordance with the Guide.

Rotarians, Rotaractors and our volunteers qualify as a 'worker' even though they are volunteers.

### **Districts Role**

District will endeavour to develop and maintain an organisational culture which respects the dignity of workers and also promote high ethical standards and reasonable behaviour amongst members. District places an equally strong emphasis on the prevention of, bullying and harassment and work-related violence as well as responding once it has occurred. This means Rotary Officers need to be active in identifying rumours. Our Insurers will be no doubt be monitoring claims in this area.

Conflict are indicators of unreasonable behaviour in the same way they go looking to expose other risks. Causes of unreasonable behaviour need to be identified and addressed effectively and promptly.

All allegations of unreasonable behaviour, bullying and harassment and work-related violence will be confidentially investigated by District Officers where appropriate or external mediators, with strong disciplinary and/or corrective action taken when necessary. Advice may be taken by District Officers as to the appropriateness or otherwise of the need for Confidentiality Agreements being entered into before any investigation or mediation is commenced.

### **Who Is at Risk?**

No Rotary Club is immune from bullying and harassment, although its occurrence may be more likely in certain areas and situations. Certain groups may be more vulnerable such as exchange students, young people or women, persons with a disability and indigenous persons.

### **The Effects:**

For the individual being harassed, it is threatening and offensive. People can feel annoyed, embarrassed, intimidated, humiliated and distressed.

Bullying and harassment has implications for all Rotarians and participants in Rotary associated activities.

It creates an unfair Club environment which may affect;

- Club morale
- Club performance
- Attendance
- Retention of members
- Club Growth

### **Application**

This policy applies to all workers as defined; all Rotary members, visitors to Rotary meetings or events and volunteers on Rotary projects.

This policy extends to all functions and places that are Rotary service work-related.

### **Policy Accountability by Role**

#### **District Governor**

Overall responsibility for the Policy in the District, specifically;

- to promote and motivate the Rotary Clubs in the District to adopt, discuss and implement the Policy in each Club
- to promote the Policy within the District Leadership Team, including resourcing and training District Leaders and Club Leaders on
- educating Rotary members on the Policy at Club level and
- educating District and Club Officers on how to respond to and deal with complaints
- Provide any complainant with support, treat the complaint seriously and take appropriate steps to deal with the complaint.

#### **Assistant Governors**

- Assistant Governors are responsible for promoting the Policy to the Clubs within their AG group

- Assistant Governors may organise training sessions for the Clubs in their AG group on Rotary member's responsibility to conduct themselves with acceptable behaviour at all times in Rotary settings. When requested by a Club, the District will organise for Club Officers to receive training on investigation, counselling and mediation, where appropriate and required
- Provide any complainant with support, treat the complaint seriously and take appropriate steps to deal with the complaint.

### **Club Presidents and Officers**

- Responsible for Policy implementation, promoting it to the members and monitoring member behaviour in their own Club. Note that bullying and harassment can occur subtly. All Club officers should be aware of this and take action to CHECK and FOLLOW UP rumours, conflicts, or other indicators of unwelcome or unreasonable behaviour. Do not wait until a formal complaint or escalation is made. It is often too late to restore good relationships at this point
- Responsible for seeking guidance from District (or third party professional) in respect to advising, counselling and/or resolving low-level complaints of bullying and harassment, unreasonable behaviour and work-related violence brought to their attention where it is feasible to do so. Otherwise immediately refer the complaint/situation to District for advice on external independent mediators. Complaint resolution is best undertaken by those specifically trained to do so. All situations must be actioned with urgency, as the highest priority.
- Provide any complainant with support, treat the complaint seriously and take appropriate steps to deal with the complaint.

### **All Rotarians**

- acceptance of personal involvement in the practical application of this Policy including, not engaging in any of the wrong behaviours outlined herein, in their personal Rotary related activities
- reporting any instances of unreasonable behaviour, bullying and harassment, discrimination or work-related violence
- create respectful workplaces which uphold District values
- promote an environment free of unreasonable behaviour, bullying and harassment, and work-related violence and take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour
- identify and properly address behaviour of workers that could lead to bullying and harassment, or work-related violence
- setting a positive example by treating everyone with respect and modelling appropriate behaviour to all

### **What Can You Do if you have been bullied or harassed?**

If you have been bullied or harassed, you are advised to keep a record of incidents, dates, times, places, witnesses any reprisals and any effects on your personal life.

If you believe you are being bullied or harassed there are a number of causes of action open to you; see the **Who to Contact** section in this Policy.

- Approach the alleged bully or harasser asking for the behaviour to stop immediately. If you do not feel able to talk to the alleged bully or harasser, another option is to write a letter giving examples and requesting that the behaviour cease immediately.
- You may care to have someone accompany you while you hand deliver the letter (you are then certain it has been received).
- If this does not resolve the problem or you feel unable to face the alleged bully or harasser or write a letter asking that the behaviour cease, then the next step is to inform your Club President as soon as possible.
- If you are unable or unwilling to discuss the matter with your Club President, then you should report the matter to the Assistant Governor or District Governor as soon as possible. They may contact the District Conflict Management Officers for assistance.

In all cases the enquiry or complaint will be taken seriously and will be dealt with confidentially and promptly.

District 9685 Policy requires that your Club President, Assistant Governor and/or District Governor will;

- provide you with support
- treat the complaint seriously
- take the appropriate steps to deal with the complaint

Note you will not be victimised in any way if you make an enquiry or a complaint of bullying or harassment. Victimisation will not be tolerated and if it occurs, disciplinary action will be taken immediately.

### **Bullying and Harassment Complaint Process**

It is critical, that any allegation of bullying and or harassment in the Club or other Rotary managed activity be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The complainant should make all reasonable attempts to resolve the dispute directly with the alleged bully or harasser.

The approach should be polite but firm and clear, indicating that the bullying and or harassment should stop immediately. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to seek the assistance of a person for support or to make a complaint to the alleged bully or harasser in writing.

If this approach is unsuccessful than the complainant should be reported to the Club President or person of authority see the **Who to Contact** section in this Policy per the following escalation process;

- if the alleged bullying and harassment occurs within a Club context between Club members, then the complaint should be reported to the Club President
- If the alleged bully or harasser is the Club President, then the complaint shall be reported to the Assistant Governor

- if the alleged bullying and harassment occurs at a District Committee meeting or a District level managed activity then the complaint shall be reported to the Assistant Governor as appropriate or District Officer in charge (either the Chair of the District Committee or Assistant Governor.)

The District Officer to whom the complaint has been made should:

- treat the complaint seriously, promptly and confidentially
- provide the Complainant with support and establish what outcome the Complainant wants, while providing options available to resolve the complaint
- Record the grievance. Take accurate notes, using the Complainant's own language where possible
- check all details with the Complainant and obtain their agreement before proceeding
- make every attempt to resolve the matter informally. Where appropriate, encourage the Complainant to confront the alleged harasser and convey their feelings on the matter. This may involve a Club President or District Officer accompanying the Complainant to see the alleged harasser. In this capacity, the role of the Club President or District Officer is one of support not action.

Review the situation readily to ensure that bullying and harassment has ceased.

If there is still no resolution the matter will immediately be referred to the District Governor.

**The District Governor may appoint a qualified person** to investigate any complaint of bullying and harassment. The District Conflict Management Officers are available to assist with any complaint. The District Governor should not investigate the matter, because they will have to make the final decisions about the outcome. When the District Governor needs assistance with handling complaints of bullying and harassment, they may arrange with the College of Governors for assistance to be provided.

**If the alleged bully or harasser is the District Governor** the matter shall be turned over to Rotary International District Club and Support for investigation. This is a critical point. The allegation may prove unfounded but the Complainant must be reasonably assured that the investigation has been fair and unbiased.

**The Investigator and other District and Club Officials shall be mindful** of the rights and responsibilities of the Complainant and the Respondent. Until shown otherwise a 'complaint' is an 'allegation'. Neither person involved should be characterised as the 'victim' or the 'harasser'. The activity or behaviour that gave rise to the complaint should be referred to as the 'allegation(s)' until proven otherwise.

**If at any time it appears that the behaviour the complaint is about a serious criminal offence by nature or may involve a child or a sexual abuse allegation of a young person under 18 years, the District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO) shall be advised in the first instance –**  
the District Governor shall be advised immediately by the DYPO.

The 1<sup>st</sup> priority is the child's safety and they shall be removed to safety and away from the alleged offender. It is important to involve the Police or Family Services early in the process so as to avoid the loss of evidence. Rotary should never be seen as impeding justice in any way **[Refer D9685 Youth Protection Policy and documents on the District web site]**

### **Time Frame**

Once the Investigator has completed the investigation, the findings (without the statements of witnesses) shall be delivered to the Complainant and the Respondent who shall be given seven days to respond in writing. The Complainant and the Respondent have a right to review the findings prior to any decision being made by those in authority.

### **The DG's Panel**

On receipt of the responses (if any) the Investigator shall deliver their finding to a Panel selected by the District Governor, who will propose a resolution process. The Investigator shall make a full disclosure of their findings to the Panel and provide any details needed to formulate a resolution process.

The District Governor or designate shall ensure the resolution process is implemented in a timely and sensitive manner.

The Complainant and/or the Respondent shall be informed in writing of the decision made by the Panel. The Complainant and/or the Respondent shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Panel by responding in writing within seven days. The Panel shall meet again to review the appeal and come to a resolution or refer the matter to Rotary International for final resolution.

At any point in the process the Panel may opt to seek the advice of legal counsel.

**Remember:** investigate thoroughly and take your time. Do not form opinions or jump to conclusions until the investigation is complete and the documentation is reviewed. There are times when allegations of bullying and harassment cannot be proved or prove false. Keep an open mind. Both parties' rights should be maintained throughout the investigation. The principles of Natural Justice shall prevail.

### **Unsubstantiated Complaint**

If a complaint is not substantiated (as determined by the District Governor) the District Governor will;

- Clearly explain the reasons for the findings to both parties
- advise the Complainant that if they are not satisfied with the findings, the matter can be taken to the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity or the Anti-Discrimination Board
- retain all records relating to the complaint in a secure place
- continue to monitor the situation to ensure that the behaviour complained about is not occurring and that any animosities have ceased.

### **Substantiated Complaint**

Disciplinary measures which may be imposed on the harasser where appropriate;

- warning and counselling
- closer supervision
- transfer to another committee
- Club membership terminated

Discipline will be gauged on the severity of the offence as considered by the District Governor.

### **Other Options**

Complainants retain the Right to Lodge a Complaint with the Equal Opportunity Commission, Anti-Discrimination Board (or equivalent body) and any point during the complaint resolution process.

The police can and should be contacted in instances where bullying and harassment may constitute a criminal offence (i.e. sexual assault or child abuse). District 9685 and Club processes must cease when a police investigation is initiated.

### **Resolution Options**

Complaints relating to unreasonable behaviour, bullying and harassment, bullying or workplace violence will be dealt with properly and in a confidential and fair manner. All parties will have the right to have their side heard.

The principles of Natural Justice shall prevail.

Depending upon their nature, complaints of unreasonable behaviour, bullying or bullying and harassment may be managed either;

#### **Informally:**

- by resolving the issue at the lowest possible level or

#### **Formerly:** when;

- an informal approach has failed
- the impact on the target has been so severe, that they are unable to confidently use the informal options
- the complaint involves work-related violence when a worker lodges a complaint that requests a formal investigation, in line with reporting procedures

#### **Notes:** (not part of the Policy)

If you receive/are dealing with a situation or formal complaint of unreasonable behaviour, bullying or bullying and harassment, decide whether you can work with the Complainant and the other party/parties to independently resolve the matter. Independence and the appearance of independence are critical to effective resolution.

If you believe you cannot independently resolve the matter, refer to the District Governor who can advise on next steps, including the possible use of an external independent mediator, skilled and knowledgeable in this area. An independent mediator has the goal of making sure all sides are confidentially heard and reached in a legal and fair conclusion that all parties understand. Often an independent

mediator provides a confidential and independent environment that is hard to achieve within the Club itself.

Any substantiated incident of work-related violence or sexual assault will be considered serious misconduct and may result in action being taken to terminate membership of a Rotarian. Rotary or District may also refer these matters to the NSW Police for investigation.

**Paul Rogers**

District Youth Protection Officer (2021-2023)

M: 0410 531 314

E: [p.rogers54@internode.on.net](mailto:p.rogers54@internode.on.net)

Version control: 1

This document was prepared June 2022.

The document was approved by the District Governor and the COTA

**Resources:**

Rotary International Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Policy

Rotary District 9685 Youth Protection Policy and attachments

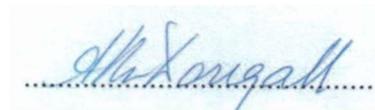
District 9675 & 9900 Bullying & Harassment policies

**Adopted .....**

**COTA 18 June 2022**



Lindsay May OAM  
District Governor 2021-22



Liz McDougall  
District Secretary