

Rotary District 5470 Youth Exchange

Abuse, Harassment & Neglect Prevention & Reporting Policy

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Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International 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 physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come in contact.

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

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District 5470 is further committed to meeting or exceeding all guidelines and regulations dealing with youth exchange set forth by both Rotary International's Board of Directors and the U.S. Department of State.

Purpose, Approach & Scope of Policy

In fulfilling this duty, District 5470's Youth Exchange Program has created this policy to safeguard students and will require participating clubs to adhere to these policies as a condition of participation in the program.

These policies and procedures are based on the following approach:

- Screening active volunteers who have authority over students will safeguard the quality of the program and the safety of both volunteers and students.
- Establishing recommended Safe Environment protocols for both volunteers and students will minimize the risk of abuse, harassment and neglect of students.
- Training of volunteers and students will enhance the quality of the program.
- Establishing and following a standard response to accusations of abuse, harassment or neglect will assure a response that meets the Four Way Test.
- Establishing standard policies and recommendations for the operation of the program will enhance the quality and safety of the program.
- Requiring clubs to adhere to these policies as a condition of participation in the D5470 RYE program will ensure a uniform quality program throughout the district.

Definitions

District 5470 Mountain & Plains Rotary Youth Exchange, Inc. is incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado and exists for the purpose of assisting financially in operating a certified Rotary Youth Exchange program. It is required to carry adequate general liability insurance with coverage and limits appropriate for its geographic location, including coverage for its officers and committee members.

District 5470 RYE Committee: District 5470 Youth Exchange committee consists of RYE Chair, appointed by the District 5470 Governor, and members who are appointed by the RYE Chair and approved by the District Governor. Committee positions may include, but are not limited to: Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO), Communication Coordinator, Inbound Coordinator,

Outbound Coordinator, Treasurer, Insurance Coordinator, Compliance Officer, and various Country Contacts plus any additional members deemed necessary by the Committee Chair.

~~District RYE Youth Protection Officer:~~ ~~Appointed by the District RYE Chair, this person is responsible for assuring compliance with the requirements of this policy, the review and recommendation to the District RYE Co-Chairs of any active volunteers, and the maintenance of records regarding volunteer background checks and training.~~

Participating Club: Any Rotary Club that participates by sponsoring or hosting students through District 5470 Rotary Youth Exchange is required to adhere to this policy as well as to all other mandatory district policies, for the protection of students and to assure the quality of the program. Agreement to adhere to this policy is required in writing as part of the agreement to host a student and is required to be submitted to the District RYE Committee Chair by October 31 of the year preceding the exchange.

Active Volunteers: Any adult officially involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities who has a supervising role, authority over, or frequent direct interactions with students. All volunteers who have direct, unsupervised contact with exchange students must undergo a criminal background check and National Sex Offender Report. This includes, but is not limited to, District Youth Exchange Committee Members, Country Contacts, club YEOs, Rotary Counselors, host parents and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings over 18 years and other family members residing in the home).

Other Volunteers: Any adult involved with sanctioned Rotary Youth Exchange activities who supervises interactions with students including Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners who host students for activities or outings, exercise authority over students in a RYE program context, or chaperone them during other activities. These volunteers are required to know and adhere to the Safe Environment protocol outlined in this policy and must undergo a criminal background check and a National Sex Offender Report annually.

Student: Youth involved with Rotary Youth Exchange, whether they be U.S. citizens studying and residing abroad or citizens of another nation studying and residing in District 5470. By the rules for participation in Youth Exchange in District 5470, students will be enrolled in public or private secondary schools and must be between the ages of 15 and 17 ½ and will not have completed more than 11 years of education (not including kindergarten or other preschool programs) prior to the start of an exchange.

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 offences
- 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 and should be considered a warning sign. 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.

Physical Abuse: Any non-accidental physical injury. District 5470 Rotary Youth Exchange prohibits corporal punishment or physically constraining or confining students as a means of discipline.

Emotional Abuse: Chronic exposure to alcohol or drug abuse, verbal attacks on a person’s sense of self, repeated rejection or humiliation. It also includes exposure to domestic abuse, isolation or placing in an environment of fear and/or anxiety and any conduct that erodes the dignity of the student, particularly based on the student’s color, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability. Emotional abuse goes beyond normal cultural adjustments and family or social interactions. Perpetrators of emotional abuse can be any age and size. This may include, but not limited to:

- Unwelcome and demeaning remarks, jokes, and innuendos
- Use, display or distribution of racist, pornographic, derogatory, or other offensive material
- Practical jokes based on race, sex, or other discriminatory grounds
- Verbal abuse or threats, inappropriate or offensive gestures.

Neglect: Neglect includes, but is not limited to, leaving a vulnerable person in a situation in which the person would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm; placing a vulnerable person in, or failing to remove the person from, a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the person’s mental abilities, level of maturity, or physical condition and that may result in bodily injury or substantial risk of immediate harm to the person; or placing a potentially vulnerable person in, or failing to remove a person from, a situation in which the person would be exposed to a substantial risk of abuse, harassment or neglect.

Active Volunteers Screening & Approval

The first step in safeguarding students is to assure the quality of individuals involved in the program as organizers and supervisors or those who have frequent one-on-one contact with students. These Active Volunteers (including Host Families and Club Counselors who have additional requirements) must have completed the following screening and been approved for participation in District 5470 Rotary Youth Exchange programs by the District RYE Chair prior to involvement with the student:

Active Volunteers:

- Complete a Youth Volunteer Affidavit on-line in the YEAH database system
- Complete and pass a Criminal Background Check and a National Sex Offender Report.
- Provide three references
- Meet Rotary International and District 5470 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 the student(s) and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the security of any youth with whom the individual may have future contact. An accused person who has been 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/she will be reinstated to his or her former position.
- Understand and comply with RI and District 5470 guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.
- Be vetted by the District Compliance Officer and approved by the District RYE Chair.
- Participate in and complete Youth Protection Awareness (YPA), Youth Protection Certificate (YPC), and Department of State (DOS LCT) training to recognize and prevent abuse, harassment and neglect.

Additional Requirements for Host Families: Host Families must:

- Complete a written on-line application in the YEAH database system.
- Undergo a comprehensive interview by the hosting Rotary Club's host family coordinator and the YEO to determine their suitability for hosting exchange students
- Complete and pass a background check and National Sex Offender Report.
- Provide a suitable environment for hosting students that ensures them appropriate privacy and safety
- Demonstrate commitment to the safety and security of students by completing and passing a Youth Protection Awareness training and test
- Demonstrate motivation for hosting a student participant that is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange.
- Demonstrate financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student
- Demonstrate aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student participant's well-being

- Home visits must be conducted for each host family and should include both announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the hosting period; home visits must be conducted at least twice during each hosting period even for host families who are continuing to host the same or a different student in the same year.
- All adult residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines for active volunteers. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family who reside in the home. College students who are away at college are exempt.

Additional Requirements for Rotarian Club Counselors:

- Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family
- Counselors must pro-actively assure students are in environments that adhere to the Safe Environment protocol, including regularly reminding students of safety protocol.
- Counselors should not be close friends or relatives of other volunteers involved with a particular student (i.e. school principal, host family, etc.)
- Counselors should speak regularly at least once per month with students and actively question students on safety and abuse issues
- Counselors must provide students with a list of contacts including a means of contact 24 hours per day.
- Counselors must be trained to respond to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange which may include instances of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment or neglect. Counselors are required to complete the Youth Protection Awareness Training and test to accomplish this goal.
- Counselors must ensure students write monthly reports to be sent to the student's Country Coordinator, Inbound Coordinator and District Chair for Student Programs
- Counselors must file a monthly report of the student's exchange with District RYE Chair through the YEAH database reporting system.

Approval of Active Volunteers:

All active volunteers must be identified and recommended by the Rotary Club YEO for screening and background checks by the District Compliance Officer who will present recommendations to the District RYE Chair for approval via the YEAH database reporting system before the volunteer is allowed to participate in the program. The District RYE Chair and the District Compliance Officer will only return an approved/not approved decision to the Rotary Club YEO who must abide by and enforce the decision of the District RYE Chair. Appeals will be heard by the District Governor.

Student Selection, Screening and Training

All students interested in participating in the District 5470 RYE program must:

- Complete a written on-line application in the YEAH database system and be interviewed at both the club and district level for their suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program. District 5470 requires the club level interviews be completed and

approved applications submitted to the District Chair for Student Programs no later than October 31 of the year preceding the start of a long term exchange, or by January 31 for short term exchanges to start that same year. Only those applicants meeting these deadlines will be considered by the district committee for exchanges during the ensuing exchange period.

- Attend and participate in all District Orientation and Training sessions.
- Agree to abide by the rules for behavior and conduct as an exchange student set forth by RI, District 5470 and any partner Rotary Districts, including avoiding engaging in abuse or harassment of others.

All parents / legal guardians of outbound students must:

- Be interviewed by the club and the district to help determine the student's suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- Attend and participate in all District Orientation and Training sessions for outbound students.

All Inbound Students:

- In keeping with U.S. Department of State rules, inbound students on long-term exchange must provide a written English summary of their academic work and may not have previously participated in an academic exchange (J1 or F1 visa).
- Must demonstrate a basic English proficiency as required by the Department of State via completing a written test in their home country, a telephone interview, or a Skype interview conducted by the District 5470 Country Contact and one other RYE Committee member.
- Must have been interviewed, selected and trained by his/her sponsoring Rotary District as required by Rotary International.
- Must understand that they are in the USA on an Academic Visa and must enroll in, participate in, and Maintain a passing grade.

Safe Environment Protocol

District 5470 Rotary Youth Exchange recognizes that it will not be able to ensure the complete protection of its students in its program nor be able to screen all adults who come in contact with students. In the interest of creating the safest possible environment, this policy recommends the following protocol for all volunteers, active and other, and all students in order to create the safest possible environment for everyone:

Three is Good Company: Whenever possible, all volunteers and students should include others, either adults or other young people, in activities, meetings and outings and avoid one-on-one situations. This is especially true of interactions involving discipline, difficult topics or activities that may cause students to be uncomfortable or feel threatened. Students should request a third person if they feel uncomfortable or threatened. This will increase the security

of both students and volunteers. If it is necessary for a volunteer to be in one-on-one contact with a student, he/she must undergo the Active Volunteer screening process.

Avoid Secrecy: Nothing in the exchange experience should involve pledges of secrecy. Volunteers and students should see requests for secrecy or confidentiality as a warning sign of inappropriate activity, as it is a technique often used by abusers to “groom” victims. In the event that difficult topics must be discussed, volunteers should ensure privacy, but not confidentiality, to students. The volunteer is required, by law, to report abusers, and by this policy, to notify the District RYE Chair of allegations of abuse, harassment or neglect.

Respect for Privacy: All volunteers should respect the privacy of students and ensure they have a safe, private place to change clothing, use bathroom facilities, and/or attend to personal hygiene. Whenever possible, host families should provide students a bedroom with a closing door and a private area to wash and to dress. Further, volunteers and students should avoid touching, brushing or bumping another person in a manner that makes them feel uncomfortable. Pushing the limits of comfort and privacy are techniques abusers often use to desensitize victims and should be seen as warning signs.

Appropriate Attire: Volunteers and students should wear appropriate attire at all times and respect the comfort level of others. Students should not be asked to participate in or be exposed to unnecessary public or private nudity, skinny dipping, nude sunbathing, bathing suits optional saunas and swimming, etc.

Access to Communications: All volunteers should ensure students have a reasonable and timely access to communications should they wish to speak with law enforcement, Rotary Club YEO, Rotary Club Counselors, Country Coordinators, the District RYE Chair or the District Governor. Students must be given a contact list by club counselors including the names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of these and other resources and should be free to contact them without restriction. Students shall be given a 24/7 contact cell number to be used any time the student feels it is needed.

Preventive Training and Other Resources

District 5470 Rotary Youth Exchange will provide abuse and harassment prevention and reporting training to all volunteers and students. This training may include on-line seminars, talks at Orientation, written home-study materials and handbooks. Training is mandatory for participation by both active volunteers and students. The District RYE Compliance Officer shall be responsible for tracking completion of this training.

Training will include information found in the RI Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual as well as district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues and legal requirements.

On-line training through our YEAH database program is available for each volunteer position.-It includes who must participate, and when, how and where the training will be conducted. Guidelines have been established to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated.

Among those who must participate in Youth Protection training are:

- District Youth Exchange Committee Members
- Club Youth Exchange Committee Members
- Rotary Club Counselors
- Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities such as local tours or district events
- Host Families
- Inbound and Outbound Students
- Parents and/or legal guardians of outbound students

Law enforcement personnel should be asked to provide the District RYE Committee with training in investigation and criminal prosecution procedures. Local Rotary Clubs should seek similar training from their local law enforcement personnel.

District 5470 will also strive to make use of the experience and talent of students who have previously completed a successful exchange (Rebounders) in both selection and training of students and training of volunteers involved with students.

District committee members with the responsibility of arranging exchanges with specific overseas RYE programs (Country Contacts) will be responsible for sharing the specifics of District 5470's training programs with their counterparts overseas, requesting from those counterparts specifics of their training programs to ensure appropriate training, and the resources outlined below, are provided to outbound students.

Resources: Hosting Club Youth Exchange Officer's will provide materials to active volunteers and students to raise awareness about abuse, harassment and neglect and provide contact information for reporting allegations and seeking assistance. In keeping with U.S. Department of State rules, inbound students shall receive a program identity card and contact numbers including:

- Local rape and suicide crisis hotlines
- Alcohol and drug awareness programs for teens
- Local and State Law enforcement agencies
- Community Services to support youth
- Contact information for: Host Family and District RYE Chairperson
- A 24/7 cell phone number for emergency contact at all times.

If any of the above incidences take place, call the San Miguel Resource Center Hot Line Number at 970-728-5660, as well as the Youth Protection Officer and RYE District Chair. All current phone numbers and email addresses are in YEAH.

In keeping with U.S. Department of State rules, hosting families in District 5470 will receive a written statement of the philosophy, rules and regulations governing the District 5470 RYE

program, as well as contact information for the local Rotarian Counselor, President and Secretary of the hosting club, appropriate Country Contact, and the District RYE Chair .

Record Keeping and Privacy

The District RYE Committee Chair shall maintain, or cause to be maintained, records of students and volunteers involved in the program. In keeping with U.S. Department of State rules, the District RYE Committee will maintain a record of documentation, including but not limited to Application Forms, Background Checks, Evaluations, and Interviews for all selected host families for a period not less than three years.

The District 5470 RYE Committee Compliance Officer will maintain records regarding the screening, approval and training of volunteers and students and will ensure the privacy of these documents and will make them available only to the RYE Chair and District Governor. If a volunteer is not approved, the Rotary Club YEO and the District Youth Protection Officer will be notified that the volunteer was not approved. In order to protect the privacy of the applicant in the local community, no reasons will be given and information relating to the non-approval will be sealed.

Country Coordinators and the RYE District Chair will maintain records on inbound and outbound students, exchange agreements with other countries, student applications and monthly reports from both inbound and outbound students. Country Coordinators will be responsible for forwarding these records to any subsequent Country Coordinator and to the District RYE Chairs when they leave their position.

All of the above noted record-keeping is now done on the YEAH Database system.

Club Compliance: All Rotary Clubs that wish to apply to District 5470 for participation in Rotary Youth Exchange, under district, RI and federal guidelines, must submit to the District RYE Chair, 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 links, etc.
- List of services in the area (rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teens, law enforcement agencies, and community and private services for teens).
- Agreement of hosting Rotary Club to accept and follow the District 5470 Abuse and Harassment Policy and prevention training programs.
- A signed Agreement to Participate in the District 5470 RYE program.
- A signed compliance statement that the Rotary Club is operating their program in accordance with District, RI and Federal policies.
- An agreement to report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately and then to the Rotary Club and District leadership immediately following within 24 hours.
- An agreement not to engage in direct placement of students outside of the District 5470 Youth Exchange program (i.e. no backdoor exchanges).

- An agreement to report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the District RYE Chair immediately.
- Written confirmation that Rotarians or program volunteers are not expected to conduct their own investigation of an allegation of abuse or harassment; this should only be done by trained law enforcement.

Hosting Clubs will also agree to:

- Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection which includes interviews and home visits both prior to and during the stay of a student.
- 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 and preferably three host families committed prior to their arrival as much as is possible.
- Develop contingency plans for hosting that include at least one pre-screened and available host homes in case of emergency or unusual circumstances.
- Establish set procedures for removal of a student from the host family including criteria for moving a student to temporary housing arranged in advance.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations with both host families and students.
- Provide hosting families, in writing, the philosophy, rules and regulations governing the District 5470 RYE program as well as provide contact information for the local Rotary counselor, President and Secretary of the hosting club, appropriate Country Contact on the District 5470 RYE Committee and the District RYE Chairs.
- Provide mandatory training for host families on physical abuse, sexual abuse, harassment and neglect and this program's reporting policy. Training should include awareness of cultural differences and how and when to use the Rotary Counselor and other local resources.

Hosting Clubs Will Agree To:

- Provide each student with a comprehensive list of local services including the names and contact information for at least three people not related to each other and independent from the host families and host counselor, who can provide assistance with any issues of students. These three should include both genders.
- Ensure that the host counselor for each student is not a member of the student's host family.
- Ensure the host counselor is trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including physical, sexual or emotional abuse, harassment or neglect. This training is achieved by completion of the NAYEN Youth Protection Awareness training and test required of all Rotary Club Counselors.
- Provide mandatory training for students on physical abuse, sexual abuse, harassment and neglect prevention and awareness of cultural differences and how and when to use the Rotarian Counselor and other local resources. This training is done at District level during Orientation twice during the exchange year.

- Not arrange exchange agreements outside of D5470's established structure (i.e. backdoor exchanges).

Rotary Clubs Engaged In Sponsoring Local Outbound Exchange Student(s) will:

- Conduct interviews with all applicants and their parents/legal guardians in sufficient time to meet district application deadline. The club is responsible for ensuring the applicant is suitable to be a Rotary Youth Exchange student prior to submitting his/her application to the District Committee.

Other District Committee Responsibilities

- The District RYE Committee will, with the cooperation of Country Contacts, ensure that all inbound and outbound students have appropriate Health, Accident and Liability coverage to meet District, RI and U.S. Department of State requirements.
- The District RYE Chair for Student Programs will see that a student data form (Visa Guarantee Form) is completed for all participating students and the completed form is submitted to RI at least one month prior to the start of the exchange.
- Country Contacts will submit copies of the following information on each inbound student to the District Committee's authorized Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) for SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) person at least two months prior to the commencement of the exchange: complete standard application, completed two page visa guarantee form, photo page of student's passport, and the first host family's application to host. The first host family must also show evidence of completion of a criminal background check and National Sex Offender Report as well as completion of the Youth Protection Awareness Training and test. This information will be used to prepare the DS2019 form required by U.S. Consulates. The completed original DS2019 will be sent to the appropriate Country Contact to be included with the package of information to be sent to the student prior to his/her departure for District 5470.

Reporting & Investigating Allegations Procedures

All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Reporting will be handled in accordance with the Youth Exchange Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting protocols developed by RI and the U.S. Department of State (incidents involving actual harm reported within 24 hours; all other incidents within 72 hours to the District 5470 RYE Chair). The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective agencies and legal investigations and will conduct its own independent investigation, as deemed necessary, in a manner which does not interfere with other investigations. The District Governor, and the District Youth Protection Officer, as well as the District RYE Chair, will be kept informed of progress of any Rotary directed investigations.

The District 5470 leadership is responsible for maintaining procedures for reporting, investigating and properly handling non-criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate, and for promulgating local, state and national laws relating to sexual abuse and harassment prevention and reporting.

Guidelines for Hearing Allegations

Any adult to whom a student reports an incident of sexual abuse or harassment is responsible for following these Allegation Reporting Procedures.

Taking a Report from Student:

- 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.
- 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 students.
- Get the facts, but don't interrogate. Ask the student questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the student that he/she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the student's story to the proper authorities.
- Be non-judgmental and reassure the student. Do not be critical of anything that has happened or of anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the student. Assure the student that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
- Record the conversation with the student in writing as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the student's words and record only what has been told to you.

Ensure the safety and well-being of the student: Remove the student from the situation immediately and from all contact with the alleged abuser/harasser. Give reassurance that this is for the student's own safety and is not a punishment. Immediately notify local law enforcement, the Rotary Club Counselor, Country Contact and District RYE Chair.

Do not challenge the alleged offender: The adult to whom the student reports must not contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of non-criminal harassment, the District RYE and District Governor are responsible for investigating and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the student has been moved to a safe environment.

Communication Protocol

When an allegation of harassment or abuse is received by any Rotarian, the following steps will be followed within 24 hours:

- Notification of the Youth Protection Officer as soon as possible
- Notification of the District Governor as soon as possible.
- Notification of the RYE Chairman

- All other adults will be notified on a “need to know” basis as determined by the YPO, the DG and the RYE Chairman.

The District Governor will serve as the communications officer when addressing the media, if necessary.

All allegations of sexual abuse or harassment must be reported to Rotary International and in the case of Inbound Youth

Exchange Students to the WESSEX Responsible Officer within 72 hours (within 24 hours in the case of serious incidents); the person responsible for doing so is the District RYE Chair. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

Follow-Up: After reporting allegations per the Communication Protocol, follow-up to make sure steps are being taken to address the situation. Rotarians and other program volunteers are not expected to conduct their own investigation of any allegations. This should only be done by trained law enforcement. Any adult against whom an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment is made will be removed from all contact with youth until the matter is resolved.

- A student involved in an allegation will be provided with a non-Rotarian counselor who can serve as advocate for the student and represent his/her interests.
- The student's natural parents and sponsor district RYE Chair must be contacted as soon as required reporting has been accomplished.

Post Allegation Report Guidelines

A cohesive and managed team approach will be needed to support the student after an allegation report. The student is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the host family or Rotary Club. After a report of harassment or abuse, students may or may not want to remain on their exchange. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary Club depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in the district, but change to a different host club.

It may be difficult for club members and host families to understand how the student is feeling, but it would be helpful for the student 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 student of their support at all times.

District RYE Committee will ensure support is provided to any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse or harassment; all criminal allegations are to be reported to the District Governor and to RI within 24 hours of learning of the incident; report all serious incidents (such as accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the District Governor and RI within 24 hours of learning of the incident.

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of the student. 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 against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

Reviewed and Updated: October 2019

Approved by RYE Committee