

ROTARY DISTRICT 5170

ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

Rotary clubs place great emphasis on their work with people in the community, including young people, through its many Youth Services programs including Rotary Youth Exchange, RYLA, Rotaract, Interact, Speech Contest, and mentoring. These volunteer efforts are vital to the quality of life in our communities and to the good reputation of Rotary and Rotarians. For these good works to continue it is extremely important that our Rotary clubs protect the interests of everyone involved, and create and maintain a safe and respectful environment for all participants in Rotary activities. Fulfilling this duty safeguards the interests of Rotary Clubs and Rotarians by minimizing their risk of liability, including legal liability, should any participant in a Rotary activity become a victim of abuse.

1. Statement of Conduct for working with Youth

Rotary District 5170 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarian's spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come in contact.

2. Definitions

Rotary Youth Services: All club and district activities involving youth, including but not limited to Youth Exchange, RYLA, Rotaract, Interact, Speech Contest and Mentoring.

Volunteer: Any adult involved with Rotary Youth Services activities who has direct interactions with students, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners that host students for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions, host parents, and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings and other family members).

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

- Non-touching offenses
- Indecent exposure
- Exposing a student 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. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or "groom" their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings

- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments
- making threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances

Harassment: includes conduct that erodes the dignity of the victim, particularly based on the victim’s color, race, national origin, religious persuasion, ethnic origin, age, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability. Types of prohibited behavior that constitute harassment include unwelcome remarks and jokes; displaying or distributing racist, or other offensive material; practical jokes based on race or other prohibited grounds; verbal abuse or threats; inappropriate gestures, touching, or physical assault.

Prohibited Person: For the purpose of this Policy, a “Prohibited Person” is anyone who:

- Has been convicted of any offense which resulted in harm to an individual, including, but not limited to, assault, sexual assault, sexual harassment or neglect.
- Has been convicted of any offense, which in the opinion of the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator, suggests an unacceptable risk of harm to a person in the care of that individual.
- Is a person subject to a court order or decree prohibiting that person from being in contact with another individual or being at a specific location.

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program

Rotary District 5170 is a member of WESSEX, which is incorporated as Western States Student Exchange, Inc. and is incorporated under the laws of the state of California. Rotary District 5170 conducts its program within the scope of the WESSEX multidistrict program. All Rotary District 5170 clubs who wish to participate in Youth Exchange must participate within the scope of the District 5170 Youth Exchange program and the WESSEX multidistrict program. In addition, participating Rotary District 5170 clubs are required to maintain good standing with Rotary International (RI).

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

The following screening steps must be completed prior to participation in Youth Services activities. Rotary District 5170 will maintain all records of criminal background checks as prescribed by law, and all waivers, and screening for adults working with minors in perpetuity.

All volunteers interested in participating in Rotary District 5170 Youth Services programs must:

- Complete a Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit form and authorize the District to conduct a LiveScan criminal background check (where required by these policies).
- Undergo personal interviews.
- Provide a list of references for the district to check.
- Meet RI and Rotary District 5170 eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future conduct. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.
- Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

Host families must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above.

- Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. This should include:
 - Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students
 - Motivation for hosting a student is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
 - Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student
 - Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well being
- Host families must complete a written application
- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include both announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.
- All adult residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family that reside in the home either on a full- or part-time basis.

Club counselors must meet the criteria for *All Volunteers*, as well as the following:

- Club Counselors must not be members of a Youth Exchange student's host family.
- Club Counselors must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange, which may include instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

5. Youth Exchange Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in the Rotary District 5170 Youth Exchange program must:

- Complete a written application and be interviewed for their suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the Rotary District 5170 Youth Exchange program must:

- Be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.

6. Training

Rotary District 5170 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Services program volunteers and Youth Exchange students. The training sessions will be conducted by the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator, Youth Exchange Committee members, or by other appropriately trained individuals.

Rotary District 5170 will:

- Adapt the Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual (when developed and provided by RI) to include relevant information on specific district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues, and legal requirements.
- 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.
- Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:

- District governor
 - District Youth Exchange committee members
 - Club Youth Exchange committee members
 - Rotarian counselors
 - Host families
 - Youth Exchange Students (outbound and inbound)
 - Parents and legal guardians of Youth Exchange students
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Rotary Youth Services activities
- Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated.
 - Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

Rotary District 5170 is committed to protecting the safety and well being of students who participate in Youth Services activities and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with the District 5170 Allegation Reporting Guidelines, found in Appendix C.

8. Investigation Guidelines

Rotary District 5170 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct its own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

9. Other Rotary District 5170 Responsibilities

Rotary District 5170:

- Has procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of non-criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate.
- Recommends that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain appropriate insurance
- Provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- Will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the beginning of the exchange (once form is developed and provided by RI).
- Will maintain and provide to Youth Exchange students a “district hotline.”
- Will follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- Will appoint an independent lawyer, therapist or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
- Will report all criminal allegations and all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI and those involving sexual exploitation or abuse to the U.S. Department of State within 72 hours.
- Will evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis.

10. Rotary Club Compliance

Rotary District 5170 will monitor and ensure that all Rotary Clubs within the district which are involved in Youth Services activities comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. All clubs that wish to participate in Youth Services activities must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- Copies of all materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Exchange program, including, but not limited to, promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.
- List of services in area (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services)
- Club abuse and harassment prevention training program and policy

Clubs must agree to:

- Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with Rotary District 5170 and RI policy (Appendix D).
- Ensure that a Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit (Appendix A) and a Request for LiveScan Services (Appendix B) are submitted to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for prescreening and that reference checks are conducted for all volunteers involved in Youth Services, including, but not limited to adult full-time residents of Youth Exchange host homes, Youth Exchange counselors, Youth Exchange club chairs, Interact chairs, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact with students involved in Youth Services.
- Follow the District 5170 Allegation Reporting Guidelines found in Appendix C. Report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately and then to the club and district leadership for investigation.
- Plan club activities so as to minimize situations where abuse may occur. Access to and from venues should be planned so that people at risk are not required to use a route to and from an event or venue that is unsupervised, lonely, dark or otherwise potentially open to danger.
- Organize resources in such a way so that children have a supervisor of the same gender.
- Avoid situations where one child is supervised by one adult. For example, Rotarians providing transportation to one child should be accompanied by another adult.

In addition, those clubs which wish to participate in Youth Exchange must agree to:

- Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both prior to and during the placement.
- Ensure that the host family has a good reputation and character by securing two personal references for each host family from the school or community, attesting to the host family's good reputation and character
- Ensure that the host family has adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations
- Verify that each member of the host family household eighteen years of age and older has undergone a criminal background check (LiveScan)
- Conduct an in-person interview with all family members residing in the home
- Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the Rotary District 5170 Youth Exchange program structure (e.g. "backdoor exchanges").
- Set procedures for removal of a Youth Exchange student from the host family (criteria for moving a student and back-up temporary housing available in advance).
- Develop contingency plans for hosting that include pre-screened and available back-up families
- Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host students.
- Ensure that long-term exchange students have at least two host families.
- Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list.

- Ensure that the host counselor for each student is not a member of the student's host family.
- Ensure that the host counselor is trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.
- Provide mandatory training on sexual abuse and harassment prevention for host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians.
- Provide the names and contact information of Rotary District 5170 Youth Exchange Committee members to contact for assistance with any issues or problems to all Youth Exchange students.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks (once they are developed and provided by RI).
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the district immediately.
- Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.

11. Scope of Policies

These policies and procedures shall apply to all District 5170 Rotarians, their spouses or significant others, and Volunteers who wish to become Club counselors, mentors, or host families in club-sponsored programs or who participate in any Rotary Club activities involving youth. These policies shall also apply to all adults over the age of 18 who reside in the home of the host family.

12. Screening Process

For Club Counselors:

Each Rotary Club that participates in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program will have a designated Club Counselor. Each Club Counselor will be required to sign and complete the Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit (Appendix A). The completed forms are to be submitted to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for his or her assessment.

Subsequent to the Pre screening, all Club Counselors must submit to a LiveScan background check at a location approved by the California Department of Justice. The Security Clearance results shall be submitted directly to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for his or her assessment.

It shall be the responsibility of the Club President to insure that each Rotarian Counselor completes a Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit before assuming those duties. In addition, the Club President or his or her designate shall complete any required interviews or background checks, sign the Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit and file it with the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator.

For Mentors, and Youth Exchange Host families

Each person who is a mentor or a host family, will be required to sign and complete the Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit (Appendix A). Once the Volunteer Assessment form has been completed and given to Club Counselor, that person will in turn determine, based on interviews and information provided, whether the applicant and/or the applicant's family is/are suitable people to be a mentor and/or a host family. That information and recommendation will then be forwarded to the DAPC for review and approval.

Once deemed suitable, those wishing to be a mentor or host family, then each person over the age of 18 living in the family home must submit to a LiveScan background check at a location

approved by the California Department of Justice. The Security Clearance results shall be submitted directly to the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator for his or her assessment.

No Rotarian or other volunteer shall act as a mentor or host family until the Youth Services Volunteer Affidavit and the Live Scan Security Clearance results have been received and accepted by the District Abuse Prevention Coordinator.

13. Club Youth Exchange Counselors

Every person acting in the capacity of Club Counselor will be required to participate in a Club Counselor Training session, which will include, but not be limited to the counseling of youth and their host families, the reporting of incidents of abuse and determining situations where removal of the youth is imperative. Each Club Counselor shall read and be familiar with the Rotary Youth Exchange publication “*A Primer for Host Families*”, a copy of which is attached to these policies. In addition, each Club Counselor shall be familiar with these District Policies and those of Rotary International with regard to abuse and harassment.

14. District Abuse Prevention Coordinator

The District Governor shall appoint a District Abuse Prevention Coordinator (DAPC) who will be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy. The DAPC shall have experience working with people at risk such as young people, the elderly and people with disabilities, either in their professional capacity or as an experienced Rotary Volunteer. At his or her discretion, the District Governor may also appoint an Assistant District Abuse Prevention Coordinator, who will act as the DAPC, in his or her absence. The ADAPC will have the same duties and responsibilities of the DAPC when acting in that capacity.

- The appointment of the DAPC will be made annually, however, it is expected that the DAPC will hold that office for at least two years and no longer than three years.
- The DAPC must be familiar with the Rotary International Child Protection System, other relevant Rotary International policies, and relevant State and Federal legislation.
- The DAPC shall review and maintain an archive of Security Clearance forms and District 5170 Screening forms submitted in accordance with the requirements of this policy and in compliance with the rules of the California Department of Justice.
- The DAPC shall maintain strict confidentiality of such forms in compliance with State and Federal legislation and with this policy.
- In the event that the DAPC determines that an individual is not acceptable as a Club Counselor, mentor or as a host due to the background information submitted, he or she shall advise the applicant that he or she is not acceptable, but shall not disclose any details of the reason(s) behind the decision.
- The DAPC shall be the first point of contact should any Club Counselor or other Rotarian receive a complaint of abuse or harassment, and shall be responsible to ensure that such complaint(s) are dealt with according to applicable laws and that the interests of the affected person are protected to every extent possible.
- The DAPC will work with District Clubs to inform each Rotarian of their obligations under this policy; of all relevant legislation; and, to ensure that appropriate prevention training is available to each Club.
- The DAPC shall annually review the credentials of each Club Counselor to ensure that the goals and requirements of this policy are complied with.
- The DAPC shall be responsible to facilitate an annual training seminar for Club Counselors, and set standards and guidelines to insure that each host family is familiar with “*A Primer for Host Families*” and the scope of these District Policies.