

ROTARY CLUB OF DUNDAS

ABUSE, NEGLECT AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION PROTOCOL

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A Introduction

The work and mission of The Rotary Club of Dundas, in Rotary District 7090, brings its members and volunteers to be actively involved with persons within The Club and in our community including young people, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Our Club meetings and programs, and activities which may be part of Rotary District programs including Rotary Youth Leadership Award, Group Study Exchange, and Youth Exchange, are examples. As an organization, Rotary District 7090 and our Club are committed to protecting the interests of participants in Rotary activities.

It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners and other volunteers to protect vulnerable individuals with whom they come in contact through Rotary activities and to prevent any physical, sexual or emotional abuse, harassment, or neglect. Fulfilling this duty protects the individuals and enhances the interests of Rotary Clubs and Rotarians in their volunteer efforts to improve the quality of life in our communities. Further, Rotary's reputation is maintained and the risk of liability, including legal liability is minimized.

B Policy Statement

The culture of The Rotary Club of Dundas does not condone any form of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal or psychological abuse nor any form of neglect or harassment.

It is the responsibility of every Rotary Club member to safeguard the welfare of every person with whom s/he comes in contact during his/her activities as a Rotarian. Special attention is to be given to children, teens, the elderly, the disabled and other vulnerable persons. This includes the prevention of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, harassment and neglect.

This policy is intended to be in keeping with the laws of the Province of Ontario and of Canada.

C Purpose and Definitions

The purpose of this policy and protocol is:

- # to maintain an environment which is free from neglect, harassment and abuse;
- # to identify behaviours which are unacceptable;
- # to establish a mechanism for receiving complaints;
- # to establish a procedure for dealing with issues of neglect, harassment or abuse.

The following definitions are intended to assist all involved in understanding the nature of the concerns with which the protocol deals:

Physical Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraints.

Sexual Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, any unwanted touching, fondling, penetration and/or observations for sexual gratification, caressing of the groin area, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit, including pornography.

Emotional Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, a chronic attack on an individual's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoat, blaming.

Verbal Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.

Psychological Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, communication of an abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitive behaviour, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, creed, sexual preference or family dynamics.

Neglect is defined as, but not limited to, any behaviour that leads to a failure to provide services which are necessary such as withdrawing basic necessities as forms of punishment, failing to assess and respond to changes in health status and refusing or withdrawing physical or emotional support.

Harassment is defined as, but not limited to, any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.

D Guidelines on Prevention of Abuse, Neglect and Harassment

1. In accordance with their legal obligations, representatives of our Club will ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals who are involved in our Club or District programs, activities, and events are protected from abuse, harassment, and neglect.
2. Our Club programs will be delivered in an environment of reasonable safety.
3. Appropriate screening will occur to prevent contact with vulnerable participants in our Club or District programs and activities by individuals who are inappropriate or who are prohibited by law from working with such participants.
4. Where allegations of abuse, harassment, or neglect or other risks of harm are made, prompt notification and reporting to the appropriate individuals and authorities will occur.

E Guidelines on Prevention of Harassment and Sexual Harassment

1. The Club individually and as part of the District will ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals involved in our or Rotary District 7090 programs including Rotarians themselves are not subject to harassment, which includes conduct that erodes the dignity of the individual, particularly based on the individual's colour, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include remarks and jokes that are unwelcome or reasonably could be expected to be unwelcome; displaying or distributing racist, pornographic or other offensive material; practical jokes based on race, sex, or other prohibited grounds; verbal abuse or threats; inappropriate or offensive gestures; and physical assault.
2. In accordance with its legal obligations, the Club will ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals who are involved in Club or District activities are protected from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes making sexist jokes; leering; displaying sexually offensive material; using sexually degrading words to describe a person; making sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures; making unwelcome enquiries or comments about a person's sex life; making unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; requests for sexual favours; unwanted touching; verbal abuse or threats; and sexual assault.

F Scope

These guidelines apply to all members of the Club and to volunteers who are, or wish to become, involved in the Club or District programs, and apply to all adults over the age of 18 years who reside in the home of a host family.

G Screening of Members and Volunteers

Prior to joining in membership of The Rotary Club of Dundas all prospective new members must complete the Club's Abuse, Neglect and Harassment Prevention Declaration and Pledge Form.

The presentation of this Protocol is, and will be, an integral part the process for the introduction of a new member to the Club. Copies of the Protocol, including the Declaration and Pledge form, will be available from the Club Secretary.

All program volunteers must also complete the said form as well as any other reference, police or criminal record checks that may be necessary from time to time if the activity is warranted to require such screening as determined by the Club Counselor and Board of Directors. Such activity might be a children's camp or a teen event.

Accordingly, the Club Abuse, Neglect and Harassment Prevention Counselor shall determine that members and volunteers include in their planning provisions the safe transport from place to place and the minimization of situations where members and volunteers are alone in the company of minor and/or vulnerable individuals (e.g. driving youth to RYLA) . Risk assessments should be done in relation to activities including such factors as age and level of vulnerability, group size, location and visibility, type of activity, supervision and monitoring, nature of relationship, physical safety etc. (See Risk Assessment Chart - Appendix B). It is necessary to consider everyone involved in the activity or event. This will include, for example, all members, partners, Rotaractors, Interactors, and all volunteers.

Prior to participation in District sponsored programs where screening is required, Rotarians, non-Rotarian volunteers and paid staff must complete the District 7090 Volunteer Assessment Form and other such screening as is required by The District.

H Clarity of Roles

Depending on the nature of the event and the extent of involvement, the Club Board or its representative, under the guidance of The Counselor, will provide everyone involved a description of their role and the tasks involved when dealing with vulnerable individuals. Such a description could identify the risks and opportunities to minimize risks. A copy of the Abuse, Neglect and Harassment Prevention Protocol could also be provided.

Rotary event supervisors should help ensure the protection of vulnerable individuals and should receive and understand the Abuse, Neglect and Harassment Prevention Policy. In the event of suspected problems, intervention by the supervisor must be taken, followed by appropriate reporting and follow-up with the Club Counselor.

I Abuse, Neglect & Harassment Prevention Counselor - Duties

1. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Counselor to be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this Protocol, and for the investigation of complaints. Preferably, that Counselor will have experience in:

- working with people at risk (such as children, the elderly, and people with disabilities) either in a professional capacity or as an experienced volunteer;
- legal/human rights;
- human resources.

2. The term of Counselor should be 3 years, if possible, and renewable.
3. The Counselor will maintain strict confidentiality in compliance with provincial and federal legislation and this Protocol.
4. The Counselor will work with those named in this Protocol to inform each and all of their obligation under this policy, of relevant legislation, and to ensure that appropriate training is made available as required.
5. The Counselor shall be the first point of contact should any Director, member or volunteer receive a complaint of abuse, harassment or neglect, and is responsible for ensuring that such complaints are dealt with in accordance with applicable law and in accordance with this Protocol, and that the interests of the affected person(s) are protected to the extent possible. The detailed procedure for handling complaints is found within this Protocol.
6. The Counselor may, while respecting confidence, confer with one or more Directors of the Board, professionals, or others with expertise in the area of the complaint at her/his discretion.
7. The Counselor shall report annually to The Board of Directors on his/her activities in this area of responsibility. That report should include the number, by general category, of offences and/or claims received, the number acted upon, and the nature of all training and promotion directed at the prevention and reporting of abuse, neglect and harassment.
8. The Counsellor shall maintain the file of signed Declarations and Pledges and all other documentation as required under this Protocol.

J Procedure for Dealing with Claims, Disclosure or Discovery of Abuse:

The objective under this procedure is to encourage the reporting of evidence of abuse, neglect or harassment and to ensure prompt and complete investigation with appropriate options for resolution of the complaint depending on the specific facts of the situation.

(a) The responsibility of all members, staff and volunteers:

1. All Rotary members and volunteers have a responsibility to report anything that concerns them about the personal security of others, and particularly of vulnerable persons, involved in the operation and programs of The Rotary Club of Dundas.
2. All will promote an attitude that reporting suspicions and/or taking action is the right thing to do and that no reprisal will occur.
3. Members and volunteers should not attempt to deal with a problem alone but rather should report complaints, allegations or suspicions to the Abuse, Neglect & Harassment Prevention Counselor.
4. Should anyone concerned be unsatisfied with the promptness or appropriateness of the handling of a complaint by the Counselor, a complaint shall be made to the President of the Club or to another Officer should the President be the object of the complaint.

(b) The responsibility of the Abuse, Neglect & Harassment Prevention Counselor:

1. The Counselor will determine further steps to be followed including the need and/or wisdom of reporting to authorities if criminal activity is suspected.
2. The Counselor will be primarily responsible to investigate all complaints and will meet

with the complainant, the afflicted, the alleged perpetrator, and with witnesses in an interview format.

3. A record of all interviews will be maintained on file by the Counselor as long as needed and for a minimum of six months beyond the date of her/his formal annual report to the Board of Directors.

4. Complaints regarding conduct by individuals at a meeting or event, such as jokes or comments in poor taste, where a number of people were witnesses may be dealt with through private conversation with the offender and may be excluded from the more formal investigation and recording procedure.

5. After the interview with the complainant, the Counselor shall draft a summary of the allegation and secure the complainant's signature before proceeding.

6. Guidelines for an interview:

- # conduct interviews in private settings
- # avoid physical intimidation
- # pay attention to the interviewee's level of stress and take measures to alleviate it
- # ask non-hostile, non-confrontational, non-accusatory questions
- # assure confidentiality and avoid irrelevant interrogation
- # begin broadly then move into specifics as required
- # be thorough - cover "who, what, when, where, and why"
- # instruct interviewees not to discuss the investigation or their interview with anyone

7. Under normal circumstances, the order of interviews will be complainant, victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses.

8. Prepare an investigation report listing the allegation, the evidence for and against the allegation, summarize findings of fact, and recommend specific actions based on the Protocol.

9. The Counselor shall present her/his findings and recommendations to the President of the Club or the designate. Together they shall resolve action to be taken. If there is a suspicion of criminal activity, legal authorities shall be informed.

10. Inform the alleged offender in writing: include the allegation, the evidence, the findings, and the intended actions. Follow up with a meeting with the offender, the Counselor and the President, allowing a hearing, before action is taken.

11. Inform the complainant, the alleged victim, and the alleged offender, in separate memos, of the final results of the investigation. Advise the complainant and the alleged victim that the Counselor has investigated the claim and come to a resolution, in collaboration with the President. Advise them that appropriate remedial action has been taken, or that the claim could not be substantiated and the investigation is complete.

12. Potential Disciplines:

- # request a change of behaviour
- # request the offender to attend a training course
- # restrict the offender from activities where the offence might be repeated
- # ban the offender from any contact or participation in any Rotary events or activities

13. Appeal may be made to an Officer of the Board of Directors of The Rotary Club of Dundas.

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