



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 5100 Youth Protection Policy



I. Policy

A. Volunteer Selection and Screening

All volunteers interested in participating in any District Youth Service Program shall meet, understand, and comply with this policy for working with youth participating in such programs.

B. Training

District 5100 shall provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all District Youth Service Program Volunteers. Training sessions shall be provided in accordance with established training policies and guidelines. In addition, youth participating in District Youth Service Programs shall be made aware of channels for reporting inappropriate behavior.

C. Allegation Reporting

District 5100 is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of all District Youth Service Program participants. District 5100 shall not tolerate any abuse or harassment of program participants. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously.

D. Investigation

District 5100 shall investigate each allegation of abuse and harassment thoroughly and in a timely fashion. District 5100 shall cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services agencies, and legal investigation and shall only conduct its own independent investigation such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

E. Club Compliance

All Rotary Clubs, Rotarians, and Non-Rotarian volunteers within District 5100 that participate in District Youth Services Programs shall comply with the District Youth Protection Policies and Procedures.

II. Procedures

A. Definitions

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL:

Rotary International (RI) is the association of Rotary clubs throughout the world. Rotary is an organization of business, professional, and community leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. (Manual of Procedure, 2007, Pg. 57)

DISTRICT 5100:

Rotary District 5100 is a geographical area in which Rotary clubs are linked administrative purposes. The activities and organization of a Rotary district exist solely to help the individual Rotary club advance the Object of Rotary. (Manual of Procedure, 2007, Pg. 27)

ROTARY CLUB:

A Rotary club is a member of Rotary International organized and existing in accordance with the RI Constitution and Bylaws. (Manual of Procedure, 2007, Pg. 3)

VOLUNTEER:

Any adult involved with a District Youth Service Program who has regular interaction with youth, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to: District Interact Committee members, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian Youth Exchange counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners. For the purposes of this policy the definition of Volunteer shall not include adults who will have only casual or occasional (group) interactions with youth; and friends and acquaintances of host families who may provide occasional transportation to and from events or school.

YOUTH:

Any person legally considered a minor in the state having legal jurisdiction or a young person who is a participant in a District Youth Service Program where the majority of the participants are legally considered to be minors.

ABUSE:

Abuse includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse toward youth. Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit sexual acts with a youth, or forcing or encouraging a youth to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex. In addition, sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to, non-touching offenses, indecent exposure or exposing a youth to sexual or pornographic material.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

DISTRICT YOUTH SERVICE PROGRAMS:

All district programs serving youth including, but not limited to Youth Exchange and Interact.

YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE:

The District Governor may appoint a group of Rotarians to serve as members of Youth Protection Policy Compliance Committee and a committee chair. The committee, if appointed, is charged with insuring that clubs and volunteers participating in District Youth Services Programs are in compliance with training and background check requirements of this policy, and reviewing and recommending changes to the Youth Protection Policy at the request of the District Governor.. The chair of the committee shall coordinate this responsibility with the Youth Protection Officer and report any compliance omissions to the Youth Protection Officer and the District Governor. The committee shall

YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER:

The District Governor shall appoint a Rotarian to serve as the District Youth Protection Officer (YPO). The Youth Protection Officer is responsible for coordinating background checks on Volunteers involved with District Youth Service Programs. The appointee and the Youth Protection Compliance Committee are responsible for coordinating compliance with this District Youth Protection Policy and Procedures. In the absence of a Youth Protective Officer or the inability of Youth Protective Officer to perform those duties, the District Governor of District 5100 may appoint an acting Youth Protective Officer to perform any duties required of the Youth Protective Officer under this Policy and Procedures.

B. District 5100 Compliance

1. District 5100 shall provide for the maintenance all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for Volunteers working with District Youth Service Programs in perpetuity.
2. District 5100 shall provide for secure storage of the personal information of all Volunteers submitted through the background check process.
3. In the event a volunteer needs a referral to local assistance services in their area (i.e. rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc) they should contact the Youth Protection Officer directly.
4. District 5100 shall ensure youth reporting abuse or sexual harassment receive appropriate support and counsel.

5. District 5100 shall report all criminal allegations relating to any District Youth Service Program activity to RI within 72 hours of notice of such allegation.
6. The District Governor-Elect shall evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedure before taking office as District Governor on July 1.

C. Club Compliance

All Rotary Clubs that participate in Youth Exchange shall submit a District Youth Protection Compliance Certification to the District Youth Protective Officer confirming that the club will comply with the District Youth Protection Policy as stated in the document titled "Youth Protection Policy Requirements and Responsibilities."

D. District Committee Chair Compliance

All district committees that provide youth services shall submit a District Youth Protection Compliance Certification to the District Youth Protective Officer confirming that the committee will comply with the District Youth Protection Policy as stated in the document titled "Youth Protection Policy Requirements and Responsibilities."

E. Volunteer Screening and Selection

1. Volunteers are required to submit an application:
 - a. The following volunteers shall complete an application to participate in District Youth Services Programs:
 - i. All adult residents of a host family home;
 - ii. Club and District Youth Exchange Program Chairpersons and committee persons;
 - iii. Youth Exchange Program Counselors;
 - iv. The Youth Protection Officer;
 - v. Various other Rotarians and Non-Rotarians that regularly host, chaperone, or transport Youths for activities or outings; and
 - vi. All others determined by the District Governor, based on their regular contact with youth involved in District Youth Service Programs, should be included in the background check process.
 - b. Application Form shall include:
 - i. District 5100 Youth Protection Policy Youth Volunteer Affidavit or other form approved by the District Governor;
 - ii. A copy of the program rules and requirements for the District Youth Services Program for which the volunteer is applying to participate; and
 - iii. A copy of this Youth Protection Policy and Procedure.
 - c. Club Presidents and District Youth Service Program Committee Chairpersons shall ensure that the completed Application forms are submitted to the Youth Protective Officer for processing and approved prior to the volunteer participating in the program.

2. Volunteer screening process:
 - a. Volunteers for Youth Service Programs will be interviewed to determine their suitability to work with youth.
 - b. Volunteers identified in E. 1 (a) shall submit to a background check.
 - c. Volunteers shall have background checks completed at least once every 3 years or as required by Rotary International or by state or federal government.
3. Screening Costs: The Club, District Committee, or District Committee member shall remit, with each Youth Volunteer Affidavit, the prescribed fee for processing each background check.

F. Background Checks

1. Club and District Committee responsibility for submitting background check affidavits:
 - a. All District 5100 Rotary Clubs shall obtain or ensure submission of a completed Youth Volunteer Affidavit form from each adult volunteer involved in the Youth Exchange Program, who are required under this Policy and Procedure to have a background check;
 - b. Each District Youth Service Program Committee Chairpersons shall obtain or ensure submission of a completed Youth Volunteer Affidavit form from each District Youth Service Program Committee member.
2. Background Check processing:
 - a. If a volunteer applicant has a record of any of the following the volunteer applicant shall be determined to **not meet** the District 5100 criteria to serve as a volunteer with a District Youth Service Program:
 - i. any active warrants;
 - ii. any active restraining orders;
 - iii. are registered as a sex offender;
 - iv. any felony conviction;
 - v. any sex offense conviction;
 - vi. any controlled substance conviction within the last 10 years; or
 - vii. any three (3) or more convictions for any crime within the last 10 years.
 - b. The check will be conducted in a manner that will provide District 5100 with a simple statement indicating the volunteer applicant either meets or does not meet the criteria specified in this Policy and Procedure. Any record matching one or more of the criteria specified in subsection 2 (a) will result in a determination that the applicant does not meet the criteria to participate as a volunteer in a District Youth Service Program.
 - c. District 5100 may contract with an independent company to conduct criminal background checks and maintain the background check records for District 5100 Volunteers. The provider must obtain its information from a government source.
 - d. The Youth Protection Officer will provide written notice to the Club President or District Committee Chair of the club or committee from which the Volunteer Application originated, and the Volunteer applicant that the Volunteer applicant

has been declined for service as a Volunteer in a District Youth Service Program. The Volunteer submitting the application may request information as to who to contact for an explanation and how to appeal the decision.

G. Training

1. District 5100 shall provide Abuse and Sexual Harassment awareness training to all District Youth Service Program Volunteers. Training sessions shall be provided in accordance with the district's established training policies and guidelines. In addition, youth participating in District Youth Service Programs shall be made aware of channels for reporting inappropriate behavior.
2. District 5100 shall:
 - a. Assign the responsibility of coordinating volunteer training sessions to the Youth Protection Officer, who will coordinate with the District Trainer to schedule sessions at Club Officer and Member Training Assembly.
 - b. Sponsor semi-annual training sessions (or annually during the Club Officer and Member Training Assembly) and provide a training program available online which shall be certified by the District or administered by the Clubs, which shall be accepted upon certification by the Club.
 - c. Maintain training session attendance records of District Youth Service Program Volunteers to ensure compliance.
3. District Youth Service Program Volunteers shall attend a minimum of one training session per year either sponsored by District 5100 or a Rotary Club.

4. Training Curriculum:

The goal of the training shall be to acquaint volunteers with their responsibilities under this Youth Protection Policy and Procedure. Volunteers are not expected to learn the nuances of identifying a child molester or abuser nor are they expected to learn symptoms of child abuse or neglect. Volunteers are not to be trained to be "watch dogs."

Curriculum shall include, at a minimum:

- a. A copy of the District 5100 Youth Protection Policy and Procedure; and
- b. A review of the components of the District 5100 Youth Protection Policy and Procedure.

H. Allegation Reporting

1. Any adult to whom a Youth reports an incident of Abuse or Sexual Harassment is responsible for following this Allegation Reporting Procedure.
 - a. When receiving the report from a youth:
 - i. *Listen attentively and stay calm.* Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
 - ii. *Assure privacy but not confidentiality.* Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other youth.

iii. *Get the facts, but don't interrogate.* Ask the youth questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the youth that she/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions. Remember your responsibility is to report the youth's story to the proper authorities.

iv. *Be non-judgmental and reassure the youth.* Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the youth. Assure the youth that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.

v. *Make a written record of the meeting.* Keep a written report of the conversation with the youth as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the youth's words, and record only what has been told to you.

b. Protect the youth:

Ensure the safety and well-being of the youth. Remove the youth from the situation immediately and all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Give reassurance that this is for the youth's own safety and is not a punishment.

c. Do not Challenge the Alleged Offender:

The alleged offender should not be contacted by the adult to whom the youth made the allegation.

d. Report to Appropriate Law Enforcement Authorities:

Immediately report all cases of child abuse or harassment to the appropriate police department. In either Oregon or Washington you may contact the police or sheriff's office in the city or county where the alleged abuse occurred; or (i) in Oregon, you may contact the Oregon State Police at 1-800-452-7888 or 503-375-3555 (in the Salem area); (ii) in Washington, you may contact the Washington State Child Protective Services at 1-800-866-ENDHARM.

e. Report to Appropriate District and Club Officials:

Immediately after reporting the child abuse or harassment to the police, notify the District 5100 Youth Protective Officer, and the local Club President.

2. The Youth Protection Officer shall immediately notify the District Governor and Chairperson of the committee having responsibility for the youth. The reporting Rotarian shall provide the responding police officer's name to the Youth Protection Officer. The Chairperson may advise the Committee Counselor responsible for the youth. If the allegation involved any of these Rotarians, the notification to that person will not be made.

3. The District Governor shall notify Rotary International with 72 hours of the reported child abuse or harassment. In the absence of the District Governor, or if that officer is involved, the District Youth Protective Officer will notify Rotary International within the prescribed time.

I. Confidentiality

Care shall be taken to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation. Do not tell anyone about the report other than those required by this policy and procedure.

J. Investigation of Allegations

The Youth Protection Officer (YPO) shall ensure that the following steps are taken immediately following a child abuse or harassment report:

- a. The adult to whom the youth reports the abuse should follow this allegation reporting procedure;
- b. Confirm that the youth has been removed from the situation immediately and all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser has been suspended;
- c. Contact the law enforcement agency receiving the report to verify the report was made as required and determine what the District can do to assist;
- d. If the law enforcement agency is not going to investigate, the YPO shall arrange for a qualified investigator to conduct an independent investigation into the allegations. Not all allegations of inappropriate behavior may be criminal. Nevertheless, the youth's safety shall always be our top priority;
- e. If the YPO conducts an independent investigation in lieu of a police investigation, a complete written report will be forwarded to the attorney for District 5100. During the investigation the YPO will be responsible to keep the attorney for District 5100 apprised of the status of the investigation. The attorney for District 5100 will be responsible for providing appropriate information and counsel to the District Governor and Club President;
- f. Ensure the youth receives support services;
- g. Offer the youth an independent counselor to represent the interests of the youth. Such services may be available through the local school district, police department, or crime victim advocates;
- h. The District Governor or his designee shall contact the youth's parents or legal guardian. If away from home, provide the youth with the option of either staying in country or returning home. If the youth wishes to return home the law enforcement organization investigating the accusation should be contacted and given an opportunity to obtain investigative information;
- i. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with the specific youth and other youth while investigations are being conducted; and
- j. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.

K. Responding to the needs of the Youth

It is important to provide a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the youth after an allegation report. The youth is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the host family or club. After a report of harassment or abuse, youth may or may not want to remain in the program. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with the hosting/local Rotary club

depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a youth who is away from home may wish to remain in country, but change to a different host club. Whenever possible, the District Committee Chair should attempt to accommodate the youth's wishes in this area. It may be difficult for club members and host families to understand how the youth is feeling, but it would be helpful for the youth to know that the club remains a support for them. Club members and host families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the Youth of their support at all times.

L. Communication within the Club concerning allegations

Sharing information concerning the allegation with club members should only occur with those having a need to know. When addressing an allegation of child abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of the youth. Club members should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any District or criminal investigations. Club members should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigations. Comments made about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers do not support our statement of conduct or Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

M. Program Evaluation and Review

Each District 5100 Youth Service Program Committee Chair shall annually evaluate their Youth Service Program in writing to ensure program compliance and effectiveness.