

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Rotary District 5960

All organizations including District 5960 at some time will have a crisis. Management of a crisis is preferred to just letting the crisis develop and resolve as-it-will with potential undesirable consequences.

Purpose: Thus, this policy is meant:

-to subscribe to and follow the 4 Way Test.

Of the things we think, say and do:

1. Is it the TRUTH;
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned;
3. Will it build GOOD WILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS;
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned.

-to establish a Crisis Management Team;

-to give guidelines to District and Club Leadership;

-to allow the District to speak with a consistent, single voice; and

-to manage any media statements.

Definition: A **crisis** is an event that significantly disrupts normal operations, has caused or is likely to cause severe distress or have severe consequences for individual staff of an organization, and requires out-of-ordinary measures to restore order and normality, thus demanding immediate action from senior leadership. Crises can come in various forms, and include events threatening an organization's reputation, image, programs, assets, financial stability, or the safety and security of staff or participants at events such as in a fire or flood.

A crisis may develop from abuse or assault on people involved in Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA), Youth Exchange, Group Study Exchange (GSE) or Vocational Training Team (VTT), inbound scholars, or members; may occur at events; may involve embezzlement of District or club funds.

Confidentiality needs to be kept for the sake of the individuals involved, as well as for the organization.

### The Crisis Management Team

District Governor (DG)

A Past District Governor (PDG)

District Governor-elect (DGE)

District Governor-nominee (DGN)

A Rotarian Media Specialist (see list of contacts)

A Rotarian Law Enforcement professional (if needed)

The appropriate Committee Chair (if needed)

Rotarian Legal Counsel (if needed)

Outside Legal Counsel (if needed)

Procedure: In the case of a crisis, the senior leadership including the District Governor, the Past District Governor, and the District Governor-elect should determine the scope of the crisis. Information should be gathered in order to do an assessment. Based on that assessment, they will determine the team to be assembled. That team will further assess the crisis and determine a plan of action. Confidentiality will be defined and clarified. They should determine the potential for media exposure and who will be the spokesperson for the District (there should be only one person speaking to the media so that response is unified); a press statement needs to be prepared. Create an ongoing communication plan. Develop talking points with basic information. Have information about the background of the District available. Make no assumptions about the media. They are not the enemy, nor the friend, regardless of many positive stories they have offered about Rotary in the past. Estimate how long the crisis will require attention and create an appropriate plan. Evaluate the legal exposure by internal Rotarian legal counsel, outside legal counsel, if needed; and victim's rights, and provide consulate or embassy access for the victim(s), if appropriate. Anything involved with Youth Exchange should include the NorthStar Youth Exchange leadership.

Post Crisis Follow-up (Debriefing and Record Keeping);

**Incident Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What Can and Can't be Said.**

Be aware of the potential of the following information may be confidential and should not be made public without prior authorization from the appropriate authorities. Refer the individual(s) requesting the information any items that need to be or are questionable to remain confidential to contact the appropriate authorities (law enforcement hospital,,...) need to be maintained confidential.

Everyone within Rotary District 5960 that has contact with for this incident shall document the names and titles of the individuals, see their press credentials, the name of their news organization, email and telephone numbers (preferred to obtain business card) and inform them that you or someone will be following them, taking notes and will be take photos of their activities while doing their interviews and/or as they tour the location.

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Date of Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Time notified of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Notified by: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number(s) for the person above: \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ (H)

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis Manager Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Crisis Spokesperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Who else has been and needs to be notified [This may include our RI Director, Rotary

International Headquarters: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Completion of Notifications Above: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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**\*\*This policy has been developed subsequent to study and discussion of crisis policy development guideline papers, companies' and organizations' policies and shaped to the potential needs of Rotary International District 5960 and its clubs.**

**(Crisis Management Task Force: PDG Clare Lillis, PDG Lee Finholm, Janet Newburg, Al Zdrazil)**

## CRISIS MANAGEMENT SCENARIOS

1. Your Rotary club sponsors an inbound youth exchange student from France. This student was placed with an initial host family when she arrived in August. The host family consists of a host mother, a host father, a 19 year old host sister and an 8 year old host brother.

The 19 year old host sister came to your club's Youth Exchange Officer and said that her father raped the youth exchange student from France. The host sister was distraught when she reported this to the YEO, said her father had also sexually abused her when she was in her early teens, and she vowed that she would never let him do that to another girl again. The host sister also reported that her father keeps child pornography on his home computer, and shares his collection of pornographic photos with other men all over the country.

Finally, the host sister told you that she took the exchange student to a friend's house and asked the friend's parents to let the exchange student stay there until the police removed her father from their house. The host sister said that immediately before she came to speak to the YEO, she called the police and told them everything she told the YEO.

1. A Rotarian (John Jones) served as his club's Treasurer, and was also a member of the District's Finance Committee. The club's President Elect, who just happened to be a certified public accountant, began to develop concerns about the financials Jones was giving to the club Board at its monthly meetings. The President Elect did his own investigation, and discovered that there was approximately \$46,000 of club money that was missing from the club's bank account, and there were numerous disbursements of funds from the club account to a business owned by Jones.

The President Elect told the club President of his concerns, and the President contacted the District Governor. The District Governor immediately asked the District Treasurer to review District financial accounts for any irregularity. The District Treasurer learned that there were several transactions in which District checks had been issued to pay a vendor no one had ever heard of. The vendor was supposedly an office supplies company, but had the same street address as Jones' residence. The District Secretary reported that she never ordered any office supplies from this so-called company, and doesn't know who authorized the payments.

In addition to his roles as his Rotary club's Treasurer, and a member of the District's Finance Committee, Rotarian Jones is a candidate for the state legislature.

2. The District hosted an inbound GSE team from India. All of the GSE team members attended the annual District Conference, and enjoyed the festivities.

Rotarian Smith, who hosted one of the GSE team members, also attended the District Conference, and imbibed copious amounts of beer at the final dinner of the conference. Smith had previously made arrangements to drive all of the GSE team members back to their host families after the final dinner of the conference. Following the dinner, he gathered the GSE team members and instructed them to get into his minivan. Although two of the GSE team members were concerned that Rotarian Smith may have had too much to drink, they all complied with his instructions so as not to offend their U.S. host.

Three miles after leaving the District Conference dinner, Rotarian Smith crossed over the center line of a two lane highway, and hit a semi truck head on. Three of the five GSE team members were killed in the collision. The remaining two GSE team members were critically injured and transported by air ambulance to a trauma hospital. Smith was also critically injured.

Local television reported the accident that same night, and reported that Smith had been convicted of DWI four times in the last six years, and did not have a valid drivers license at the time of the crash.

3. The District hosted a group of Rotarians from Great Britain under a "Friendship Exchange". The group of British Rotarians and their spouses were a jovial group and seemed to be enjoying their visit to 5960 immensely. They seemed to particularly enjoy the bright sunny days, and all of the food on a stick they ate on a visit to the Minnesota State Fair. They were particularly partial to the deep fried butter on a stick.

One morning, each host family discovered that their British guests were missing from their homes. The host families and the host Rotary clubs searched frantically for the Brits for three days with no luck.

On the third day, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called the District Governor and said all of the British Rotarians and their spouses were in her office in the State Department and wanted to defect from Great Britain to the United States. Secretary Clinton

reported that the Brits were sick to death of rainy weather and eating bangers and mash, and wanted to become not just Americans, but Minnesotans!

Finally, Secretary Clinton reported that the British contingent was refusing to leave her office until their requests to defect were granted.