



Youth Protection Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International and District 5050 strive to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

The Rotary District 5050 Youth Protection Policy applies to District and club activities that involve minors. This includes Y.E.S. (Youth Engaged in Service), Interact, and Y.A.I.L. (Youth Adventures in Leadership) programs. District 5050's Youth Exchange Program (RYE) has a separate Youth Protection Policy (the RYE YPP). Where that policy conflicts with this policy, the RYE YPP controls. Where the RYE YPP is silent, this policy controls.

Minors are usually defined as those less than 18 years of age; however, since some youth exchange students as well as some Interactors may be slightly older, they are treated as minors in Rotary's efforts to protect youth. Rotaractors are college age or older and are not included as minors and are not covered in Rotary's Youth Protection Policy.

In protecting our youth, there is no one process that guarantees safety. It's the combination of deterrence measures that minimizes risk.

DISTRICT 5050 Youth Protection Policy

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1. Definitions

Casual Contact: Persons having casual contact with a youth not in the youth exchange program are persons who may have brief contact with youth as part of a club sponsored event. Casual contact must be infrequent so that a regular pattern is not developed. Further, casual contact must take place in a group setting in a public place and there must be no one-to-one contact between the adult and the youth. There must be no reasonably foreseeable risk of abuse or harassment, verbal or otherwise. Persons having this type of casual contact with youth are not required to be screened.

Crisis Management Team: This refers to a team of district personnel that is activated by the District Youth Protection Officer upon receipt of an allegation of abuse or harassment. The makeup of the team is determined by the status of the youth making the allegation, but will include the following: District Governor, District Youth Protection Officer, District Youth Services Chair, and Club President.

Physical Abuse: This refers to any assaultive behavior and includes any physical offense that would be criminal.

Sexual Abuse: This refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a youth or forcing or encouraging said persons to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age. This includes non-touching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a youth sexual or pornographic material. This includes any sexual offense that would be criminal.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Some examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person or other vulnerable person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- References to a youth or other vulnerable person's body or physical maturity in a sexual way;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, media or drawings;
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as "brushing" or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

Volunteer: any adult involved with Rotary Youth Program activities who has direct interactions, supervised or unsupervised, with youth. A volunteer does not include those adults who have casual contact with youth.

Youth: This means any minor (less than 18 years of age) or any young adult participating in RYE, YES, YAIL, or Interact (or any other youth program except Rotaract).

Youth Exchange (RYE) Rotary Youth Exchange facilitates long-term and short-term cross cultural exchange opportunities for youth. Youth reside with host families and, in the long-term exchange program, attend high school in their host community. To more specifically address the youth protection needs of these youth, District 5050 has adopted a separate Youth Protection Policy (the "RYE YPP").

The RYE YPP is available on the District 5050 RYE website. Where that policy conflicts with this policy, that policy controls. Where that policy is silent, this policy controls.

Youth Protection Officer - District: There will be two District Youth Protection Officers – one appointed from one of the American clubs in the District and one appointed from one of the Canadian clubs in the District. Contact information for these Officers can be located on the District 5050 website under the District Organization Chart.

Youth Services Chair: Every club in the district will appoint a Club Youth Services Chair. This person ensures compliance with this policy, including ensuring that any criminal history checks are performed on any volunteer. This person will be aware of the results of the criminal history checks and will relay the information only as necessary. Additionally, this person must under the same criminal history checks and training as a volunteer.

2. **Volunteer Screening & Criminal History Checks**

All volunteers must be committed to the safety and security of youth. All volunteers must demonstrate good judgment and in addition to the requirements herein, must ensure that youth for whom they are responsible are safe from harassment and other injurious behavior from others around them. This includes keeping youth safe from those who may be drinking alcohol or ingesting other substances that may impair judgment or ability to drive.

All volunteers must:

- Undergo a criminal history check a minimum of every two years (see Appendix A),
- Meet Rotary International's eligibility requirements as set forth in the Rotary Code of Policies, and
- Participate in training. Training is provided via an emailed link to the Youth Protection Awareness training. This link will be sent by either the Youth Protection Officer or the Club President.

Criminal History Checks

A person who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual or physical abuse or harassment may not be a volunteer.

Automatically disqualifying criminal convictions include:

- Any felony (American) or Indictable Offense (Canadian) that involves assault, threats, sexual offending, or domestic violence;
- Any felony or Indictable Offense that has occurred within the prior ten years;
- Any other criminal conviction for crimes involving assault, threats, sexual offending, or domestic violence;
- Any offense involving driving or being in physical control of a vehicle when under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when the volunteer would be responsible for transportation of youth.

Other convictions/findings not specifically enumerated herein may also disqualify an applicant depending on the age of the conviction, the nature of the conviction, and whether the applicant has remained crime-free for at least ten years in the community.

Criminal History Checks, procedure:

Criminal history checks for RYE will be conducted pursuant to the policies and procedures of RYE. For criminal history checks of all other volunteers, the following procedure must be adhered to.

For an American Club, if a potential volunteer has been a resident of the State of Washington for the preceding ten (10) continuous years and a Club member for the preceding five (5) years, then the criminal history check will be through WATCH (a statewide check). Otherwise, the criminal history check must be through INTELLICORP (a nationwide check). There is a nominal fee to be borne by the potential volunteer for an INTELLICORP check.

For an American Club, the Club Youth Services Chair will send a request for a criminal history check to the American District Youth Protection Officer. If the check is through WATCH, then the club will provide the name and date of birth of the potential volunteer to the District Youth Protection Officer. The American District Youth Protection Officer will cause the criminal history check to be conducted. If the check is through INTELLICORP, then, upon proper request from the club, the District Youth Protection Officer will provide a link to the potential volunteer. The potential volunteer will provide information to INTELLICORP via this link and then INTELLICORP will conduct the criminal background check and provide the results to the District Youth Protection Officer. For good cause, an American Club may require a Canadian history check. If the check is through WATCH, the District Youth Protection Officer will additionally check the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Registry. The District Youth Protection Officer will make a recommendation to the Club based on the criminal history check by completing and forwarding the Appendix F. The recommendation will be maintained with the other background check records.

For a Canadian Club, the Club Youth Services Chair will have the potential volunteer obtain his/her criminal history from the local RCMP office (or municipal police agency). The volunteer will provide the results of the criminal history check to the Club Youth Services Chair. If the volunteer has zero criminal history, then the Club Youth Services Chair will keep this record. If the volunteer has any sort of criminal history at all, then the Club Youth Services Chair will forward the criminal history results to the District Youth Protection Officer. For good cause, the Canadian Club may require an American history check. Where criminal history results have been forwarded to the Canadian District Youth Protection Officer, the District Youth Protection Officer will make a recommendation to the Club based on the criminal history check by completing and forwarding the Appendix F. The recommendation will be maintained with the other background check records.

If, after consultation with each other, the Club is not in agreement with the District Youth Protection Officer's recommendation that a volunteer applicant should not be accepted based on the criminal history, then the Crisis Management Team will review the matter and make the final determination.

If a potential volunteer is not acceptable after being screened, then the Club Youth Services Chair shall notify the potential volunteer, the District Youth Protection Officer, the Club President, and the District Governor.

A potential volunteer who is not cleared to be a volunteer may appeal to the District Governor with

review by the Crisis Management Team. The potential volunteer may challenge the results of a background check, but must do so himself or herself by direct contact with the screening company or agency at his or her own expense. The potential volunteer may point to extenuating circumstances such as passage of time since the conviction. The potential volunteer may provide additional information if he or she believes that s/he has been incorrectly identified in a criminal history check.

Maintenance of Records:

Records relating to criminal history checks and training will be maintained in the WESSEX system, as allowed by law. Such records obtained by a club will be scanned and sent to the District Youth Protection Officer for uploading into that system. Where not permitted by law, then the records will be maintained by the volunteer's home club.

3. Response to an Allegation of Physical or Sexual Abuse

The immediate response to any allegation of abuse is to ensure the safety and protection of the reporting youth. This means removing the youth from the physical proximity of the alleged offender and ensuring all contact between the offender and youth ceases. Follow-through procedures must be followed as set forth in Appendix D.

4. Club Compliance

The District Youth Protection Officer and District Governor will monitor all participating clubs within the District and ensure that they comply with Rotary International guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. **All** District 5050 clubs must annually certify that they are in compliance with this Youth Protection Policy. Certification will be made by using the form in Appendix C and forwarding the form to the District Governor.

If a club is not compliant with this Policy, the District Governor will notify the District Youth Protection Officer and the Club Youth Services Chair and the District Governor and order the cessation of any activities involving youth until compliance is achieved. The District Youth Protection Officer will work with the noncompliant club's President and the District Governor to restore compliance with this Policy.

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APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES FOR CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

Who requires a criminal history and sex offender registry check?

Any Club Youth Services Chair and any volunteer as defined in these guidelines.

When should such checks be done?

The Club Youth Services Chair must complete these checks upon appointment to the position. These checks MUST be completed before applicant acts as a volunteer as defined in this policy.

How often does someone involved in a Rotary youth program need to have a criminal history and sex offender registry check completed?

Checks must be performed every two years.

Is there a cost to get a criminal history check done?

There is no cost to the volunteer for a Washington State Patrol WATCH or Department of Justice National Sex Offender Registry check. There is no cost to the volunteer for an RCMP or Canadian municipal agency check. There is a nominal fee for an INTELLICORP check.

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APPENDIX B: CLUB CHECKLIST FOR YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMS

To participate in Rotary Youth Services programs, a club must:

- Complete, sign and return the attached compliance statement that the club is operating its Youth Services Programs in accordance with District 5050 and RI policies;
- Appoint a Club Youth Services Chair to ensure that all guidelines for participation in Rotary youth services programs are followed and to maintain records of applications and supporting documentation as outlined in this policy;
- Follow the procedures outlined in this Policy for reporting any allegations;
- Ensure that the Youth Services Chair and/or the President Elect attends the District 5050 Youth Protection Training session at the annual District Assembly every three years unless the trained person has left the club or is no longer willing or able to meet the requirements. In this case, a new person/s must attend the next available training;
- Ensure that the youth services volunteer who attends the District 5050 Youth Protection Training session provides other club youth services volunteers with the information from the training session.

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APPENDIX C: CLUB COMPLIANCE FORM

This form must be completed **annually by July 15th by all District 5050 clubs.**

The Rotary Club of _____

Acknowledges receipt and review of the following information:

- District 5050 Rotary Youth Protection Policy (available on the District 5050 website under the Youth Service tab)
- Rotary District 5050 Club Checklist for Youth Services Programs – Appendix B to the District 5050 Rotary Youth Protection Policy

Confirms that this Rotary Club is operating any Youth Services Programs in accordance with Rotary International and District 5050's policies and guidelines;

Has adopted the District 5050 Youth Protection Policy; and

Conducts or will conduct any or all of the following Youth Exchange/Youth Services activities (check all that are applicable).

Youth Exchange
 YAIL
 Interact
 Y.E.S.
 None
 Other _____

PLEASE EXPLAIN - ATTACH EXTRA SHEET IF NEEDED

Print Club President's or President Elect's name, email and phone number:

Print Club Youth Services Chair's name, email, and phone number: _____

Club President's (Elect) Signature _____ Date: _____

Return to: **District Governor**

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APPENDIX D: ABUSE ALLEGATION-RESPONSE

Any adult to whom the youth alleges physical or sexual abuse will:

1. Ensure that the youth has been removed from, and has no contact with, the alleged offender. If the youth is staying with a host family and the alleged offender is in the host family household, then the adult to whom the youth discloses abuse will first attempt to place the youth with another host family who previously hosted the youth or was slated to host the youth in the future. If this option is not available then the youth will be placed on an emergency basis with the student's RYE Counselor or Youth Exchange Officer.
2. Notify the local law enforcement agency, the Club Youth Services Chair and the District Youth Protection Officer.
3. Keep a written record of the conversation with the youth as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Do not interrogate the youth but use the youth's words and record only what has been told to you.

The **District Youth Protection Officer** will:

1. Notify the Crisis Management Team and the District Governor. Where the incident involves a youth exchange student, notify the District Youth Exchange Chair.
2. Notify the youth's parents or legal guardians.
3. Ensure the youth receives immediate support services, including medical, counseling, and advocacy services.

The **Crisis Management Team** will:

Recommend any limitations on the accused person in regard to interaction with youth for consideration by the District Governor.

At the conclusion of any investigation, the team will convene and review the entire incident in regard to the extent that district policies were followed and any lessons learned. Based on their review, the team will recommend any necessary changes to the District Policy, screening process, or training.

The **District Governor** will:

1. Direct the person accused of abuse to have no further contact with the youth.
2. Prohibit a non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in abuse of a youth from working with youth in any Rotary context.
4. Notify Rotary International of any potential criminal investigation and serious incidents.
5. Notify the insurance carrier.

The **Parent Club** of any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in abuse of a youth shall terminate the membership of the Rotarian

Do not tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both the youth and the accused during the investigation.

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APPENDIX E: DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

The District Youth Protection Officer (YPO) shall be a Rotarian in good standing in District 5050. Ideally, he or she should be a professional with training in abuse and harassment prevention and youth protection issues. District 5050 will have two District YPOs: one from an American Club and one from a Canadian Club. Contact information for these Officers can be located on the District 5050 website under the District Organization Chart.

This appointment is for three years.

Duties:

1. Serve as co-chairs of the District Youth Protection committee and Crisis Management Team.
2. Maintain, supervise, and increase awareness of the District Youth Protection Policies.
3. Require that clubs and committees that participate in Rotary sponsored activities involving protected persons follow the District 5050 policies for abuse and harassment and the reporting guidelines for such allegations and monitor such compliance.
4. Report to the District Governor regarding reported incidents of possible abuse or harassment.
5. Where appropriate, assure that cases of abuse are reported to the proper law enforcement agency.
6. Provide District training regarding this policy.
7. Cause background checks to be performed as required by this policy.
8. Maintain confidentiality other than the disclosures required by this policy.

