



District 7780 Approved Policy – For Local Club Adoption

For the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment

ROTARY CLUB OF: _____

1. Purpose and Statement of Conduct for Rotarians and Clubs

A. District 7780 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. To that end, the district clubs and their members will strive to establish a culture of respect and conduct consistent with the 4-Way Test:

Of the things we think, say or do

First, is it the truth?

Second, is it fair to all concerned?

Third, will it build good will and better friendships?

Fourth, will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Our thoughts, words and actions in our interactions with fellow Rotarians, the youth with whom we work, our associates, partners and spouses, other volunteers and the community must be respectful and appropriate at all times.

Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and protection of all children and youth, vulnerable persons, fellow Rotarians and volunteers with whom we interact in our Rotary activities. This shall include safety and protection from physical, sexual and emotional abuse or harassment and extends to all activities of Interact, Rotaract, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) and Rotary Youth Exchange as well as to other projects and programs of Rotary Clubs and District 7780.

B. It will be the responsibility of all members of Rotary Clubs in District 7780 to safeguard the welfare of persons with whom they come into contact during Rotary activities. While special attention is to be given under this policy to protected persons, everyone with whom we interact is entitled to protection from abuse and harassment.

C. Contact is defined as any direct, one-on-one interaction with a youth or other protected persons.

Note: Although this policy outlines guidelines and requirements for volunteers who might have direct, unsupervised one-on-one interaction with a youth or other protected persons, it is strongly suggested



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that Rotary Volunteers avoid having any direct, unsupervised one-on-one interaction with a youth or other protected person and that Rotary Volunteers always work with youth and/or other protected person in groups of two or more.

D. Rotarians and volunteers should always:

Provide a model of good and appropriate behavior;

Treat others with respect;

Respect each person's right to privacy;

Be aware that behavior can be misinterpreted even when well intentioned; and

Challenge unacceptable behavior.

Rotary Clubs place great emphasis on their work with people in the community. Rotary's volunteer efforts are vital to the quality of life in our communities and to the good reputation of Rotary and Rotarians. For this exemplary work to continue, it is important that our Rotary Clubs protect the interests of everyone involved and create and maintain a safe and respectful environment for all participants in Rotary programs, activities and events.

E. Therefore, all allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with these guidelines. However, nothing in these guidelines is intended to preempt referral of criminal activity to law enforcement authorities. When an allegation is made, the safety and well-being of children, youth, vulnerable persons or other protected persons shall always be the first priority. Since an allegation does not necessarily mean that abuse or harassment occurred, this policy will also assist in ensuring that an adult against whom an allegation is made is treated fairly.



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2. Scope

This Policy applies directly to all contact with youth, young adults, and vulnerable persons regardless of age, who come into contact with Rotarians and volunteers in District or Club programs, activities, and events. This policy shall also apply to fellow Rotarians, volunteers, spouses, partners, guests and community members participating in such activities.

Clubs must adhere to “Requirements of Clubs” as described in Appendix D of the District Protection Policy. This includes adoption of the District Protection Policy in whole or as part of its own club policy approved by District 7780.

3. Definitions

A. Volunteer: Any adult involved with any Rotary sponsored activity who has direct, unsupervised interactions with youth or other protected persons. Volunteers include but are not limited to:

- Club Protection Officers (CPO) and District Protection Officer (DPO)
- Youth Exchange Officers (YEO), Youth Exchange Counselors (YEC) and Youth Exchange Committee members.
- RYLA staff, Interact and Rotaract advisors.
- Rotarians and non-Rotarians who host youth or other protected individuals for activities and outings including transportation to and from the event or function.
- Long Term (Greater than 14 days) or Short Term (less than 14 days) Host Parents and other adult members of the host family, including all offspring.

In general, adults who have only casual or occasional group interactions with youth and protected individuals are not considered volunteers under this policy. However, as Rotarians they would still be held to the same level of conduct regarding interactions.



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B. Youth/Young Adult: Children and adolescents under the age of 21 who are involved with any Rotary sponsored program, activity or event.

C. Vulnerable Person: Any person with a disability who is in need of assistance to meet his or her basic personal care and self-management needs or a person who is not capable of rational decision making due to their advanced age or other circumstances.

D. Protected Person: Any child, youth, young adult, or vulnerable person to whom Rotary owes a duty of care.

E. Sexual Abuse: Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a protected person, or forcing or encouraging a protected person to engage in such acts alone or with another person of any age regardless of gender. Sexual abuse shall include but is not limited to non-touching offenses, indecent exposure or exposing a protected person to media with explicit content, sexual or pornographic material.

F. Sexual Harassment: Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, use of sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, inappropriate comments regarding one's sexual activity, preferences, deficiencies or prowess may be considered harassment. Harassment may also include but is not limited to verbal or physical communication of a sexual nature; displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures or drawings; photographs; sexual leering or whistling; any inappropriate physical contact, gestures or obscene language; and suggestive or insulting comments.

G. Contributing to the delinquency of a minor: Aiding or encouraging a minor to violate any federal or state law, municipal or county ordinance, or court order.

H. District Protection Officer (DPO): Rotarian appointed by the District Governor to oversee the enforcement of the Protection Policy for the District. See Appendix B for job description.



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I. Club Protection Officer (CPO): Oversees the enforcement of the Club Protection Policy. If no member is selected, the Club President is the de-facto Club Protection Officer. See Appendix A of this policy for complete job description. The Club Protection Officer may or may not be a member of the Board of Directors as determined by the club. However, the Club Protection Officer will report directly to the Club President.

J. Youth Exchange Officer (YEO): Responsible for the detailed duties specific to the Youth Exchange Program. Oversees the Youth Exchange Program for the club. See Appendix I for Youth Exchange Responsibilities.

K. Youth Exchange Counselor (YEC): Acts as an intermediary for the exchange student and host family and serves as the youth's advocate and confidante. Assists the YEO in fulfilling Youth Exchange responsibilities. See Appendix I for Youth Exchange responsibilities.

Note: Rotary District 7780 has specific *Guidelines Regarding Abuse and Harassment* that apply specifically to Youth Exchange volunteers. The District Youth Exchange program has more specific and detailed procedures than those outlined in this policy. Please refer to *District Protection Policy* when considering participation in the Youth Exchange Program.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

Each Volunteer must complete an application (Appendix H) every three years authorizing the District or Club to conduct a background check. The background check may be completed through the ESSEX web-site. Background checks completed by law enforcement, schools or local government may meet this requirement for volunteers (other than those participating in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program).

Documentation regarding background checks shall be submitted to and maintained by the local club or by the District depending on the volunteer activity.

References must be provided to and checked by the Club Protection Officer or the District Protection Officer. Documentation shall be maintained by the respective officer.



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The Club or District Protection Officer will interview each volunteer applicant and provide him/her with a copy of the Club and/or District Protection Policy.

Volunteers or applicants who have admitted to, been convicted of, or are otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment are prohibited from working with children, youth or any other vulnerable or protected person in a Rotary program.

5. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines as per Appendix A.

The Club Board shall review each allegation of unwelcome physical contact, advances or comments at Rotary events or activities and respond to the allegation within a reasonable time frame. If the offending individual is a member of the board, he or she is expected to recuse himself or herself from the discussion.

Any allegation of criminal behavior shall be referred to local law enforcement.

Any failure on the part of the club or its board to adequately address allegations of inappropriate behavior shall be referred to the District Governor as per Rotary International Policy.

6. Investigation Guidelines

The Club will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal jurisdictional investigations. If Rotary District 7780 conducts its own independent investigation, clubs will cooperate to the extent that it does not interfere with other official investigations.

* District 7780's Guidelines Regarding Abuse and Harassment apply to Youth Exchange volunteers; however, the Youth Exchange program has a more specific and detailed policy. Please refer District 7780's Guidelines when needing Youth Exchange information.



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7. Training in Protection for Youth and Other Vulnerable Individuals

All club members and volunteers with Rotary activities involving youth or other protected persons shall receive Protection Training at least every three years. This training will be provided by the Club Protection Officer or by the District Protection Officer at the Club's invitation.

8. District 7780 Responsibilities

District 7780 has specific responsibilities related to carrying out the *District Protection Policy* and regarding the enforcement of the *District Protection Policy*. Refer to that policy for further information.

9. Club Responsibilities

Rotary clubs participating in activities, programs, or events, either at a Club or District level, that involve youth, young persons or other protected persons and specifically with Rotary Youth Exchange are required to be Certified by the District by demonstrating the following:

- Adopt an approved Club Protection Policy.
- Assure that the Club Protection Officer (CPO) is carrying out his/her duties as defined in the Job Description for this position.
- Ensure the CPO is a member of the Board of Directors of the club or reports directly to the Club President.
- Annually complete and return a signed Club Resolution for Adopting and Approving Protection Policy (Appendix E of this policy) certifying that the club is operating their program in accordance with a District 7780 approved policy or see *District Protection Policy* for Sample Resolution.
- Secure background checks in accordance with the District Protection Policy. The cost of background checks completed through ESSEX shall be the responsibility of the club.

Note: Background checks must be completed through ESSEX for any Rotarian involved with the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. Documentation of background checks conducted by schools, law enforcement or local governments may meet this requirement for other volunteers.



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- If a member has questions regarding the background check procedures, they should contact the CPO. The cost of the background check is the responsibility of the club (unless the District sponsors the program).

Anyone failing to pass such a background check may personally challenge the result of the background check by direct contact with the screening company at his or her own expense.

10. Club Protection Officer (CPO)

Clubs will appoint a Club Protection Officer whose responsibilities will include the following:

- Assure that volunteers are trained in protection procedures and how to respond to an abuse or harassment allegation.
- Arrange to have all volunteers working directly with protected persons in an unsupervised program complete a Volunteer Application (Appendix B of this policy) and submit for a background check.
- Complete checks with personal references of all volunteers.
- Follow the District 7780 Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines. Report all cases of suspected sexual abuse to the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately and then to the District Protection Officer for investigation.
- Report all accidents, crimes, injuries or fatalities involving protected persons to the District Governor and District Protection Officer.
- Report to the District Governor and district Protection Officer any premature return of an exchange student to his or her home or any unexpected termination of the student from the program.

11. Sanctions

A. A club may not grant membership to a person who has been convicted of (in a criminal proceeding) or found liable for (in a civil proceeding) sexual abuse, physical abuse or sexual harassment.

B. An admission of, or conviction for committing sexual abuse, physical abuse or sexual harassment is sufficient evidence of violation of this policy. Clubs, through their presidents, will terminate the



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membership of any member who has admitted, or been convicted of these crimes. Should a club fail to terminate the membership of the Rotarian, the District Governor should notify the Board of Directors of Rotary International that sanctions against the member or club may be warranted under RI policies, including the possibility that the club's charter may be revoked.

C. A non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse, physical abuse, or sexual harassment shall be prohibited from working with protected persons during Rotary events, activities or programs.

D. If an investigation into a claim of sexual abuse, physical abuse or sexual harassment is inconclusive, additional safeguards should be put in place to ensure the safety and protection of all concerned in the event of future contact between the parties in the course of a Rotary event or activity..

E. In the event of a claim of abuse or harassment against an accused, the accused should be prohibited from working with protected persons in Rotary events, activities or programs pending resolution of the allegations.

F. Regardless of criminal guilt or civil liability, the continued presence of an accused at a Rotary event or activity could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization; clubs should take steps to protect Rotary's reputation and ensure the integrity of their events, activities and programs.

G. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, or the charges otherwise are determined to be unfounded, may apply to be reinstated to full participation in Rotary events, activities and programs. Reinstatement is not a right and each case should be assessed on its own facts, and no guarantee should be made that he or she will be reinstated to any former role or responsibility.

Amended April 2018 by District Protection Officer

Following adoption of Revised District Protection Policy adopted by Rotary District 7780, April 2018



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APPENDIX A

Job Description

Club Protection Officer (CPO)

RESPONSIBLE TO: Club President and District Protection Officer

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB: To insure that young and other vulnerable individuals who participate in Rotary sponsored activities are protected; that the Rotary Club is in compliance with its' adopted protection policy and where required, the District 7780 Protection Policy.

SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Approachable with friendly manner
- Good listener
- Well organized
- Motivated
- Ability and willingness to participate in District 7780 protection training program and to carry out club policies and practices.
- Willingness to report violations to appropriate persons including to law enforcement and/or other professional agencies when necessary.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Report directly to the Club President. May serve on the board of directors as determined by the club.
2. Attend available trainings / district roundtables to receive training on protection policies, investigative procedures and best practices.



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3. Maintain working knowledge of appropriate state and federal laws as well as club and district protection guidelines. Know the difference between an inappropriate conduct and a potential criminal act.
3. Maintain a confidential list of club members who had background checks submitted.
4. Coordinate club protection policy complaints and ensure that a complaint is properly investigated; coordinate with law enforcement or other appropriate agency where indicated.
5. Maintain record of protection policy complaints and dispositions.
6. Present club and/or district protection training to the club as may be required but at least every three years.
7. Compose articles for the club newsletters when requested.
8. Facilitate the background check process for club Rotarians.
9. Conduct reference checks using either the Volunteer Reference Form, (Appendix D), personal interview or by phone on all background check. Document any personal/phone contacts.
10. Before the end of each calendar year, forward a list of all club members with valid background checks to the District Protection Officer.
10. Recruit, interview, select, orient, train, retain and recognize an assistant and/or replacement CPO to function as a back-up and to ensure succession planning.



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Appendix B:

Rotary Volunteer Application

Every prospective volunteer age 18 and older must complete

The Rotary Club of: _____ District 7780

Volunteer Name: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Mobile Telephone: _____

Home Email: _____ Work Email: _____

Activity/Position applying for: _____

I have been interviewed for my volunteer position by: _____

Date of Interview _____

VOLUNTEER HISTORY WITH YOUTH: (please attach additional sheets, if necessary)

Have you had a previous affiliation in any way with other youth programs as a volunteer? YES / NO

If yes, please indicate the name of the organization you were affiliated with and list the dates of your affiliation with that organization: _____

List other non-youth Volunteer position and or organization involvement: _____



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PERSONAL REFERENCES (may not include relatives and not more than one former or current Rotarian)

**Must verify at least 2 references.

1. Name: _____

Email: _____ Relationship: _____

2. Name: _____

email _____ Relationship: _____

CRIMINAL HISTORY: (Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

1. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any crime(s)? YES / NO

NOTE: Convictions for minor offenses will not necessarily disqualify you from volunteering. All responses are confidential.

2. Have you ever been subject to any court order involving any sexual, physical or verbal abuse including but not limited to any domestic violence or civil harassment injunction or protective order? YES / NO

If yes, describe in full. Indicate dates(s) of crime(s) and in which city and state each took place. _____

3. Have you ever been investigated by any child protective services agency in the past? YES / NO If yes, please indicate when and for what reasons. _____

4. Is there anything you would like to add? _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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APPENDIX C:

DISTRICT 7780 APPROVED BACKGROUND CHECK WAIVER/CONSENT/RELEASE

Each Rotary volunteer must complete this waiver for the background check.

Rotary Club of: _____

I am applying for a volunteer position with a Rotary Club and understand that Rotary may deny a volunteer position to anyone deemed, in the sole and absolute discretion of Rotary, to be unacceptable or unsuitable, either now or at any time in the future, and that Rotary may terminate my volunteer position at any time, with or without cause. I hereby certify that any information I have provided in connection with this application is truthful and that I have disclosed all pertinent information. I hereby agree to supplement this application, and report to Rotary, any events or changes which might affect this application as soon as possible after such event or changes occur.

I hereby give my permission for Rotary or their representative to investigate and verify all the information I have provided through this background check by whatever means Rotary deems suitable and/or appropriate including, but not limited to, searching public records, criminal background checks, contact with employers or references, etc., and I hereby indemnify and hold harmless Rotary, and all persons involved with, or working with or for Rotary, from any and all liability for any and all loss or consequences - of any type whatsoever - I may sustain as a result of such investigation and/or verification. Further, I hereby give my permission for any such investigation and/or verification to be repeated at any time, and as often as necessary, for so long as I may remain a volunteer, or at any time in the future that I might reapply to be a volunteer.

I further agree to conform to the rules, regulations, and policies of Rotary International and its District affiliates, at all times during my service as a volunteer.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE WAIVER, CONSENT, AND RELEASE, AND THAT I SIGN THIS FORM VOLUNTARILY.

Print Name: _____ DOB: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Home Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

SEND THIS WAIVER ALONG WITH THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION TO THE CLUB PROTECTION OFFICER: **The fee per background check conducted by ESSEX is to be paid by the local club.**



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APPENDIX D:

ROTARY VOLUNTEER REFERENCE FORM

Two references are required per volunteer. References cannot be a relative and not more than 1 form or current Rotarian.

Volunteer Name: _____ Rotary Club: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ email: _____

1. How long have you known this individual? (Approximately) _____ Years

2. In what capacity do you know this individual? _____

3. Are you aware of any problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, physical abuse, etc. that might affect this individual to work with children, young people or other persons? _____

If yes, please explain (Answers are confidential)

4. In your judgment, is this person a dependable, honest and stable individual? _____



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5. Would you recommend this individual to work as a volunteer with Rotary for Youth and students?

OTHER COMMENTS: _____

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date ____/____/____

Would you be interested in learning about becoming a Rotary Club Member or volunteer? _____



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APPENDIX E:

Club Resolution for Adopting and Approving Protection Policy

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF

(Name of Club)

APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE DISTRICT 7780 POLICY REGARDING

PROTECTION of YOUTH AND OTHER VULNERABLE PERSONS

WHEREAS Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities and it is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarian's 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 youth and other vulnerable individuals with whom they come in contact and District 7780 is committed to the same and,

WHEREAS the Board of Directors, Rotary International adopted the above Statements of Conduct for Working with Youth on November, 2002 and,

WHEREAS the Club must ensure that all officers, staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and accept responsibility to help prevent the abuse of youth and other vulnerable individuals and respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of harassment and/or abuse, and by providing a safe atmosphere so youth and adults feel comfortable expressing any concerns about abuse / harassment.

(continued on page18)



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NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF

(Name of Club)

THAT:

The Board hereby approves and adopts the Protection Policy; Exhibit A attached, and authorizes and directs the President to appoint a Club Protection Officer with the associated Job Description, Exhibit B attached, to implement the Policy in the Club.

This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY:

President, Board of Directors

Date

Secretary, Board of Directors

Date

Note that this policy is subject to change. Contact District Protection Officer to receive the most current copy.