



Rotary International District 5960, Inc. Youth Protection Policy

Protecting Youth We Cherish, Your Rotary Club and You

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International District 5960, Inc. (herein the “District”) is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, spouses or partners of Rotarians, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the abuse or neglect of youth with whom they come into contact in Rotary Youth activities.

2. Definitions

VOLUNTEER: Any adult (any person 18 years old or older) involved with any Rotary Youth activity who has incidental interaction with youth, either supervised or unsupervised.

CERTIFIED VOLUNTEER: A Certified Volunteer is a Volunteer who has significant interaction with youth and has been certified by the District Youth Protection Officer pursuant to procedures in Paragraph 3 below.

YOUTH: Those young people who are involved with any Rotary Youth activity as a participant, including but not limited to Strive, Interact, Camp RYLA and Youth Exchange.

DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER (DYPO): Oversees the implementation of the Youth Protection Policy for the District pursuant to the job description at Appendix B.

CLUB YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER (CYPO): Oversees the implementation of the Youth Protection Policy at the Club level pursuant to the job description at Appendix C.

3. Volunteer Certification and Screening

All Volunteers participating in Rotary Youth activities and having significant interaction with Youth, members of the District Youth Protection Committee, the District Governor, the District Governor-Elect, the District Governor-Nominee, the District Governor-Nominee Designate and the Club Youth Protection Officers must be certified. To become certified, the individual must:

- Complete and submit the *Youth Volunteer Application and Background Check Form* (Appendix A);
- Meet Rotary International (“RI”) and District eligibility requirements for working with Youth;
- Participate in District and/or Club Youth Protection training; and
- Understand and comply with the District Youth Protection Policy.

4. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

All allegations of abuse or neglect must be reported to the District Youth Protection Officer and may be reported to law enforcement or child protection authorities. Rotarians and adult volunteers may report allegations to the Club Youth Protection Officer, but the District Youth Protection Officer must also be informed. All allegations of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with the Youth Protection Policy’s *Abuse and Neglect Allegation Reporting Guidelines* at Appendix D.

Investigation Guidelines

The Club and District will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and may only conduct its own independent investigation if an allegation involves Volunteers in Rotary programs and if such investigation does not interfere with other investigations.

5. Training in Youth Protection

Certified Volunteers will have had training in accordance with Paragraph 3 of this Policy. Other Rotarians and non-Rotarian volunteers who participate in Rotary Youth activities are encouraged to attend Youth Protection Training.

6. No One-On-One Contact

One-on-one contact between Certified Volunteers or other adult volunteers and Youth is not permitted with two limited exceptions set forth below. In situations that require personal meetings, the meetings are to be conducted in view of other adults and/or youth.

Exception #1: Host family members may meet with Rotary Youth Exchange Students one-on-one.

Exception #2: Certified Volunteers may transport Youth Exchange Students one-on-one to and from destinations.

7. Policies of School Districts and Outside Organizations

If Certified Volunteers are involved in school-based youth activities or youth activities with outside organizations, they must abide by all youth protection policies of the applicable school district or outside organization, to the extent those policies are more protective of youth than this District Youth Protection Policy or other Rotary policies.

8. Activities Involving Overnight Accommodations

If Youth activities involve overnight stays, adults and youth of the same gender may occupy dormitory or single accommodations, provided there is a minimum of one Certified Volunteer and a minimum of four youth. Adults must establish separation barriers or privacy zones to keep sleeping areas and dressing areas separated from youth areas. If separate shower facilities are not available for male and female and youth and adults, separate times should be scheduled and posted for showers.

In all coed youth activities involving overnight stays, youth must be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.

Rotary District 5960 encourages Rotarians and other adult volunteers to send at least two adults on any significant youth activity, regardless of the number of youth attending.

9. District Responsibilities

The District has the following responsibilities related to carrying out the District Youth Protection Policy:

- § Establish a standing District Youth Protection Committee, consisting of five members;
- a. Members should include relevant professions such as educators, social workers, law enforcement, medical, and legal.
 - b. Responsibilities of the District Youth Protection Committee will include
 - i. Meet as often as needed, but at least one time a year;
 - ii. Review District Youth Protection Policy at least annually;
 - iii. Act as alternate District Youth Protection Officers;
 - iv. Convene quickly to address any concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect in Rotary Youth activities.
- Develop policies and procedures for certifying Clubs and Certified Volunteers;
 - Establish a policy for paying for and maintaining records of background checks;
 - Develop and facilitate training for Volunteers;
 - Report all criminal allegations involving any Rotary Youth activity to RI as required by RI policies or procedures; and
 - Require any provision of information to the media about specific allegations, this Policy, or this Policy's application to specific allegations be done only by the District Youth Protection Officer, the District Governor, or the District Governor's designee.

10. Club Responsibilities

Clubs participating in Rotary Youth activities are required to be Certified by the District by demonstrating the following:

- Compliance with District Youth Protection Policy;
- Designation of a Club Youth Protection Officer and prompt notification of that designation to the DYPO;
- The Club will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal jurisdictional investigations; and

11. Exceptions

Any requests for exceptions to the provisions of this policy must be submitted to the DYPO or the District Governor and approved in advance.

Please note that the District Youth Protection Policy is subject to change. Please contact the current District Youth Protection Officer to receive the most current copy.

**Adopted by the District 5960 Board of Directors on January 26, 2010.
Last updated 3/12/13**

APPENDIX A



The Youth Volunteer Application and Background Check Form are available on-line on the District 5960 website (www.rotary5960.org), under Youth Protection.



APPENDIX B

Rotary International District 5960, Inc.

Job Description District

Youth Protection Officer (DYPO)

RESPONSIBLE TO: District Governor

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB: To insure that all Rotary Clubs are in compliance with the District Youth Protection Policy and that Youth who participate in Rotary Youth activities are protected from abuse. Recommend to District leadership updates and changes to the District Youth Protection Policy and procedures as needed.

SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Approachable with friendly manner
- Good listener
- Well organized
- Motivated
- Familiar with state, federal, and Rotary International youth protection policies and practices.
- Proficient with Hotline procedures and checklists.
- Prepared to pass on concerns to professional agencies when necessary.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist Clubs in the recruitment and selection of Club Youth Protection Officers.
- Assist in recruiting, selecting, and training of an Assistant District Youth Protection Officer who will function as a back-up and to ensure succession planning.
- Maintain familiarity with current state, federal and Rotary youth protection policies, laws, practices and ethics.
- Ensure Club Youth Protection Officers are trained and do club training
- Monitor Youth Protection procedures, rules and regulations.
- Direct concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities
- Maintain data base of Certified Clubs within the District.
- Communicate with individual Volunteers and Club Youth Protection officers concerning the Certification status of Volunteers.
- Develop and distribute training materials.

- Participate as a member of the District Youth Protection Committee.
- In conjunction with the District Youth Protection Officer, develop a calendar for training and define the frequency of training required for each volunteer position, including descriptions of who is to participate, when training should occur, and how training will be conducted.
- Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated in training.
- Assist the District in maintaining records of participation to ensure compliance.
- Conduct independent investigations per RI and District policy to the extent that it does not interfere with other investigations.
- Comply with all Rotary International policies and procedures governing reporting allegations of abuse and neglect.



APPENDIX C

Rotary International District 5960, Inc.

Job Description Club

Youth Protection Officer (CYPO)

RESPONSIBLE TO: Club President and the District Youth Protection Officer

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB: To insure the CYPO's Rotary Club is in compliance with all the District Youth Protection Policy and that Youth who participate are protected from abuse.

SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Approachable with friendly manner
- Good listener
- Well organized
- Motivated
- Trained by DYPO or other responsible and trained Rotarian familiar with District Youth Protection Policies and practices.
- Meet all requirements of a Certified Volunteer.
- Proficient with Hotline procedures and checklists.
- Prepared to pass on concerns to professional agencies when necessary.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- In addition to becoming a Certified Volunteer, review all the Youth Protection Guideline hard copy forms (The Youth Protection Policy, Background Check Policy, FAQ's) available on the district website.
- Assure that Certified Volunteers are trained in Youth Protection and how to respond to an abuse or neglect allegation as required by the District Youth Protection Policy.
- Arrange to have all volunteers who are required to be certified, because of significant involvement with youth, complete the three step process (on-line training, on-line application, on-line background check).
- Develop a spreadsheet for your club to track those who are certified volunteers, and when they'll be needing re-certification (every 3 years).
- Follow the District's *Abuse and Neglect Reporting Guidelines*. Report all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the District Youth Protection Officer or an alternate District Youth Protection officer immediately for investigation.
- Immediately report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, death) involving any Youth to the District Youth Protection Officer or an alternate District Youth Protection officer.

APPENDIX D



Rotary International District 5960, Inc. Youth Protection Policy

Abuse and Neglect Allegation Reporting Guidelines

For use by all Certified Volunteers and Rotary Volunteers to whom a youth reports an incident of abuse or neglect

Any Rotary Certified Volunteer or Volunteer to whom a youth reports an incident of abuse or neglect is responsible for following these ***Allegation Reporting Guidelines***.

1. Report from Youth

a. **Listen attentively and stay calm.** Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or neglect. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror or disbelief.

b. **Assure privacy but not confidentiality.** Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/neglect to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other youth.

c. **Get the facts, but don't interrogate.** Ask the youth questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the youth that s/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the youth's story to the District Youth Protection Officer.

d. **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.

e. **Record.** 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. Use the youth's words, and record only what has been told to you.

2. Protect the Youth

Ensure the safety and well-being of the youth. If feasible, remove the youth from the situation immediately and all contact with the alleged perpetrator. Give reassurance that this is for the youth's own safety and is not a punishment.

3. Report to District Youth Protection Officer.

Immediately report all cases of alleged abuse or neglect to the District Youth Protection Officer. You may also report any allegation of suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to child protective services. You may also make a report directly to your Club Youth Protection Officer. In the event you make a report directly to your Club Youth Protection Officer, you or the CYPO must immediately also report to the District Youth Protection Officer.

4. Avoid Gossip and Blame

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 victim and the accused during any ensuing investigation.

5. Do Not Challenge the Alleged Offender

The adult to whom the youth reports must not contact the alleged offender. In cases where the reporter or the District Youth Protection Officer notifies law enforcement or child protective services, and either of those organizations initiates an investigation, any interrogation must be left entirely to the investigating authorities. *In cases of allegations of abuse or neglect which do not appear to rise to the level of a violation of state law, and which are not reported to law enforcement or child protective services, the District Youth Protection Officer, the District Youth Protection Committee and the District Governor are responsible for investigating, and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the youth has been moved to a safe environment. Any adult against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect is made will be removed from involvement in Rotary youth programs until the matter is resolved.*

Post Report Procedures

The District Youth Protection Officer is responsible for ensuring that the following steps are taken immediately following receipt of an allegation of abuse or neglect:

1. Confirm that steps have been taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the youth.
2. In those cases where the allegations made, if true, might rise to the level of a violation of state law, report the allegations to a law enforcement or child protective services agency. In those cases where the allegations made, if true, might not rise to the level of a violation of state law, the District Youth Protection Officer will conduct an independent investigation of the allegations. In those cases where the allegations are reported to a law enforcement or child protective services agency, and the authorities choose not to conduct an investigation, the District Youth Protection Officer will conduct an independent investigation of the allegations.
3. Ensure the youth receives immediate support services.
4. Offer the youth an independent, Rotarian or non-Rotarian counselor to represent the interests of the youth.
5. Contact the youth's parents or legal guardian.

6. Remove alleged abuser from all contact with the alleged victim and other youth participating in Rotary youth programs while investigations are conducted.

7. Cooperate with any law enforcement or child protective services investigation.

8. Notify Rotary International and other entities (such as the U.S. State Department) of the allegations as required by RI policy or law.

Appropriate Response for Addressing Issues Within the Rotary Club for Allegations Made Against Rotarians or Non-Rotarians

When addressing an allegation of abuse or neglect, 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 police 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.

Potential Disciplinary Action upon Conclusion of District, Law Enforcement or Child Protective Services Investigation

The District Youth Protection Officer will inform the District Governor of the findings of any investigation conducted pursuant to these Guidelines. The District Governor may take any appropriate disciplinary action, including barring the alleged offender from participating in any Rotary youth programs.