

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT & PRIVACY GUIDELINES

When your club/district uses songs, poems, photographs, illustrations, charts, videos, or graphs in presentations, club/district websites, online, in newsletters, and other club/district publications, you must obtain a license or permission from the author (owner) prior to use. This includes any songs, photos, etc. you find on the Internet or created by a club member.

- If you cannot identify the copyright owner or you do not have permission from the owner, do not use the content.
- If you want to use content created by a club member, ask them to sign a License Agreement. Alternatively, look for reputable organizations that provide public copyright licenses (Creative Commons for example), open access images or royalty free licenses.
- Read the terms of use before purchasing the content and verify that the organization vets the content they license.
- Set up a process to track and store the licenses.



Paying a license fee to use an image is less costly than the costs of responding to a copyright infringement demand letter or defending a lawsuit. **Consult an attorney for assistance in determining copyright ownership and licensing.**

You may have heard others use the term “fair use.” Fair use allows limited use of copyrighted material without permission of the copyright owner for purposes such as criticism, parody, news reporting, education, and research. It is a defense to copyright infringement, and likely does not apply to a club’s activities, publications, and promotions.

If you are recording people, including beneficiaries, volunteers, or community members, or using a photograph, video or other recording that includes the image or any personal data of any recognizable person, under right of privacy and publicity laws and regulations, you must obtain written permission from each person (or the parent or guardian of any minor child or individual who lacks legal capacity) before using that photograph, video, or other recording. **Consult an attorney for assistance in drafting a model release / likeness release. Refer to RI’s best practices for creating promotional content, <https://my.rotary.org/en/what-you-need-know-about-creating-promotional-content>.**

If you have not yet done this, we urge your club/district to do the following:

- Review your club’s social media accounts and websites and delete any content including images or other media where you do not have the copyright owner’s permission. This includes bulletins, newsletters, and other documents and forms, even if they are 10+ years old.
- Contact claims@rotary.org immediately if your club receives a notice of alleged copyright infringement. The Program may provide coverage depending on the way the image or other media was used.

Going forward:

- Instead of lifting images or other media off the internet, use images or other media created by members of your club (first receive their permission) or use the [Rotary Brand Center](#).
- Never post images or other media without permission.
- Purchase images or other media online.
- Consult the United States Copyright Office’s [website](#).