

## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 5180 CRISIS PLAN

### Using This Plan: Important

- *Who Should Know?* Rotary Club Presidents, Leaders, Chairs, and Members  
District Leadership, Committee Chairs and Committee Members
- *What Should be Shared?* Provide a full copy of the plan to every Club Member and District Staff person.
- *What Should be Done Before a Crisis?* Read the entire plan. Clubs as well as District Committees should hold a meeting dedicated to discussing and understanding the plan. All new Club members and new District Committee Members should be educated on the plan.
- *If You Have Questions Before a Crisis?* Ask your Club President, Assistant Governor, District Governor or any individual on the Crisis Management Team.
- *What Should Be Done During a Crisis?* Carefully re-read and follow this plan.
- *If You Still Have Questions During a Crisis?* Don't guess or try to fix it yourself. Ask any individual on the Crisis Management Team for help.
- *If You Have Suggestions After a Crisis?* Share them with any individual on the Crisis Management Team.

### Introduction

A crisis can strike at any time. Natural disasters like fires, hurricanes, earthquakes and floods; manmade tragedies such as shootings or terrorist activities; financial debacles like embezzlement or theft; and events caused by an action or inaction of a Rotarian or non-Rotarian such as a violent crime, a traffic accident, a youth protection issue, harassment, discrimination or simple bad judgment may place a Rotary Club officer or board member, an entire club, the District Governor or other Rotarians in a situation that requires serious and immediate attention.

When a crisis occurs, it is important to have a Crisis Management Plan in place. It is a set of procedures applied to assure a response with accurate information reflecting Rotary's sincere concern and resolution of an emergency in planned and coordinated steps that can be understood, followed and managed so that those involved are protected, that communication is timely and professional, and that necessary action is taken.

In our internet-driven and social media information age, written and video content can be transmitted instantly and be misunderstood or intensified which is why our Rotary District must

respond with a clear message that is presented honestly, accurately, timely, consistently, and in a manner that is appropriate for the situation.

Clubs, District Committees and individuals should NOT handle any crisis alone! District 5180 and Rotary International have first responders who can help and relieve you of the worry of facing the media when your attention is needed dealing with the actual crisis. The District Governor may decide what is the most appropriate course of action.

### **What Constitutes a Crisis?**

A “crisis” is a critical event or point of decision which requires an appropriate and timely response. For purposes of District 5180, it probably will be an unexpected or unusual event, often tragic, that impacts Rotarians and/or Rotary in a negative manner. Examples include an untimely death or injury stemming either from natural (such as fire, flood or earthquake) or unnatural (such as accidents or mass casualties) events; illegal activities where the victim or suspected perpetrator is a Rotarian, a Rotary club, or the District; or another event that involves a Rotarian, a Rotary club, or the District that impacts persons or property in a negative manner.

These events may, but do not necessarily, involve youth involved in Rotary functions and activities, such as RYLA students, Interactors, RYE students, or REGL participants. District youth programs have carefully designed youth protection plans which take precedence over this plan and which are to be followed prior to following this plan.

### **Policy and Parameters**

1. The District Governor currently in office is the only officer of Rotary International in the District. As such, when a crisis occurs, the District Governor is the main contact between the District and Rotary International and between the District and the event or activity manager, if applicable (such as a camp director). He or she will ensure that Rotary International is notified and kept informed, as needed.
2. The District Governor is the person in charge for Crisis Management in District 5180 unless and/or until he or she appoints someone else. If the District Governor is absent, unavailable or unable to take charge, the District Governor-Elect, Immediate Past District Governor, the District Governor Nominee, or another Rotarian may be appointed by the District Governor or by the District Finance Advisory Committee while the District Governor is absent, unavailable or unable to take charge.
3. The District Governor shall appoint a Crisis Management Team as part of the District Leadership Team to provide support, information and guidance as needed.
4. The District Governor or his/her appointee will activate the Crisis Management Team or individual members of the team as needed.
5. If the event involves a Rotary Club or Rotarian, that Rotary Club’s President or the Club’s designated appointee will represent the individual Club as needed and as requested by the District Governor.

### **Crisis Management Team**

A Crisis Management Team will be appointed by the District Governor for that Governor's term, prior to the start of the term, which should include:

1. The District Governor who will serve as Chair
2. The District Governor-Elect, Immediate Past District Governor, or District Governor Nominee who will serve as the Assistant to the District Governor
3. District 5180 Youth Protection Officer or, if none, a member of the District Youth Protection Committee
4. A legal professional who is familiar with local law and can give immediate advice as to confidentiality, exposure, liability, and related legal implications
5. The District Public Image Chair
6. The District Insurance Chair
7. A District Spokesperson who serves as liaison to the media, who may or may not be the District Public Image or District Communications Chair
8. The Assistant Governor if the incident reported happens in a community where local presence is important
9. The chair of the committee responsible for the activity from which the incident originated, if applicable
10. Others at the request of the District Governor

### **When a Crisis Develops**

1. Contact and consult with the District Governor or, if the District Governor is absent, unavailable or unable to take charge, the designated appointee as set forth above.
2. The District Governor or designated appointee determines the need to notify and consult with the Crisis Management Team and decides if the team or certain members of the team should be activated. For example, depending on the situation, the activated team members might consist of the Club president, a committee chair, an attorney, the Spokesperson, the youth protection officer and/or the public information chair.
3. Immediately provide information, such as social media posts, voicemail messages, emails or other written documentation, bearing on the crisis to the District Governor, designated appointee or Spokesperson so that they may determine how best to respond. Avoid responding, posting or sharing the information yourself.
4. The Crisis Management Team will cooperate with Law Enforcement and will direct individuals in the gathering of facts.
5. The District Governor will contact Rotary International and the Rotary International Zone Director.
6. The District Governor will confirm that Law Enforcement has been contacted, if applicable and not already involved.
7. The District Governor will designate a District Spokesperson. This should be someone who is on top of the issue, communicates well, and is comfortable interacting with the media.
8. The District Governor will direct Presidents and Assistant Governors to communicate appropriate and approved information to affected Clubs and/or affected Rotarians and instruct all Club members to refer press inquiries to the District Spokesperson.

9. The District Governor may communicate with Assistant Governors, District Leadership Team members, Clubs and/or individual Rotarians as needed.
10. The District Governor will direct the District Spokesperson to prepare a statement, that is in writing, made available to the media, and posted on the District 5180 website, that accurately states the facts, expresses Rotary's position, conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, commitment, etc.) and develops key messages to help the Spokesperson convey Rotary's position consistently and accurately. The Spokesperson will update the statement as needed with input and advice from the District Governor. NOTE: It is important to determine WHAT MAY BE COMMUNICATED in the first place. Legal rights of those affected must be considered.
11. The District Governor will seek further assistance from Rotary International regarding media inquiries as needed.

### **If the Media Contacts You**

If a Club President, Club Event or Activity Chair, Club Member, District Chair or District Leadership Team Member or some other person is contacted by the Media, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Follow the protocols set out above. Do not issue a statement or make any comment to the media.
2. Immediately contact the District Governor or designated appointee, even if in doubt of the urgency or importance of the matter. Let those responsible make the decisions as to urgency and importance.
3. Respond to all media inquiries promptly. Ignoring media can contribute to unnecessary speculation. A media interview is a good opportunity to convey the facts and Rotary's position to the public, but this is the responsibility of the District Spokesperson.
4. Refer the media contact to the District Governor or, in an on-going situation, designated District Spokesperson. If you need time to confirm or determine the District Governor or Spokesperson's contact information, tell the media you will respond promptly.
5. The District Governor and/or Spokesperson will be completely honest and truthful, will not say anything he/she is unsure of, and will not cover up or make excuses. NOTE: It is important to determine WHAT MAY BE COMMUNICATED in the first place. Legal rights of those affected must be considered.
6. The District Governor or Spokesperson will represent Rotary. When they speak, they ARE Rotary. No personal observations or speculations will be issued.
7. Monitor the media's local coverage of the issue for accuracy and tone. If Rotary is misrepresented, let the Spokesperson know who will convey the concern to the District Governor for action, if needed.
8. Utilize the attached Media Strategy Checklist (Attachment A) if appropriate.

## 2018-2019 CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM AND CONTACT INFORMATION

District Governor	JACK ARNEY	(415) 378-4530	rotaryjackarney@gmail.com
District Governor-Elect	RAY WARD	(916) 730-7668	rotaryray5180@gmail.com
Immediate Past District Governor	SANDI SAVA	(916) 947-1958	gorotary5180@gmail.com
District Governor Nominee	BRENT HASTEY	(530) 400-1992	dg5180.brent@gmail.com
Youth Protection Officer	MIKE GARCIA	(916) 261-5661	miketgarcia@yahoo.com
Legal Advisor	SANDI SAVA	(916) 947-1958	gorotary5180@gmail.com
Public Image Chair	MEGAN HAM	(916) 804-5643	meganh@addlins.com
Communications Chair	PAUL BONAVENTURE	(805) 801-5434	paul.d.bonaventure@gmail.com
Spokesperson	JACK ARNEY *** (*** interim)	(415) 378-4530	rotaryjackarney@gmail.com
RI Zone Director	JOHN MATTHEWS	(206) 755-3349	jcmatthews15@gmail.com
RI Club & District Support	JIM DAMATO	(847) 866-3405	james.damato@rotary.org
RI Risk Manager	JULITA BRZozowska	(847) 424-5394	insurance@rotary.org
Rotary Insurance Broker	A.J. GALLAGHER CO.	(833) 376-8279	rotary@ajg.com
Insurance and Risk Management Website	<a href="https://insight.ajg.com">https://insight.ajg.com</a>		Username: rotary@ajg.com Password: rotarian1
District Insurance Chair	MEGAN HAM	(916) 804-5643	meganh@addlins.com

## **MEDIA STRATEGY CHECKLIST**

### **Attachment A**

- Alert the Spokesperson
- Gather who, what, where, when and why of the situation
- Confirm the facts
- Clarify and verify technical information
- Prepare a summary statement
- Prepare a fact sheet
- Notify stakeholders (people key to the organization)
- Tell volunteers and clients about changes in services/operations
- Respond to the media
- Keep a log of callers and questions
- Update media as situation develops
- Follow up implications; prevent backlash
- Evaluate and tweak the system