

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 7810

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction

Tragedy and crisis can strike at any time.

Events such as:

- a violent crime, a traffic accident, a youth protection issue or a simple case of bad judgment
- natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods; or
- events caused by an action or inaction of a Rotarian or non-Rotarian

may lead to a situation that will place a Rotary club officer or board member, an entire club, the District Governor, or other Rotarians in a situation that requires their utmost and immediate attention.

When such an event occurs, it is important to have a plan in place that can be followed to ensure that the matter is handled with the utmost care, being sure that those involved in the incident are kept safe, that communication with those who need to know is completed quickly, accurately, and professionally, and that other actions are taken swiftly and professionally when needed.

Additionally, in our internet-driven information age, written and video content can be transmitted in a matter of seconds, which makes it important that when a crisis erupts, our Rotary District responds with a clear message, presented honestly and in a timely manner.

Clubs, District committees and individuals are *NOT* to handle any crisis alone. It is critical to ask for help. District 7810 and Rotary International have trained responders who can assist with the worry of facing the media especially when your attention is needed dealing with the actual crisis.

The District Governor shall decide the most appropriate course of action. Contact the District Governor as soon as a possible crisis is developing or has developed.

What Constitutes a Crisis?

A “crisis”, for the purposes of implementing the Rotary District 7810 Crisis Management Plan, is an unanticipated, unusual event or occurrence arising out of, or closely related to,

a Rotary Club project, event, or program that results in, or is likely to result in, physical or psychological harm, serious injury, or death to a participant, or that is or can be detrimental to the public image of Rotary.

Examples include a death or injury stemming either from natural disasters impacting a Rotary project, event, or program (such as fire, flood, or earthquake) or human caused (such as accidental or intentional mass casualty event).

A “crisis” can include suspected illegal activities where the victim or suspected perpetrator is a Rotarian, a Rotary club, or the District; or other event that involves a Rotarian, a Rotary club, or the District that impacts persons or property in a substantial, negative manner.

These events may, but not necessarily, involve youth involved in Rotary functions and activities, such as RYLA students, Interactors, Rotary Youth Exchange students and participants. Such youth programs have carefully designed youth protection. District 7810’s Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy takes precedence over this plan and is to be followed prior to implementing this plan, although every effort should be made to provide simultaneous notification of the “crisis” to the District Governor.

Purpose of this Policy

In the event of a “crisis”, it is imperative to operate pursuant to established guidelines so as to ensure the communication of accurate, timely and consistent information to Rotarians and the public, and to provide for the immediate care and protection of all individuals involved in the situation, as well as their families.

It is the policy of District 7810 to deliver the highest level of transparency and cooperation consistent with applicable laws and government policies.

Policy and Parameters

1. *The District Governor is the only officer of Rotary International in the District. As such, they are the main contact between the District and Rotary International and between the District and the Club, event or activity manager of the Rotary activity involved when a crisis occurs.*
2. The District Governor shall hold final responsibility for Crisis Management in District 7810. In their absence or in the case of their inability to act, the following

individuals, in the order listed, shall hold final responsibility:

- a. The Immediate Past District Governor
 - b. The District Governor-Elect
 - c. The District Governor-Nominee
3. The District Governor shall appoint a Crisis Management Team as part of the District Leadership Team on an annual basis, to provide support and guidance as needed.
 4. Only the District Governor or their designate as set forth in item 2 above, has the authority to activate the Crisis Management Team, or involve individual members of the team, when required.
 5. The District Governor may request an individual Rotary club president or designee to represent an individual club if the incident requires.

Crisis Management Team

Purpose:

A Crisis Management Team (CMT) shall be established annually as part of the District Leadership Team, to provide support and guidance.

Composition:

The “core” Crisis Management Team shall be composed of:

1. The District Governor as Chair
2. The Immediate Past District Governor
3. The District Governor-Elect
4. District Governor- Nominee

Depending on the nature of the “crisis”, the CMT may include any or all of the following as determined by the District Governor:

1. District Director of Youth Services and or District Youth Protection Officer
2. An attorney at law who is familiar with local law and can give immediate advice as to confidentiality, potential legal action, and liability
3. The District Director of Communications
4. An Incident Spokesperson (“Spokesperson”) who serves as liaison to the media, who may or may not be the District Communications or Public Image Chair
5. The Treasurer of the District

In addition, others may be asked to serve on the Crisis Management Team for a specific incident as required and determined by the District Governor:

6. The Assistant Governor of the Area of the incident, if the incident reported happens in a distant community where local Rotary District Leadership presence is important
7. The chair of the committee responsible for the activity where the incident originated, if applicable
8. Individuals or companies at the request of the District Governor.

Education:

1. All members of the Crisis Management Team must be familiar with the most recent edition of Rotary International's Media Crisis Handbook and the Rotary Youth Protection Guide and District 7810's Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy.
2. All members of the Media Contact Team shall undergo media relations training available through Rotary International. (All club Youth Protection Officers shall be trained on the District 7810's Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy.)

Collaboration:

In situations requiring law enforcement or other emergency service involvement, the Crisis Management Team shall cooperate with public authorities in all respects and follow the direction of responsible public officials.

If a Crisis Develops

1. The **Rotary club president** or other Rotarian who becomes aware of a crisis situation shall:
 - 1.1. determine if appropriate authorities have been called into action, such as law enforcement, medical emergency, or fire responders.
 - 1.2. immediately contact and consult with the District Governor. If the District Governor is not available, contact the next person on the Crisis Management Team list in the order listed and the Assistant Governor for the area affected. All youth program staff shall follow the detailed reporting procedures of the District's Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy before contacting the District Governor, although every effort should be made to simultaneously notify the District Governor as well.
2. The **District Governor** or designee shall:

- 2.1. determine the need to consult the Crisis Management Team and shall decide if the team or certain members of the team shall be activated. The District Governor has sole discretion and authority to determine which members of the team, if any, shall be activated.
 - 2.2. notify the activated members of the Crisis Management Team.
 - 2.3. confirm that applicable law enforcement agencies has been contacted.
 - 2.4. contact Rotary International and the current Rotary International Director for District 7810.
 - 2.5. designate an Incident Spokesperson, if one is not already designated. This should be someone who is knows the issue, communicates well, and is comfortable interacting with the media.
 - 2.6. direct the Spokesperson to prepare a statement that accurately states the facts, expresses Rotary's position, and conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, commitment, etc.)
 - 2.7. develop key messages to help the Spokesperson convey Rotary's position consistently and accurately.
 - 2.8. ask club presidents and assistant governors to communicate appropriate and approved information to affected clubs and instruct all Rotary club members to refer press inquiries to the Spokesperson.
 - 2.9. notify Rotary International and the Rotary International Director of significant changes in the crisis situation and media involvement.
 - 2.10. seek further assistance from RI regarding media inquiries as needed.
 - 2.11. communicate with Assistant Governors, District Leadership Team members, clubs and/or individual Rotarians as needed.
3. The **Spokesperson** shall:
- 3.1. develop a set of "talking points" to be used as reference by the Media Resource Team in order to keep messages simple and focused.
 - 3.2. update the statement and talking points as needed.
4. The **District Governor and/or Spokesperson** shall:
- 4.1. be completely honest and truthful, shall not say anything he/she is unsure of and shall not cover up or make excuses,
 - 4.2. represent Rotary. No personal observations or speculations shall be issued.

Media

Definition: For purposes of District 7810's Crisis Management Plan, "media" includes,

but is not limited to, the following areas:

- i. Traditional print media, such as newspapers
- ii. Broadcast media, such as television and streaming
- iii. Social media platforms
- iv. Online sources such as bloggers. This may include an untrained citizen journalist who captures an event through photographs, videotapes, or recordings capable of putting online visual, audio and text from the site of a “crisis”.

Media Resource Team

1. The District Governor and the Spokesperson shall designate a Media Resource Team who will assist the Spokesperson with media interaction thus enabling the Spokesperson to divide the workload among several team members.
2. Each team member shall follow one media area and report to the Spokesperson. This will allow the District Governor and the Spokesperson to maintain control of messages propagating on social media.
3. The Spokesperson's contact information shall be provided to anyone reasonably anticipated to be contacted by the media. This information shall be accompanied by instructions to refer all inquiries to the Spokesperson.
4. Before use, the statement prepared by the Spokesperson shall be reviewed by Rotary International Public Image and Press Relations staff.
5. The Media Resource Team shall monitor the local media coverage of the issue for accuracy and tone. If Rotary is misrepresented, alert the Spokesperson. He/she will convey the concern to the District Governor for action, if needed.

Club Presidents or members

If a Rotary club president, event or activity chair, or some other Rotarian is contacted by the media, the following procedures apply:

1. The goal is to have an organized media response through the Spokesperson. Follow the protocols set out above.
2. Do not issue a statement or make any comment to the media other than referring them to the Spokesperson. Ignoring media can contribute to unnecessary speculation, but it is the responsibility of the Spokesperson to communicate the facts and positions of Rotary to the media.
3. If time is needed to confirm or determine the District Governor or Spokesperson's contact information, tell the reporter that you or a Rotary representative will call back promptly.

4. Immediately contact the District Governor or designate, even if in doubt of the urgency or importance of the matter. Let those responsible make the decisions as to urgency and importance.
5. Never use the term, "off the record."

Post Crisis debriefing

Once the crisis has ended, the District Governor, the Crisis Management Team and the key local Rotarians, shall assess handling of the crisis and recommend changes in procedure to improve future crisis management.

With the start of each new club year on July 1st, the District Administrative Secretary will add to the list below, the appropriate names and contact information as directed by the District Governor.

Core Crisis Management Team Members		Cell Phone Number	Email Address
District Governor	Darren Hansen	506-852-6137	Govdist781020212022@gmail.com
Immediate Past District Governor	John Slipp	506-325-8721	johnslipp@gmail.com
District Governor-Elect	Harvey Bass	506-473-8351	Dg7815.2022.2023@gmail.com
District Governor-Nominee	None for 2021/22		
Ad Hoc Committee Members	<i>Shall be members in good standing of clubs in District 7810</i>		
District Director Youth Services and District Youth Protection Officer	Noel Eustace	506-476-2924	bumperchute@ca.inter.net
Legal Advisor	Nick O'Toole	506-229-0161	nicholas@actuslaw.com
Financial Advisor	Jack Christie	506-622-1986	jack@fcpax.ca
Public Image Chair	Martine Babineau	506-988-0898	martinebabineau@gmail.com
Communications Chair	Martine Babineau	506-988-0898	martinebabineau@gmail.com
Incident Spokesperson	Nick O'Toole	506-229-0161	nicholas@actuslaw.com

Rotary International Resources for Crisis Management Team			
RI Director	Valarie Wafer		Valarie.wafer@gmail.com
Club & District Support	Sophie Dangerfield		Sophie.Dangerfield@rotary.org
Assistant Club & District Support	Sarah Steacy		Sarah.Steacy@rotary.org