



# Rotary District 7505 YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

A crisis involving Rotary District 7505 Youth Exchange (RYE) may involve international students hosted in our District or students hosted in Districts overseas. A crisis may involve an individual student or a group of students within a region. A crisis may involve the death of a student; a transportation accident, food poisoning, building fire, and many other possibilities. Even if there are no serious injuries or illnesses, a crisis may exist because of public perception, especially in the case of an Inbound student's home embassy and the press.

*One of the most important points to remember is Safety First! Take action immediately to protect the student, family or other person who needs protection. This may involve calling for medical or public safety assistance, removing the student from the home or situation or some other immediate action.*

## **THE ROTARY DISTRICT 7505 RYE COMMITTEE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The District 7505 Chair acts as the District Crisis Management Officer (DCMO). Additional team members may include the following:

- District Outbound Coordinator
- District Inbound Coordinator
- District Country Coordinator
- Other District YE Committee member(s), as assigned by the Chair
- Club YE Committee members, if appropriate

See the Contact page information details provided in Appendix B.

## **ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ROTARY DISTRICT 7505 RYE COMMITTEE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM**

*Procedures proposed in this Crisis Management Plan incorporate many of Rotary International's "Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies", which are included as Appendix A.*

All persons should recognize and appreciate that timely, accurate and concise information is critical to effectively manage a crisis.

Unless otherwise noted, the DCMO will be the point person for contact during the course of the crisis. All inquiries shall be directed to the DCMO. Depending on the seriousness of the crisis, other individuals may be named to assist.

If the DCMO will not be accessible via the listed contact information, the DCMO will provide temporary contact information to the District Crisis Management Team. In the event the DCMO will be inaccessible, the District YPO will become the contact person and leader of the District Crisis Management Team. In the event that neither the DCMO or District YPO are available, then the District Inbound or Outbound Coordinator will be appointed.

The DCMO or designee will be the spokesperson for the media. **NO ONE should speak to the media except the DCMO or their designee!** Simply provide the media with the name and contact information of the DCMO or their designee.

District Crisis Management Team Members are expected to respond to the crisis **immediately** upon notification. If circumstances prohibit an immediate response, the DCMO shall be notified so these duties can be reassigned to other available individuals.

Additional District Crisis Team Members will endeavor to remain accessible in the event of an emergency. If members will be away and not accessible (i.e. not checking phone messages and/or e-mail), they will notify the DCMO of their absence.

### **INBOUND CRISIS PROCEDURE – for one or more students**

This guideline addresses an emergency involving an individual student or a group of the District's inbound students.

In the event of a crisis such as death, serious injury, serious illness, natural or other disaster or other problem deemed serious by the Host Club, the **Host Club Youth Exchange Officer (HCYEO)** shall contact the DCMO immediately and provide the following details at a minimum:

1. Name of student(s) involved.
2. Home country(ies) of student(s) involved, including sponsor district number(s), if possible.
3. Host Club name(s).
4. Name and contact information for local Rotarian(s) to be contacted in this specific emergency.
5. Sufficient details involving the crisis.
6. Be sure to take a few moments to document and make written notes of what happened (answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how as specifically as possible) and to outline next steps. Thinking through a plan of action before anything further is done will help to avoid problems later.

Upon notification of the crisis, the **DCMO** will immediately take over management of the crisis, including:

1. Make all necessary internal (within District) communications:
  - Contact all members of the District Crisis Management Team and relay crisis information and status updates throughout the crisis.
  - Request any necessary assistance from team members relative to the crisis. This may include research or other procedures. The DCMO may also include or ask for assistance from the Club and others outside of the District Crisis Management

Team. All parties will work together to create solutions. The team should use the Rotary International “Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies” as a baseline.

- Communication should also be extended to the current District Governor and all other members of the Rotary District 7505 Youth Exchange Committee (RYE) not affected by the crisis.
2. Make all necessary external (out of District) communications:
    - Contact and relay crisis information to Rotary International and provide status updates throughout the crisis.
    - Contact and relay crisis information to ESSEX and provide status updates throughout the crisis.
    - Contact and advise others such as Embassy/Consulate for the student.
    - Contact and advise counterpart officers in student’s Sponsoring District.
    - Contact insurance companies, if appropriate
  3. Others who may need to be informed and not necessarily identified previously above include:
    - Parents/Legal Guardians
    - Host family(ies), club counselor(s)
    - Host and Sponsoring District Governors
    - Host Rotary Club
    - Local Rotary Club (if crisis occurs while away from the host area)

### **OUTBOUND CRISIS PROCEDURE – for one or several students**

This guideline addresses an emergency involving a District 7505 student(s) hosted by a District overseas.

In the event someone is notified of a crisis such as death, serious injury, serious illness, natural or other disaster or other serious problem involving a District 7505 Outbound Student, the person who receives the information shall contact the **DCMO** immediately and provide the following details at a minimum:

1. Name student(s) involved.
2. Name of Sponsor Rotary Club in District 7505.
3. Name of Host Rotary Club(s) of student(s) involved, including Host District Number, if possible.
4. Name and contact information for the Responsible Officer for the overseas region where crisis is occurring and who should be contacted in this specific emergency.
5. Sufficient details involving the crisis.
6. Be sure to take a few moments to document and make notes of what happened (answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how as specifically as possible) and to outline next steps. Thinking through the plan of action before anything further is done will help to avoid problems later.

Upon notification of the crisis, the **DCMO** will immediately take over management of the crisis, including:

1. Make all necessary internal (within District) communications:

- Contact all members of the District Crisis Management Team and relay crisis information and status throughout the crisis.
  - Request any necessary assistance from team members relative to the crisis. This may include research or other procedures. The team should use the Rotary International “Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies” as a baseline.
  - Communication should also be extended to the current District Governor and all other members of the District 7505 Youth Exchange Committee not affected by the crisis.
2. Keep in contact with the Responsible Officer for the region where the crisis is occurring and work through the Responsible Officer to resolve the crisis.
  3. Others who may need to be informed and not necessarily identified previously above include:
    - Parents/Legal Guardians
    - Host family(ies), club counselor(s)
    - Host and Sponsoring District Governors
    - Host Rotary Club
    - Local Rotary Club (if crisis occurs while away from the host area)

### **POST CRISIS REPORTING AND WRAPUP**

The DCMO will determine when the crisis has ended and will notify the District Crisis Management Team. While the immediacy of the crisis may have passed, there remains a need for additional follow through.

Within one month after the crisis has ended, the District Crisis Management Team, along with others (if needed), will review the effectiveness of the District Crisis Management Plan. The team should determine what worked well and consider any improvements which may be necessary in the event of any future crisis. In addition, the DCMO, with the help of the Crisis Management Team, will write a report summarizing the incident and submit to the District Governor.

Any proposed/recommended changes to the Crisis Management process should be summarized and presented to the Rotary District 7505 (RYE) Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

## APPENDIX A

### **ROTARY INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH EXCHANGE EMERGENCIES**

Although they are rare, unfortunate emergency situations do occasionally arise during Youth Exchange activities. Preparation for any possibility is an essential part of a Youth Exchange program. How the student's family and the media perceive the emergency was handled will have a direct impact on the program. The following guidelines outline how to prepare in advance for a possible emergency, the individuals to contact should an emergency occur, and the steps to follow during an emergency.

#### **Tips for Emergency Preparedness**

- The District Inbound Counselor should have copies of the airline ticket and passport should the student be traveling or in case the student's documents are not accessible through the club counselor.
- The District Inbound Coordinator should obtain consent from the student's parents or legal guardians to reissue a student's passport in the event it is lost, stolen, or inaccessible at time of departure.
- The District Inbound Coordinator should share with the sponsoring Youth Exchange Officer the student's itinerary and know who will meet the student at the airport upon arrival.
- District 7505 will pay for the student to return to finish the exchange after being evacuated in the case of political or civil unrest.
- The District Inbound Coordinator and current host family should know details regarding all of the student's travel plans and should ascertain that these travel plans have been approved by the natural parents/legal guardians of the student, especially if the student is traveling to another city or country during the exchange.
- The student's parents should issue a written authorization letter (or powers of attorney) naming the host Rotarian counselor, host families, and another Rotarian of the host/receiving club (preferably the host club president), any of whom is to act for the parent in the event of injury or death. This is very important because most government departments and local authorities require it. Some districts have the parents/legal guardians sign a number of parental consent forms separate from the application form to ensure that each host family and counselor has a copy of the form. The letter should also authorize the incurring of:
  - Funeral expenses (cost of claiming body, embalming, casket, compliance with legal and government fees, and transportation of casket/body, cremation cost, etc.) to be reimbursed from the insurance policy;

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- Expenses of authorized persons (Rotarian counselor and/or host parent) to act on behalf of parent (transportation and hotel charges for travel to place of accident, etc.), to be reimbursed from the insurance policy. The handling of expenses is

important as not every host club can afford to incur such immediate expenses. The ability of the club or district to handle immediate costs can prevent a tragic situation from becoming worse. The host Rotarian is committed to treat the student as though he/she is his/her own child and will do everything a natural parent would do if faced with similar circumstances.

- However, if a host Rotarian has to spend a substantial amount of money for immediate needs, other Rotarians may be discouraged from becoming host parents and counselors in the future.

It is therefore recommended that District 7505 establish an emergency fund to cover immediate expenses in the event of a tragedy. The insurance money received will reimburse this fund. Many hosting districts require the students to have an emergency fund to assist in the event of an emergency.

**APPENDIX B**

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DISTRICT 7505**

This information should be updated any time positions change and reviewed at least annually for accuracy.

	Name	1Phone	2Phone	email
Rotary International	Carissa Coons	847-866-3421		Carissa.Coons@rotary.org
ESSEX	Rich Friedman	612-202-1995		richefriedman@yahoo.com
DCMO/Chair	Melanie Druziako	609-774-3671		madruziako@gmail.com
Youth Protection Officer	Doreen Goldberg	856-816-5368		goldberg32@gmail.com
Inbound Coordinator	Diane Rotondelli	732-740-7428		drotondelli@optonline.net
Outbound Coordinator	Jack Kammer	+1 609-408-2875		jtkammer@aol.com

## APPENDIX C

### **CLUB ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT IN CRISIS RESPONSE**

The Club plays an important role in responding to a crisis. Each club's RYE Committee will act as the Crisis Management Committee. Each committee member should be given a copy of the Crisis Management Protocol and all should be aware of the District Policies on Crisis Management.

When a tragic event occurs, things need to be done quickly. Tasks should be assigned to the various members of the club/district committee. The important thing is to document the crisis details and inform the DCMO immediately, so the DCMO can take over the management and handling of the crisis.

Suggested Club Crisis Management Team members are listed below. Your Club may choose to add other persons to your Committee as the need arises.

- Club Youth Exchange Officer (CYEO)
- Club Counselors (both inbound and outbound)
- Other Club Youth Exchange Committee members
- Club President
- Current Host Parents

#### Finances

The Club should work with the District Crisis Management Team to ensure payment for any expenses incurred are paid immediately. The DCMO should approve the expenses to be incurred. The District Youth Exchange Committee will support the Club, as long as the DCMO is involved in the decision to incur the expense.

The goal is to not add burden to the student's family in the midst of the crisis. The matters need to be handled and after the immediacy of the crisis situation has been resolved, the Club and District can work together to resolve the financial matters, such as pursuing insurance reimbursements, and requesting additional funds from the parents, or other suitable resolution.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **DEATH OF A STUDENT**

When a tragic event occurs, things need to be done quickly. Tasks should be assigned to the various members of the club/district emergency committee.

Procedures to follow when the death of a student occurs:

- Ascertain that the deceased is the student.
- Contact all of the individuals noted above for immediate internal or external communications
- Contact the student's Parents/Legal guardians. Obtain clear instructions (ideally written) concerning burial, cremation or return of body. Ask about memorial services and give consideration to the religion of the deceased.
- Check with local police for local regulations and obtain a copy of the police report. Reclaim the deceased's possessions, especially the passport.
- Check with the local hospital and mortuary for the claiming of the body and regarding an autopsy. Obtain the death certificate.
- Contact a local undertaker and embalmer. Ensure that the embalmer possesses an internationally recognized practice license so that the embalmed body may cross national borders. (This is to prevent the spread of disease.) Obtain the embalmer's certificate. Order a suitable casket and arrange transportation to student's home country, or arrange for burial or cremation, according to the parents' wishes.
- Obtain the "sealing certificate." For the casket to cross national borders, the inside must be metal-lined and sealed. Sealing must be officially witnessed, to prevent smuggling. In order for a sealed casket to leave the country, an export permit is required. For the sealed casket to enter the student's home country, an import permit is required. An established undertaker should be able to deal with these matters. The embassy can assist in obtaining the two permits.
- Appoint a reputable air-transport agent to airlift the casket to the student's home country. This is to ensure that all connecting flights are correctly scheduled without risk of the casket being accidentally off-loaded at an intermediate airport. The arrival flight details should be provided to the deceased's parents/guardians so they can make arrangements to receive the casket. Give copies of the death certificate, embalming certificate, casket sealing certificate, import and export permits, and passport to the transport company. These documents must accompany the casket on the airplane.
- Hold a memorial service for the student. Remember to write a complete report to your District Governor. Send copies to Rotary International, ESSEX, and to the student's Home District and Rotary Club.