

YOUTH & AT-RISK PROTECTION POLICY

STATEMENT OF CONDUCT

This Policy applies to all participants in District/Club sponsored programs. District 5450 reaffirms its adherence to Rotary International's (RI) zero-tolerance policy against abuse and harassment. While this Statement of Conduct speaks to all aspects of Rotary Club programs, this Policy refers more specifically to those programs that involve Youth & At-Risk individuals, collectively known as "Protected Individuals". Other Youth & At-Risk related Rotary programs include, but are not limited to, Rotaract, Young Rotary/Interact, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE). The current versions of these documents can be obtained from the District 5450 website at: www.rotary5450.org.

Rotary International's Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth provides the basic principle for Rotarians to follow when working with young people in any capacity:

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' partners, and other volunteers must safeguard children and young people with whom they come in contact, and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. (October 2019)

DEFINITIONS

Abuse - Treatment of someone in a manner that a reasonable person would consider harmful. This may include verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse, or contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Adult - Any person over the age of 18 years.

At-Risk Individual - Any person physically, mentally, or developmentally impaired, or needing supportive care.

Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor - Inducing, aiding, or encouraging Youth or At-Risk individuals to violate any federal or state law, municipal or county ordinance, or court order.

Crisis Management Team - A team of District personnel that is activated by the Youth Protection Officer(s) upon receipt of an allegation of abuse or harassment. The makeup of the team is determined by the status of the Protected Individual making the allegation. The makeup of the Crisis Management Team is defined under the Responsibilities section in this Policy.

Cultural Differences - "Normal social behavior" can be critical in the perception of an abusive or harassing event. There can be different perspectives from which individuals view a situation. These perspectives can be influenced by the following: gender, country of origin, culture, age, religion, and personal values. Cultural differences can lead to some misunderstandings, however, using common sense and good judgement can help avoid offensive behavior.

Frequent and Recurring Contact – Contact with Protected Individuals (by Rotarian or Non-Rotarian volunteers), at Rotary sponsored programs, that is **significant, regular, often, and occurs repeatedly**. This contact can be in a group or one-on-one setting and may be supervised or unsupervised.

Harassment - Any act, comment, or display that, to a reasonable person, belittles, demeans, and causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, or any act of intimidation or threat. It includes conduct, gestures, display or distribution of material, jokes or communication with which the actor intends to harass, annoy or alarm another person by reference to race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

Infrequent and Occasional Contact - Contact with Protected Individuals (by Rotarian or Non-Rotarian volunteers), at Rotary sponsored programs, that is **incidental, irregular, intermittent, and does not present the opportunity to establish a pattern**. This contact can occur from time to time, can be in a group or one-on-one setting, and may be supervised or unsupervised.

Neglect - Failure to provide the food, shelter, or medical care that is necessary to well-being.

Physical Abuse – Physical contact intended to cause pain, injury, or other physical suffering or harm.

Prohibited Individual - Anyone who has been shown through a background check or other reasonably reliable sources, as determined by the Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s), has been formally charged or convicted of an offense against others, or who is considered to be an inappropriate person for working with Protected Individuals.

Protected Individuals - Protected Individuals are defined as: 1) Minors less than 18 years of age, 2) Young Adults between 18 and 21 years of age, and 3) At-Risk Individuals any person physically, mentally, or developmentally impaired or needing supportive care, participating in District/Club sponsored programs.

Sexual Abuse - Engaging in or arranging implicit or explicit sexual acts, whether they are performed alone or with another person of any age or gender, through force or coercion, or with anyone who is unable to give consent. Any sexual activity between a legal adult and a minor is considered sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can also include non-touching offenses, such as voyeuristic behavior, 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 that is unwanted or directed at someone unwilling or unable to provide consent. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims. Examples of sexual harassment include: sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, display of sexually suggestive objects or images, sexual leering or whistling, inappropriate physical contact such as brushing against or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

Volunteer – Any adult (Rotarian or Non-Rotarian) involved in Rotary programs who interacts directly with Protected Individuals, whether supervised or unsupervised.

Youth – Minors - less than 18 years of age, and Young Adults - between 18 and 21 years of age.

Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s) - (YARPO) - The Rotarian(s) appointed by the District Governor to oversee the implementation of the District Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The District 5450 Governor is responsible for:

- a. Appointing a Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s) and acting in the place of the YARPO(s) if the Officers are not available.
- b. Appointing a District Spokesperson who will communicate with the press when a crisis is involved.
- c. Ensuring the District has a Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy that complies with the Rotary Code of Policies, for all Youth & At-Risk programs, and monitoring the implementation of the Policy.
- d. Consulting with a legal professional to review the Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and ensure compliance with local laws.
- e. Working with District 5450 committees to ensure policy compliance throughout the District with appropriate handling of all abuse or harassment allegations, and other crises.
- f. Participating as a member of the District's Crisis Management Team.
- g. Working with the YARPO(s) and Club Presidents to ensure all Clubs are in compliance with the Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy.

2. The District Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s) is responsible for:

- a. Developing, implementing, and monitoring the District Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy.
- b. Monitoring Clubs within the District and District programs to verify that they are in compliance with RI guidelines and this Policy.
- c. Serving as the chair of the District Crisis Management Team.
- d. Ensuring the appropriate training is provided to Rotarians, other volunteers, and youth program participants, to inform them of the youth and at-risk individual protection obligations as established by this Policy, including the maintenance of training records.
- e. Arranging for District-approved Background Checks required by this Policy and maintaining a confidential and secure filing system for Background Check applications and results.
- f. Identifying Prohibited Individuals and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken regarding their interaction with Protected Individuals and with their continued membership in Rotary.
- g. Maintaining all records related to the investigation of allegations of abuse or harassment in secure, confidential files, and in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- h. Developing an emergency management plan for the District, in conjunction with the Crisis Management Team, in case of an emergency that would ensure program participants were safe, procedures were established, and all necessary parties, including participant's parents or legal guardians, were notified.

3. The District Crisis Management Team is responsible for:

- a. The Crisis Management Team is comprised of the Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s), District Governor, District Governor-Elect, District Governor Nominee, District Committee Chair (RYE, RYLA), and Club President.
- b. Convening whenever an allegation of abuse or harassment is made and overseeing the process of investigating all allegations.
- c. Reviewing and ensuring that allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment have been reported to:
 - i. Local authorities in compliance with state law
 - ii. Rotary International within 72 hours of the allegation
 - iii. The U.S. Department of State (if applicable)
 - iv. The Youth or At-Risk individual's Counselor (if applicable)
 - v. The Youth and At-Risk Protection Officer(s)
 - vi. The District's insurance carrier
- d. Developing an emergency management plan for the District, in conjunction with the YARPO(s), in case of an emergency, that would ensure program participants were safe, procedures were established, and all necessary parties, including participant's parents or legal guardians, were notified.

4. **The District Youth Committee Chairs are responsible for:**

- a. Reviewing and understanding all RI and District Youth & At-Risk Protection Policies and ensuring that District/Club programs meet all policy requirements.
- b. Serving as a liaison between Clubs to support the implementation of this Policy with their programs.
- c. Implementing required training, screening, program logistics, and risk management procedures.
- d. Identifying volunteers (Rotarian or Non-Rotarian), who will have **frequent and recurring** contact with Protected Individuals in the Clubs' programs.
- e. Serving as a member of the Crisis Management Team if an allegation of abuse or harassment is made, within their area of responsibility.
- f. Keeping the District Governor and the YARPO(s) informed of committee officers, and youth programs.

5. **The Club Presidents' are responsible for:**

- a. Reviewing and understanding the District Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy, District Youth & At-Risk program guidelines, the RI Youth Protection Guide and ensure that District/Club programs being implemented meet all policy requirements.
- b. Reviewing and sharing with **ALL** volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian), who will be working with Protected Individuals, the Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and RI's Youth Protection Guide, at a Club meeting before **August 31st** each new Rotary year.
- c. Identifying and requiring volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian), who will be having **frequent and recurring** contact with Protected Individuals as part of the Clubs' programs, to complete a District-approved Background Check, and complete the District-approved online Youth Protection and Awareness Course/Quiz, before having contact with Protected Individuals.
- d. Completing and submitting the Club Compliance Form to the Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s) by **August 31st** of each new Rotary year.
- e. Coordinating with the YARPO(s) to respond immediately and thoroughly to all allegations of abuse, harassment, and other crises.
- f. Budgeting for the cost of required background checks if the Club chooses to reimburse for this cost.
- g. Club Presidents may appoint a designee to carry out these duties.

6. **The Rotarian & Non-Rotarian Volunteers who have:**

- a. **Infrequent and occasional contact** with Protected Individuals are responsible for:
 - i. Reviewing the District 5450 Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and RI Youth Protection Guide.
- b. **Frequent and recurring contact** with Protected Individuals are responsible for:
 - i. Reviewing the District 5450 Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and RI Youth Protection Guide.
 - ii. Completing the District-approved Background Check.
 - iii. Completing the District-approved online Youth Protection & Awareness Tutorial/Quiz.

7. **All Rotarians' are responsible for:**

- a. Ensuring that District/Club programs, involving Protected Individuals, are provided in a safe and caring environment.

REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERS – SELECTION AND SCREENING

All volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) interested in working with Youth & At-Risk programs, must meet RI and District 5450 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.

1. Volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) who will have **INFREQUENT AND OCASIONAL** contact with Protected Individuals, as part of Rotary programs will:
 - a. Review the District 5450 Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and RI Youth Protection Guide.
2. District Committee Chairs and Club Presidents will identify all volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) who will have **infrequent and occasional** interaction with Protected Individuals, as part of Rotary programs.
3. Volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) who will have **FREQUENT AND RECURRING** contact with Protected Individuals, as part of Rotary programs will:
 - a. Review the District 5450 Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy and RI Youth Protection Guide.
 - b. Complete the District-approved Background Check.
 - c. Complete the District-approved, online Youth Protection and Awareness Tutorial/Quiz with at least an 80% proficiency rate.
4. District Committee Chairs and Club Presidents will identify all volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) who will have **frequent and recurring** contact with Protected Individuals, as part of Rotary programs.
5. The YARPO(s) will review the District-approved, online Youth Protection and Awareness Tutorial/Quiz results and Background Check performed on the identified volunteer(s). They may also conduct interviews of the volunteer(s) and contact references, as needed.
6. Once the review is complete, the YARPO(s) will notify each applicant and the Club President or program chair that the interested individual has met the RI and District 5450 Eligibility Requirements.
7. The YARPO(s) will notify the interested individual and Club President or program chair if the results of the review are **not acceptable** and that the individual is **not cleared**. The YARPO(s) will designate the individual as a Prohibited Individual. **NOTE:** A volunteer that is designated as a Prohibited Individual may appeal to the District Governor. The volunteer may challenge the results of a background check but must do this at their own expense.
8. The YARPO(s) will maintain confidentiality and security of screening records and will not share the contents of these records without the express written permission of the volunteer involved. The records will be saved for five years.
9. The District reserves the right to require a volunteer to complete the District-approved Background Check and online Youth Protection and Awareness Tutorial/Quiz, at its discretion.

TRAINING

1. The YARPO(s) will develop training materials utilizing resources provided by RI and other youth-related agencies.
2. The YARPO(s) will utilize President-Elect Training Seminar (PETS) and District Assemblies as training opportunities.
3. The required District-approved Background Check and online Youth Protection & Awareness Tutorial/Quiz for volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian), will be required every **three** years, unless it is required more often in other Rotary programs. **NOTE:** Individual District Committees such as Rotary Youth Exchange and RYLA may develop training requirements appropriate to their programs, however, such programs should align with the RI and District policies and must be approved by the YARPO(s).

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OR HARRASSMENT

The following steps must be taken **immediately** after an alleged abuse or harassment is reported. Some of the steps may be performed by any program volunteer, while others should be performed by the District Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s), as specified. (Refer to Appendix A for further details).

1. **Receive and record/document the report from the Protected Individual**
 - a. Record the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Document the Protected Individual's exact words.
2. **Provide safety for the Protected Individual**
 - a. Ensure the safety and well-being of the Protected Individual by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. The District Governor, YARPO(s), or District Committee Chair will direct the person accused of abuse or harassment that they are **not to have any further contact** with the Protected Individual, until the matter is resolved. Reassure the Protected Individual that this is for his or her safety and is not a punishment. Take immediate action to ensure the Protected Individual's health and well-being, and get him or her medical or psychological care, if necessary.
3. **Notify the Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s)**
 - a. Notify the YARPO(s) and provide a written statement of the allegation and, together, determine whether to call the law enforcement agency or the youth protection authorities. District 5450 will ensure that the Protected Individual's parents or legal guardians have been notified and offer an independent, Non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. The YARPO(s) will also notify the District Governor, the appropriate District Committee Chair (RYE, RYLA), and the Club President.
4. **Immediately report all allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment to the appropriate law enforcement agency**
 - a. Any allegation that involves sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be reported to law enforcement, **IMMEDIATELY**. Interrogations related to allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be left entirely to law enforcement agencies. Most people are not trained professionals with expertise in determining the legal implications of an allegation. A volunteer, (Rotarian or Non-Rotarian), should **never** determine whether an allegation constitutes criminal behavior.
5. **Ensure privacy is respected**
 - a. District 5450 maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality), of any accused person by only sharing information with those who are either in a supervisory position that requires such information, or who are directly involved in the investigation regarding an allegation.
6. **Follow-through and next steps**
 - a. All allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be reported to RI by the YARPO(s) or District Officer and **must be made within 72 hours**. The YARPO(s) will submit the 'Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report' to RI and will provide ongoing updates to the District Governor. If the incident involves a Rotary Youth Exchange or RYLA student, the YARPO(s) will contact the District Committee Chair, the student's counselor, and notify the U.S. Department of State, of the alleged abuse, if applicable.
 - b. Upon receipt of a report of sexual abuse or sexual harassment, the YARPO(s) will evaluate the allegation, and if considered appropriate, activate the Crisis Management Team. If law enforcement agencies will **not** investigate, or if the investigation is inconclusive, the District Governor or YARPO(s) will activate the Crisis Management Team to coordinate an independent review, to ensure that the District's Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy was followed, that youth safety was the highest priority, and determine any necessary modifications to District procedures.
 - c. The parent Club of any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment, shall terminate the membership of that Rotarian. The District Governor shall prohibit a Non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment, from working with Protected Individuals in any Rotary context.

INCORPORATION AND LIABILITY INSURANCE

1. District 5450 carries liability insurance with Rotary International that has appropriate coverage and policy limits. This policy protects the organization from third-party claims and lawsuits alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers.

POLICY REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. The YARPO(s) will review this policy annually and propose recommended changes for consideration to the District 5450 Executive Committee and identify any additional training that might be appropriate.
2. This Policy will become effective immediately after approval by the District 5450 Executive Committee as shown by the District Governor's signature and date of enactment, below.
 - a. The District Governor will distribute copies of this Policy to the chairpersons of all District Committees, groups working with Protected Individuals, and to all Club Presidents.

POLICY/RESOURCE REFERENCES

1. **Rotary Code of Policies:**
 - a. 2.210. Youth Protection
 - b. 41.010. Interact
 - c. 41.050. Rotary Youth Exchange
 - d. 41.060. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards
 - e. Article 12. Rotaract Clubs
2. **Rotary Youth Protection Guide**
3. **North American Youth Exchange Network (NAYEN)**
 - a. NAYEN online Youth Protection & Awareness Tutorial/Quiz

The above Policy was adopted by Rotary District 5450 Executive Committee on this ____ day of ____, 2020.

District 5450 Governor

APPENDIX A

DISTRICT 5450 GUIDE TO REPORTING ABUSE & HARASSMENT ALLEGATIONS

District 5450 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all Protected Individuals and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. All allegations will be taken seriously and must be handled within the listed guidelines.

Rotary International's Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth & At-Risk provides the basic principle for Rotarians to follow when working with young people in any capacity:

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' partners, and other volunteers must safeguard children and young people with whom they come in contact, and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. (October 2019)

RECEIVING AN ALLEGATION REPORT

Any adult to whom a Protected Individual reports abuse or harassment must:

1. ***Listen attentively and stay calm.*** Acknowledge that it takes courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging but remain neutral. Do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
2. ***Assure privacy but not confidentiality.*** Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse or harassment to make it stop and ensure that it does not happen to others.
3. ***Get the facts, but do not 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 report this information to the proper authorities.
4. ***Be non-judgmental and reassuring.*** Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Emphasize that it was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature to come to you.
5. ***Document the allegation.*** Record the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can with the Protected Individual's exact words.

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OR HARASSMENT

The following steps must be taken **immediately** after an alleged abuse or harassment is reported. Some of the steps may be performed by any program volunteer, while others should be performed by the District Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s), as specified.

1. **Receive and record/document the report from the Protected Individual**
 - b. Record the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Document the Protected Individual's exact words.
2. **Provide safety for the Protected Individual**
 - b. Ensure the safety and well-being of the Protected Individual by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. The District Governor, YARPO(s), or District Committee Chair, will direct the person accused of abuse or harassment that they are **not to have any further contact** with the Protected Individual, until the matter is resolved. Reassure the Protected Individual that this is for his or her safety and is not a punishment. Take immediate action to ensure the Protected Individual's health and well-being, and get him or her medical or psychological care, if necessary.

3. Notify the Youth & At-Risk Protection Officer(s)

- b. Notify the YARPO(s) and provide a written statement of the allegation and determine whether to call the law enforcement agency or the youth protection authorities. District 5450 will ensure that the Protected Individual's parents or legal guardians have been notified and offer an independent, Non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. The YARPO(s) will also notify the District Governor, the appropriate District Committee Chair (RYE, RYLA), and the Club President.

4. IMMEDIATELY report all allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment to the appropriate law enforcement agency

- b. Any allegation that involves sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be reported to law enforcement, **IMMEDIATELY**. Interrogations related to allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be left entirely to law enforcement agencies. Most people are not trained professionals with expertise in determining the legal implications of an allegation. A volunteer, (Rotarian or Non-Rotarian), should **never** determine whether an allegation constitutes criminal behavior.

5. Ensure privacy is respected

- a. District 5450 maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality), of any accused person by only sharing information with those who are either in a supervisory position that requires such information, or who are directly involved in the investigation regarding an allegation.

6. Follow-through and next steps

- a. All allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment must be reported to RI by the YARPO(s) or District Officer and **must be made within 72 hours**. The YARPO(s) will submit the 'Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report' to RI and will provide ongoing updates to the District Governor. If the incident involves a Rotary Youth Exchange or RYLA student, the YARPO(s) will contact the District Committee Chair, the student's counselor, and notify the U.S. Department of State, of the alleged abuse, if applicable.
- b. Upon receipt of a report of sexual abuse or sexual harassment, the YARPO(s) will evaluate the allegation, and if considered appropriate, activate the Crisis Management Team. If law enforcement agencies will **not** investigate, or if the investigation is inconclusive, the District Governor or YARPO(s) will activate the Crisis Management Team to coordinate an independent review, to ensure that the District's Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy was followed, that youth safety was the highest priority, and determine any necessary modifications to District policies and procedures.
- c. The parent Club of any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment, shall terminate the membership of that Rotarian. The District Governor shall prohibit a Non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment, from working with Protected Individuals in any Rotary context.
- d. District 5450 will document all accusations of inappropriate behavior and the actions taken to resolve the situation, so that patterns of inappropriate behavior are identified and addressed.

NOTE: After making an allegation, the Protected Individual is likely to feel embarrassed or confused. He or she may become withdrawn and have mixed feelings about continuing in the program. For example, Rotary Youth Exchange participants who make an allegation may want to stay in the program but not continue their relationship with their host club. Although volunteers (Rotarian and Non-Rotarian) may have trouble understanding the participant's feelings, it is necessary to continually reassure them. After the investigation, it may be necessary to revise the District's Youth & At-Risk Protection Policy to prevent recurrences.