

## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL District 5450

### ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PROTECTION POLICY

#### STATEMENT OF CONDUCT

District 5450 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of, and to prevent the verbal, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment of all persons with whom they come into contact.

This Policy applies to all participants in District or Club sponsored programs, activities and events. District 5450 reaffirms its adherence to Rotary International's zero-tolerance policy against abuse and harassment.

#### DEFINITIONS

**“Abuse”** means treatment of someone in a manner that a reasonable person would consider harmful. This may include verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse or contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

**“Abuse and Harassment Protection Officer”** (AHPO) is the Rotarian appointed by the District Governor to oversee the implementation of the District Abuse and Harassment Protection Policy.

**“Adult”** means any person over the age of 18 years.

**“Contributing to the delinquency of a minor”** means inducing, aiding, or encouraging a youth to violate any federal or state law, municipal or county ordinance, or court order.

**“Crisis Management Team”** is team of District personnel that is activated by the AHPO upon receipt of an allegation of abuse or harassment. The makeup of the team is determined by the status of the protected person making the allegation: District Governor, AHPO, District Committee Chair (RYLA, Interact, or RYE), Youth Protection Officer (RYE), Country Contact (RYE), Club President (Club Activity). The team is chaired by the AHPO or, in his/her absence, by the appropriate District Committee Chair.

**“Harassment”** means any act, comment or display that, to a reasonable person, belittles, demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, or any act of intimidation or threat. It includes conduct, gestures, display or distribution of material, jokes or communication with which the actor intends to harass, annoy or alarm another person by reference to race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

**“Minor”** is anyone under 18 years of age.

**“One-On-One interaction with Protected Persons”** means the condition where Volunteers may find themselves unavoidably in an unsupervised or unobserved condition with a Protected Person. Note that activities conducted in view of other adults are not considered “one-on-one”.

**“Prohibited person”** means anyone who has been shown through background check or other reasonably reliable sources, as determined by the AHPO, has been formally charged or convicted of an offense against others, or who is considered by the AHPO to be an inappropriate person for working with protected persons.

**“Protected Person”** means any minor (less than 18 years of age), young adult (between 18 and 21 years of age) or vulnerable person participating in a District or Club sponsored program or event.

**“Sexual abuse”** means improper and unwanted exposure to sexual contact, activity or behavior. This may be engaging in sexual acts with a protected person, or forcing or encouraging a protected person to engage in sexual acts alone or with another person and includes unlawful sexual behavior, Unlawful Sexual Contact, Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault on a Child, Sexual Assault on a Child by One in a Position of Trust, all as defined by Colorado Revised Statutes.

**“Sexual Harassment”** means 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. Some examples of sexual harassment include: sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken 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; display of sexually suggestive objects, picture, or drawings; sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing against or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

**“Volunteer”** means any person, involved in District or Club programs or events involving protected persons, who has interaction with those protected persons. This includes, but is not limited to, district committee members, club youth exchange officers, club counselors, club members, chaperones or host families.

**“Vulnerable person”** means any person who is impaired because of the loss of, or permanent loss of use of, a hand or foot; or is unable to walk, see, hear, or speak; or is unable to breathe without mechanical assistance; or is developmentally disabled; or is a person with a mental illness; or is mentally impaired; or is receiving care and treatment for a developmental disability, all as defined by Colorado statute.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. The District 5450 Governor** is responsible for:

- a. Appointing a District Abuse and Harassment Officer (AHPO).
- b. Monitoring the implementation of the District Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy.
- c. Participating as a member of the Crisis Management Team.
- d. Acting in the place of the AHPO in the case of the unavailability of either the AHPO or a trained designee.
- e. Working with the AHPO and club President to enable a club that is not in compliance with this policy to come into compliance.

### **2. The District Abuse and Harassment Protection Officer (AHPO)** is responsible for:

- a. Developing, implementing, and maintaining the District Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy.
- b. Monitoring participating clubs within the district and district programs to verify that they are in compliance with RI guidelines and this policy.
- c. Working with noncompliant clubs to restore compliance with this policy.
- d. Serving as the chair of the District Abuse and Harassment Protection committee and Crisis Management Team.

- e. Supervising the training process for District Personnel as established by this Policy, including the maintenance of training records.
  - f. Arranging for background checks required by this Policy.
  - g. Identifying Prohibited Persons and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken in regard to their interaction with protected persons and in regard to their continued membership in Rotary.
  - h. Maintaining a confidential and secure filing system for background check applications and the results of such checks.
  - i. Maintaining all records related to the investigation of allegations of abuse or harassment in secure, confidential files in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
  - j. Other specific duties as specified in the AHPO Job Description, Appendix B to this Policy.
- 3. The District Crisis Management Team** is responsible for:
- a. Convening whenever an allegation of abuse or harassment is made.
  - b. Overseeing the process of investigating all allegations.
  - c. Reviewing and ensuring that allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment have been reported to local authorities in compliance with state law and reported to Rotary International, The U.S. Department of State, Student Counselor, Youth Protection Officer, and the insurance carrier, as appropriate.
  - d. Serving as the primary contact with the media for allegations made within the scope of this Policy.
- 4. The District Committee Chairs Involved with Protected Persons' Activities** are responsible for:
- a. Monitoring the implementation of this Policy in their respective committees and associated activities.
  - b. Identifying Rotarians or volunteers who, as part of their program activities, will have one-on-one interaction with protected persons.
  - c. Serving as a member of the Crisis Management Team if an allegation of abuse or harassment is made within their area of responsibility.
- 5. Club Presidents** are responsible for:
- a. Identifying Rotarians or volunteers who, as part of their program activities, can be expected to have one-on-one interaction with protected persons (see definition).
  - b. Requiring Rotarian or volunteers identified in 5.a. above to be screened in accordance with this policy and to complete required training before having one-on-one interaction with protected persons.
  - c. Ensuring that Club members are made aware of the requirements of this Policy, including the requirement to avoid one-on-one interaction with protected persons prior to the completion of specified screening and training. It is suggested that each club schedule one meeting each year devoted to reviewing this policy.
  - d. Budgeting for and paying the cost of required background checks for individuals who will have one-on-one interaction with protected persons.
- 6. Volunteers Who Have One-On-One Interaction with Protected Persons** are responsible for:
- a. Completing the District 5450 Volunteer application and authorizing the District AHPO to arrange for appropriate background checks.
  - b. Being personally interviewed by the AHPO, if requested.
  - c. Providing a list of references to the AHPO, if requested.
  - d. Completing and documenting the training required by this Policy.

7. **All Rotarians** are responsible for:
- a. Ensuring that Club and District programs involving protected persons are provided in a safe and caring environment.

## **ACTION**

### **1. Volunteer Selection and Screening**

- a. **District Committee Chairs and Club Presidents** shall identify volunteers who may have one-on-one interaction with protected persons as part of Rotary programs, events, and activities involving protected persons.
- b. **Volunteers** identified in 1.a. above shall complete an authorization release for a background check and submit it to the AHPO.
- c. The **AHPO** shall have background checks performed on the identified volunteers.
- d. The **AHPO** may conduct interviews of the volunteers and contact references if considered appropriate.
- e. The **AHPO** shall review the results of the background checks and other such information that may be obtained and notify the applicable club President or program chair when the volunteers are cleared for one-on-one interaction.
- f. The **AHPO** shall notify the individual and the club President or program chair if the results of the review are not acceptable and that the volunteer is not cleared. The **AHPO** will designate the individual as a Prohibited Person.

**NOTE:** A volunteer that is designated as a Prohibited Person may appeal such designation to the District Governor. The volunteer may challenge the results of a background check, but must do so himself or herself by direct contact with the screening company at his or her own expense.

- g. The **AHPO** shall maintain confidentiality and security of screening records and shall not divulge the contents of these records without the express written permission of the volunteer involved.
- h. The **AHPO** shall maintain screening records in perpetuity.

### **2. Training**

**NOTE:** Individual District committees, such as but not limited to the Youth Exchange Program and RYLA, may develop training requirements appropriate to their programs. However, such programs should meet the spirit and intent of the District and Rotary International policies and must be approved by the AHPO.

- a. The **AHPO**, in coordination with the District Training Officer, shall cause training materials to be developed, based on materials provided by RI and local statutes and laws.
- b. The **AHPO** will encourage the use of PETS and District Assemblies as training opportunities.
- c. **All Rotarians** should be familiar with this District Policy. Such familiarity can be successfully attained by attending a presentation on the policy, by reading the policy and providing documentation of completion as specified by the AHPO, or by other means identified by the AHPO.

- d. **Adult volunteers who will be working one-on-one with protected persons in a Rotary context but not involved in the Rotary Youth Exchange program** (including RYLA counselors, facilitators, and staff; Interact advisers and committee members; district youth program committee members) shall complete:
  - i. One training session on “Awareness and Prevention” patterned after Session 1 of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
  - ii. One training session on “Recognizing Problems and Reporting” patterned after Session 2A of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
- e. **Adult volunteers in the Rotary Youth Exchange program** (including District youth Exchange committee members, adult members of host families, Rotarian counselors, Club Youth Exchange committee members and contacts) shall complete:
  - i. One training session on “Awareness and Prevention” patterned after Session 1 of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
  - ii. One training session on “Recognizing Problems and Reporting” patterned after Session 2B of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
  - iii. One training session on “Developing a Support System for Youth Exchange Students” patterned after Session 3 of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
- f. **Parents of outbound Youth Exchange students** shall complete:
  - i. One training session on “Preparing for a Safe Exchange Experience: Parents” patterned after Session 4 of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
- g. **Inbound and outbound Youth Exchange students** shall complete:
  - i. One training session on “Preparing for a Safe Exchange Experience: Students” patterned after Session 5 of the RI Training Leaders’ Guide.
- h. **The AHPO** shall maintain records of training completed in accordance with this policy.

### 3. **Policy Compliance**

- a. The **AHPO** will monitor participating clubs within the district and district programs to verify that they are in compliance with RI guidelines and this policy.
- b. If a club is found to be noncompliant with this policy, the **AHPO** shall order the cessation of activities involving protected persons until compliance is achieved.
- c. The **AHPO** will work with the noncompliant club’s President and the District Governor to restore compliance with this Policy. This action may include training and/or background checks.

### 4. **Response to an Allegation of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Harassment**

- a. Any **Rotarian receiving an Allegation** of sexual abuse or sexual harassment shall adhere to the guidelines below which are amplified in Appendix A to this Policy.
  - i. Receive and record the report from the protected person.
  - ii. Provide Safety for the protected person.
  - iii. Immediately report the allegation to the appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with state laws.
  - iv. Notify the AHPO and the appropriate District chair (for district activities) or club President (for club activities).
  - v. Provide the written report of the allegation to the AHPO.
  - vi. Ensure privacy is respected.
- b. The **AHPO** shall activate the Crisis Management Team upon receipt of a report of allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment.

- c. If the person making the allegation is a minor, then the **AHPO** shall notify the parents or legal guardian.
- d. The **District Governor** or designated **District Chair** shall direct the person accused of abuse or harassment not to have further contact with protected persons until the matter is resolved.
- e. The **AHPO** shall report any criminal charges and serious incidents to Rotary International within 72 hours of receiving the report of an allegation.
- f. The **AHPO** shall report any incident to the applicable insurance carrier.
- g. If the incident involves a Rotary Youth Exchange student, then the **AHPO** shall
  - i. Verify that the District RYE Chairperson, the Student Counselor, and the Youth Protection Officer have been notified.
  - ii. Notify the U.S. Department of State of the alleged abuse.
- h. The **parent club** of any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment shall terminate the membership of the Rotarian.
- i. The **District Governor** shall prohibit a non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment from working with protected persons in any Rotary context.
- j. If law enforcement declines to pursue the case, then the **Crisis Management Team** shall recommend any subsequent limitations on the accused person in regard to interaction with protected persons, for consideration by the **District Governor**.
- k. When law enforcement has completed its investigation and subsequent actions are completed, the **Crisis Management 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 **Crisis Management Team** will recommend any necessary changes to the District Policy, screening process, or training.

## 5. Response to an Allegation of Harassment

- a. Any **Rotarian receiving an Allegation** of harassment shall adhere to the guidelines below which are amplified in Appendix A to this Policy.
  - i. Receive and record the report from the protected person.
  - ii. Provide Safety for the protected person.
  - iii. Notify the AHPO and the appropriate District chair (for district activities) or club President (for club activities).
  - iv. Provide the written report of the allegation to the AHPO.
  - v. Ensure privacy is respected.
- b. Upon receipt of a report of an allegation of harassment the **AHPO** shall evaluate the allegation and if considered appropriate, activate the Crisis Management Team
- c. If the person making the allegation is a minor, then the **AHPO** shall notify the parents or legal guardian.
- d. The **District Governor** or designated **District Chair** shall direct the person accused of harassment not to have further contact with protected persons until the matter is resolved.
- e. If the incident involves a Rotary Youth Exchange student, then the **AHPO** shall
  - i. Verify that the District RYE Chairperson, the Student Counselor, and the Youth Protection Officer have been notified.
- f. If activated, the **Crisis Management Team** will investigate the allegation to determine if the allegation is valid and what actions are appropriate, including considering whether law enforcement should be informed. Recommendations concerning actions will be made to the **District Governor** for implementation.
- g. When the investigation is completed and subsequent actions have been taken, the **Crisis Management Team** will review the entire incident in regard to the extent that district policies were followed and any lessons learned. Based on their review, the **Crisis**

**Management Team** will recommend any necessary changes to the District Policy, screening process, or training.

**6. Policy Review**

- a. The **AHPO** shall cause this Policy to be reviewed annually and propose recommended changes for consideration by the District Executive Committee.
- b. The **AHPO** shall review any changes to this Policy and identify any additional training that might be appropriate.

**7. Policy Implementation**

This policy will become effective 90 days after approval by the District Executive Committee as shown by the District Governor's signature and date of enactment below. During this period the following will be accomplished:

- a. The **District Governor** will cause copies of this policy to be distributed to the chairpersons of all District Committees or groups dealing with protected persons and to all club presidents.
- b. Utilizing forms provided by the AHPO, **club presidents** and **district chairs** shall identify all volunteers who they can reasonably foresee will be likely to be involved in one-on-one interaction with protected persons during the following twelve months.
- c. **Volunteers** identified in b. above shall complete an authorization release for background check and submit it to the AHPO.
- d. The **AHPO** shall initiate background checks for identified volunteers.
- e. **Club presidents** and **district chairs** shall cause volunteers to be trained in accordance with this policy utilizing training procedures provided by the AHPO. Training documentation shall be forwarded to the AHPO for retention.

The above policy was adopted by Rotary District 5450 Executive Committee on this 24th day of June, 2008.

s/ David G. Beall  
David G. Beall – District 5450 Governor

## Appendix A Procedures for Response to Allegations

### Understanding the Needs of the Protected Person

There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the protected person after an allegation is reported. The protected person may feel embarrassed, confused, or angry, or may become withdrawn.

It may be difficult for club members, volunteers and host families who become aware of the allegation to understand how the protected person is feeling, but it would be helpful for the protected person to know that the club remains a support for them. Club members and volunteers may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the protected person of their support at all times.

It should not come as a surprise that the protected person may wish to have nothing to do with any Rotarian after a serious incident.

### Procedures for Rotarian Receiving Allegation

Any Rotarian to whom a protected person reports an incident of abuse or harassment should comply with the following guidelines. The Rotarian should record the report from the protected person, take steps to protect the protected person, report the allegation, and ensure privacy and follow-up.

#### **1. Receive Report from Protected person**

- a.) **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.
- b.) **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 does not happen to others.
- c.) **Get the facts, but don't interrogate.** Ask the protected person questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the protected person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.
- d.) **Be non-judgmental and reassuring.** 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 protected person.
- e.) **Record.** Keep a written record of the conversation as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the protected person's words, and record only what has been told to you.

#### **2. Provide Safety for the Protected Person.**

Ensure the safety and well-being of the protected person. If you or the protected person has any concerns regarding his or her safety, immediately remove him or her from the situation and from all contact with accused. Reassure him or her that this is for his or her own safety and is not a punishment.

#### **3. Report to appropriate agency/person.**

- a.) If sexual abuse or sexual harassment is alleged, immediately contact the appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with state laws.

**Appendix A**  
**Procedures for Response to Allegations**

- b.) Report the allegation to the District Committee Chair responsible for the program, activity or event in which the alleged incident or incidents occurred and to the District Abuse and Harassment Protection Officer (AHPO).

**4. Ensure Privacy is Respected**

Avoid gossip and blame. Do not tell anyone about the allegation other than those whom these Guidelines require to be told. Except as required by these Guidelines, all information with respect to the allegation must be kept strictly private and confidential to protect the rights of both the protected person and the accused.

**5. Follow Up**

Once the case has been reported to the AHPO and the District Committee Chair, your role is complete. You may wish to follow up to ensure that steps are being taken to address the situation. You must not however contact the accused about the allegation. Be aware that you may be interviewed by law enforcement officials conducting an investigation.

**Appropriate Behavior for Others Aware of Allegation**

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of a protected person. Club members who become aware of the allegation should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder or prejudice any investigation. In extreme cases, adverse comments made against either a protected person or an accused could lead to a legal action for defamation filed against Rotarians or clubs by the person about whom those comments are made.

**Contacting the Parents or Legal Guardian**

The **AHPO** or designate shall immediately notify the parents or legal guardian of any minor making an allegation under this policy. If the student is away from home, the student and his or her parents should decide whether to stay in country or return home. If the student stays in country, written authorization from the student's parents or legal guardian is required.

## **Appendix B**

### **DISTRICT ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PROTECTION OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION**

The District Abuse and Harassment Protection Officer (AHPO) shall be a Rotarian in good standing in District 5450. Ideally, he or she should be a professional with training in abuse and harassment prevention and youth protection issues.

This appointment is yearly renewable for three years.

#### **Duties:**

1. Serve as the chair of the District Abuse and Harassment Protection committee and Crisis Management Team.
2. Maintain, supervise, and increase awareness of the District Abuse and Harassment Protection Policies.
3. Require that clubs and committees that participate in Rotary sponsored activities involving protected persons follow the District 5450 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 sexual abuse and sexual harassment are reported to the proper law enforcement agency.
6. Supervise District training in the prevention and awareness of abuse and harassment.
7. Maintain records of District training, content, dates and participants.
8. Contract on behalf of the District with a background search company.
9. Cause background checks to be performed as required by this policy.
10. Maintain a confidential and secure filing system for applications for background checks and such results.
11. Receive and review all background information results and other related information regarding volunteers who may have one-on-one interaction with protected persons.
12. Make findings regarding the appropriateness of volunteers to have one-on-one interaction with protected persons.
13. Contact first the volunteer, then if necessary, the appropriate supervising Rotarian (Club President, District Committee Chair, etc.), then if necessary, the District Governor, regarding the results of the background check.
14. Advise volunteers of their right to appeal a "prohibited person" designation to the District Governor.
15. Maintain the strictest confidentiality possible in all communications regarding the results of background checks.

**Appendix B**

**DISTRICT ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PROTECTION OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION**  
(CONTINUED)

16. Perform succession planning for the AHPO position by actively identifying and training a prospective AHPO.
17. Identify a properly trained designee to act in the absence of the AHPO.