

Operations Manual

Appendix A.

District Youth Protection Policy. (Approved by the Corporate Board of Directors on May 8, 2018)

Developing and implementing an effective youth protection policy demonstrates a district's commitment to protecting Rotary youth program participants. This document provides a basic framework for a district policy for all youth programs. The sections below follow Rotary's certification requirements for Rotary Youth Exchange.

In September 2017, The Rotary Foundation ("TRF") formally identified youth program participants (RFCP¹) § 10.080. TRF has adopted sexual abuse and harassment prevention guidelines binding on all Rotarians, Clubs and Districts. *Id.* § 10.050. The level of care for District involved youth is governed by the level of interaction or risk. For this reason, Rotary Youth Exchange ("RYE") and any Rotary Youth Leadership ("RYLA") Programs have background evaluations standards appropriate to a youth's overnight experiences. Please review Forms 1a, 1b, and 2.

Other adult volunteer interactions with youth may be brief (less than 8 daytime hours) such as instruction, speaker presentations, or Club projects at the Interact, Rotaract or Club level. In these circumstances, short-form background checks are appropriate. See Forms 3a and 3b.

DISTRICT 5500 YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

1. Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth

District 5500 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

This policy is based on an examination of the District's successful long-term history of protecting District youth over decades and hundreds of youth programs.

2. Definitions

Volunteer or Youth Program Volunteer — Any adult involved with Rotary youth activities who interacts directly with youth, whether supervised or unsupervised and includes RYLA, Interact, Rotaract, Vocational, and Club sponsored programs involving youth.

For Youth Exchange, volunteers include, among others, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members; Rotarian counselors; Rotarians and non-Rotarians and their spouses and partners who work with students during activities or outings or who transport students to events; and host parents and other adult residents of the host home, including host siblings and other family members.

¹ The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies.

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Youth program participant — Anyone who participates in a Rotary youth program, whether child or adult

YCO – Youth Compliance Officer – District Officer

YSO – Youth Services Officer – District Officer

YPO – Youth Protection Officer – District Officer

YPO – Youth Program Director – District or Club Officer, includes any RYLA, RYE, Interact, Rotaract, Vocation or other Youth Program Director or Coordinator

3. Liability Insurance

District 5500 carries liability insurance with appropriate coverage and policy limits. This policy protects the organization from third-party claims and lawsuits alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers.

4. Club Compliance

The district governor is responsible for supervision and control of all youth activities in the district, including those associated with Rotary Youth Exchange. District 5500 will monitor all participating clubs and ensure that they comply with youth protection and Rotary Youth Exchange certification requirements.

All clubs that participate in Rotary Youth Exchange must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- ***A signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 5500 and RI policies***
- ***Confirmation that volunteers will be prohibited from contact with program participants until a written application, interview, reference check, and criminal background check have been conducted and clearance for unsupervised contact with program participants has been issued***
- ***All club materials that advertise the Youth Exchange program, including brochures, applications, policies, and websites***
- ***List of services in the area (rape and suicide hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)***
- ***Any club youth-protection training materials***

5. Volunteer Selection and Screening

All Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers interested in working with youth program participants must meet RI and district eligibility requirements. RI prohibits the membership and participation of any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment.

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If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and the law enforcement investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth program participants with whom the accused may have future contact, as well as the accused.

A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated as a youth program volunteer. Reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to his or her former position is not guaranteed.

Non-RYE / Non-RYLA Youth Program Volunteers will complete the required applications for consideration, reference check, database check, and approval by the particular Youth Program Director. In the event of denial or appeal, the completed application will be referred to the YSO or YPO. The District Clerk or YCO shall maintain a searchable database of all applications approved and denied. The District Clerk, the YSO, the YPO, and the YCO are jointly responsible for reviewing the database ("DB") for volunteer questionnaire denials.

Access to the database shall be limited to the DG, Clerk, YSO, YPO, YCO, and Youth Program for the event and volunteer in question. The use of the RYLA volunteer questionnaire forms 1a and 1b are appropriate for those volunteers where contact with a given minor is anticipated to occur over an extended period of time, or on multiple occasions such as Rotary Youth Leaders.

The Youth Program Director may, in his or her considered judgment, decline to require a completed questionnaire from a volunteer when risk is low, but only upon consideration of such factors as the age of the volunteer, the age of the minor, the number of other volunteers, professionals, and minors anticipated to accompany the minor, and the limited duration of volunteer services such as Rotary Youth Speakers.

All Youth Exchange Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers that have direct, unsupervised contact with program participants must:

- **Complete a volunteer agreement form**
- **RYE volunteers must complete an online application at: <https://yehub.net/S50-volapp>.**
- **Provide a list of personal references with contact information (it's recommended that references include no family members and no more than one Rotarian)**
- **Undergo reference and criminal background checks (subject to local laws and practices)**
- **Complete required training on their role and responsibilities prior to meeting with RYE students.**
- **Comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program**

Youth Exchange host families must also meet these selection and screening requirements:

- **Undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability, demonstrating:**
 - **Commitment to the safety and security of students**
 - **Appropriate motives for hosting a student that are consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange**
 - **Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student**
 - **Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being**

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- **Complete an online application at: <https://yehub.net/S50-hfapp>**
- **Undergo home visits with and without notice, both before and during the placement; home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families**

Note: All adult residents of the host home must meet all selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family or household staff who are full-time or part-time residents of the home.

Youth Exchange students must be appointed and receive emergency contact information for a Club-level Rotarian counselor who meets the criteria for all volunteers. Also:

- **A counselor must not be a member of the student's host family. It is also recommended that counselors not hold another role of authority with respect to the student's exchange (e.g., school principal, club president, district Youth Exchange chair).**
- **Counselors must be able to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise, including instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.**

6. Participant Selection and Screening for Outbound RYE Candidates

All students interested in the District 5500 Youth Exchange program must meet district guidelines and:

- **Complete an online application at: <https://yehub.net/S50-obapp>**
- **Be interviewed at the club and district levels**
- **Attend and participate in all club and district orientation and training sessions**
- **Note: If Short Term Exchanges are implemented, interested students must apply at <https://yehub.net/S50-stapp>**

All parents or legal guardians of Youth Exchange participants must also be interviewed at the club or district level to determine the student's suitability for program participation. If a Club lacks sufficient experience, it shall request the District Youth Exchange Officer or designee to assist with interviews.

7. Training

District 5500 and member clubs shall strive to provide youth-protection training and information on youth programs. The YSO will conduct at least one training session per year.

The District 5500 Youth Exchange program must provide youth-protection training and information to all students and volunteers. The YSO, YPO, or their designee will conduct the training sessions. Specifically, District 5500 will:

- **Adapt Rotary's Youth Protection Guide to reflect district guidelines, information on local customs and culture, and legal requirements**
- **Develop a training schedule that specifies who will be trained, how often, and how**

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- **Conduct specialized training for those involved in Youth Exchange:**
 - *District governor*
 - *District Youth Exchange officer and committee members*
 - *Club Youth Exchange officer and committee members*
 - *Rotarian counselors*
 - *Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events*
 - *Host families*
 - *Students (outbound and inbound)*
- **Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance**

8. Allegation Handling and Follow-Through

District 5500 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will handle them in accordance with the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with official investigations when conducting its own independent review.

District 5500 may appoint a youth protection officer or district review committee to evaluate and review files, policies, and allegations regularly.

9. Travel by Youth

Youth travel outside of the local community must comply with youth protection policies.

For all youth travel sponsored by District 5500 or its clubs, the following will be done before departure:

- Obtain written permission from the parents or legal guardians of program participants
- Give parents and legal guardians details about the travel, including locations, accommodations, itineraries, and the organizer's contact information
- When traveling more than 150 miles, or 240 kilometers, from the residence, verify that program participants have adequate insurance, including benefits for medical services, emergency medical evacuation, repatriation of remains, and legal liability

For the travel of Youth Exchange students outside their host communities, either with their host families or to attend Rotary events, District 5500 shall obtain written permission from the students' parents or legal guardians.

For all other Youth Exchange student travel that is not customarily a part of the exchange program, organizers must:

- **Receive authorization from District 5500 in advance**
- **Obtain written permission from the parents or legal guardians for travel outside of the local host community**
- **Provide parents or legal guardians details about the trip, including locations, accommodations, itineraries, and the organizer's contact information**

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10. District 5500 Youth Exchange Administration

The District 5500 Youth Exchange program, in collaboration with participating clubs, must also:

- **Confirm that all inbound students have insurance that meets or exceeds what is prescribed in the Rotary Code of Policies. District 5500 requires:**
 - **\$1,000,000 each incident**
 - **\$3,000,000 aggregate**
- **Store participant and volunteer records securely in accordance with all applicable privacy laws.**
- **Student and volunteer records will be stored online within the YEAH database management system.**
- **Provide each student a list of local services (rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.). This list must include the following district and club contacts:**
 - **For inbound students: Rotarian counselor, host club president, host district Youth Exchange chair, and host district governor**
 - **For outbound students: Rotarian counselor, sponsor club president, sponsor district Youth Exchange chair, sponsor district governor**
- **Provide each student with the names and contact information of at least two non-Rotarian resource people — one male and one female, who are not related to each other and do not have close ties to the host families or Rotarian counselor — who can help the students with any problems.**
- **Submit inbound program participants' data to RI before or shortly after the exchange begins.**
- **Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to students.**
- **Report all serious incidents (abuse or harassment allegations, accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI Youth Exchange staff within 72 hours.**
- **Prohibit placement of students outside of the district Youth Exchange program structure ("backdoor" exchanges).**
- **Establish criteria and procedures for a student's removal from the host family and arrange for contingent, temporary housing in advance.**
- **Develop contingency hosting plans that include prescreened families.**
- **Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host inbound students.**
- **Ensure that long-term program participants have multiple host families. It is recommended that long-term program participants be placed with three host families during their exchange.**
- **Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.**
- **Request a monthly report from each inbound and outbound program participant that includes information on current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The district Youth Exchange chair can then review the reports and assist program participants as needed.**

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ROTARY INTERNATIONAL'S STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2006

Forms:

- 1a Junior Counselor Application – ***Refer to District website for a current copy of this form.***
- 1b Adult Advisor Application – ***Refer to the District website for a current copy of this form.***
- 1c Delegate Application – ***Refer to the District website for a current copy of this form.***
- 3a District 5000 Rotary Youth Program Volunteer Questionnaire (Non-RYE / Non-RYLA)
(Short form)
- 3b Youth Volunteer Rotary Reference Check Questionnaire (Non-RYE / Non-RYLA)

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FORM 3A: ROTARY YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER QUESTIONNAIRE (NON-RYE/NON-RYLA)

Thank you for offering to serve as a Rotary Volunteer!

Name: _____

Address: _____

How Long at the Address: _____ Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Employer: _____

How Long with Employer: _____

Previous Employer (if recent employment is less than 5 years): _____

1. Have you served as a Rotary Youth Exchange Parent before? ____ Yes ____ No

2. Have you ever been a volunteer for any other Youth Programs?

Explain: _____

3. Have you been involved with any formal or informal accusations of misconduct with a minor?

____ Yes ____ No

4. Are you now, or have you been, a Rotarian? ____ Yes ____ No
Club _____ Years _____

5. Are you now, or have you been, a member of any youth or other service organization?
____ Yes ____ No

If so, describe: _____

6. List two references, one male, one female, familiar with your conduct around minors.

____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature

Date

For internal use only:

References contacted by: _____ on _____
Initials Date

DB Check _____ on _____
Name Initials Date

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Rotary Reference Check Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Reference #1 _____

Name of Person Calling References with these questions:

1. Are you comfortable leaving a child alone with _____
[Applicant]?

2. What experience with youth have you observed with _____
[Applicant]?

Extensive Experience _____ Yes _____ No

Little Experience _____ Yes _____ No

No Experience _____ Yes _____ No

3. Do you see any problem allowing the applicant to be in the company of children?
_____ Yes _____ No

4. What is your relationship to the applicant? _ Non-Relative _____ Non-Rotarian
Explain: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Reference #2 _____

Name of Person Calling References with these questions:

1. Are you comfortable leaving a child alone with _____
[Applicant]?

2. What experience with youth have you observed with _____
[Applicant]?

Extensive Experience _____ Yes _____ No

Little Experience _____ Yes _____ No

No Experience _____ Yes _____ No

3. Do you see any problem allowing the applicant to be in the company of children?
_____ Yes _____ No

4. What is your relationship to the applicant? _ Non-Relative _____ Non-Rotarian
Explain: _____

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Application ___ Approved _____ Denied

Signature

Printed Name

**ATTACH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE APPLICATION AFTER RESPONSES
AND SEND TO DISTRICT CLERK**

Rotary International District 5500
District Clerk, PO Box 65716, Tucson, AZ 85728-5716

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FORM 3b: ROTARY YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER QUESTIONNAIRE (NON-RYE/NON-RYLA)

Thank you for offering to serve as a Rotary Volunteer!

Name: _____

Address: _____

How Long at the Address: _____ Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Employer: _____

How Long with Employer: _____

Previous Employer (if recent employment is less than 5 years): _____

7. Have you served as a Rotary Youth Exchange Parent before? _____ Yes _____ No

8. Have you ever been a volunteer for any other Youth Programs?

Explain: _____

9. Have you been involved with any formal or informal accusations of misconduct with a minor?

_____ Yes _____ No

10. Are you now, or have you been, a Rotarian? _____ Yes _____ No
Club _____ Years _____

11. Are you now, or have you been, a member of any youth or other service organization?

_____ Yes _____ No

If so, describe: _____

12. List two references, one male, one female, familiar with your conduct around minors.

_____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

For internal use only:

References contacted by: _____ on _____

Initials Date

DB Check _____ on _____

Name Initials Date

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Rotary Reference Check Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Reference #1 _____

Name of Person Calling References with these questions:

5. Are you comfortable leaving a child alone with _____
[Applicant]?

6. What experience with youth have you observed with _____
[Applicant]?

Extensive Experience _____ Yes _____ No

Little Experience _____ Yes _____ No

No Experience _____ Yes _____ No

7. Do you see any problem allowing the applicant to be in the company of children?
_____ Yes _____ No

8. What is your relationship to the applicant? _ Non-Relative _____ Non-Rotarian
Explain: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Reference #2 _____

Name of Person Calling References with these questions:

5. Are you comfortable leaving a child alone with _____
[Applicant]?

6. What experience with youth have you observed with _____
[Applicant]?

Extensive Experience _____ Yes _____ No

Little Experience _____ Yes _____ No

No Experience _____ Yes _____ No

7. Do you see any problem allowing the applicant to be in the company of children?
_____ Yes _____ No

8. What is your relationship to the applicant? _ Non-Relative _____ Non-Rotarian
Explain: _____

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Application ___ Approved _____ Denied

Signature

Printed Name

**ATTACH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE APPLICATION AFTER RESPONSES
AND SEND TO DISTRICT CLERK
Rotary International District 5500
District Clerk, PO Box 65716, Tucson, AZ 85728-5716**