



# District 7120 Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy, District 7120 Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines and District 7120 Youth Exchange Crisis Management Plan

## District 7120 Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy

---

### 1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 7120 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 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 into contact.

### 2. Definitions

- **Volunteer.** Any adult 18 years old + involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities who has direct interactions, either supervised or unsupervised, with students. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Interact Advisors, RYLA counselors (Mom and Pops), trainers, 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).
- **Student.** Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Exchange, regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority. Rotaract would be excluded because that program is for young adults
- **Sexual abuse.** Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex.  
This includes but is not limited to:
  - Touching and non-touching offenses
  - Indecent exposure
  - Showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.
- **Sexual harassment.** 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 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, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of 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

### **3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance**

Rotary District 7120 Youth Exchange program is incorporated as Empire State Youth Exchange Program, Incorporated, under the laws of the state of New York, USA.

District 7120 program must carry adequate general liability insurance with coverage and limits appropriate for its geographic location. District 7120's policies are through Rotary International that is appropriate for the geographic location - Lockton Companies - Lexington Insurance Company

### **4. Volunteer Selection and Screening**

District 7120 will maintain in perpetuity all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors.

**Volunteers in the following Youth Exchange roles: Club Counselor, Club YEO, Country Officer and District Committee Members in District 7120 Youth Exchange Program must meet the following requirements:**

- Complete the direct link with Intellicorp to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices).
- Undergo personal interviews.
- Provide a list of references for the district to check.
- Complete the NAYEN Training on Youth Protection Awareness
- Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI policy prohibits any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment 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, additional safeguards must be put in place to ensure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future contact as well as for the protection of the accused. 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.

**Volunteers that are not in the District Youth Exchange roles described above but will have extended one on one time with the student must meet the following requirements.**

- Complete the direct link with Intellicorp to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices).

**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. Host families must demonstrate:
  - Commitment to the safety and security of students
  - Motivation for hosting a student 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
  - Understanding of Rotary Rules and guidelines
- Host families must complete the on-line application.
- Complete the direct link with Intellicorp to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and prac-

tices).

- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include announced and unannounced visits, both before 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 who are permanent or part-time residents in the home.
- Complete the NAYEN Training on Youth Protection Awareness

*Rotarian counselors* must meet the criteria for all volunteers, as well as the following:

- Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family.
- Counselors must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

## **5. Student Selection and Screening**

*All students* interested in participating in the District 7120 Youth Exchange program must meet these requirements

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

*All parents or legal guardians of students* interested in participating in the District 7120 Youth Exchange program must be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the program.

## **6. Training**

District 7120 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants.

Specifically, District 7120 will:

- Instruct Rotarians and Host families 18+ to take the NAYEN Youth Protection Awareness on-line training program and will give specific district guidelines, information on local customs and cultural issues, and legal requirements during training
- Develop a training calendar that defines the participants, frequency of training required for each volunteer position, and training methods to be used
- Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:
  - District governor - Volunteer application includes: Department of State (DOS) on-line training & NAYEN on-line training
  - District Youth Exchange committee members - Department of State (DOS) on-line training, NAYEN on-line training renewed every 3 years with renewal of Volunteer Application and annual District training
  - Club Youth Exchange YEO — Department of State (DOS) on-line training, NAYEN on-line training renewed every 3 years with renewal of Volunteer Application and annual District training
  - Club Counselors - Department of State (DOS) on-line training, NAYEN on-line training renewed every 3 years with renewal of Volunteer Application and annual District training
  - Other Rotarians that may include YE Committee Members and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events and this person(s) will have extended one on one time with the student will need to complete a criminal background check
  - Host families - member 18+ NAYEN on-line training part of their application process and training by the Club YEO
  - Students (outbound and inbound) - Part of the student's Orientation session conducted by the District's Student Protection Officer
  - Parents and legal guardians of students - Part of the Student's Orientation session conducted by the District's Student Protection Officer
- Rotary YEAH tracks that all participants have received the requisite training.

- Rotary YEAH maintains records of participation to ensure compliance.

## **7. District 7120 Responsibilities**

- Establish procedures for reporting, investigating, and handling noncriminal offenses or historical cases that law enforcement chooses not to investigate.
- All inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance at the following levels: Accident and sickness - \$1,000,000, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit - \$100,000, Emergency Evacuation (Medical) - \$50,000, Repatriation - \$50,000, Emergency Evacuation (Non-Medical) Personal Liability - \$500,000. Foreign Policies are reviewed and approved by our Insurance Chair to determine if extra coverage is required.
- District 7120 provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hot lines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.) on the Emergency Contact list that is sent to them before they arrive.
- The District 7120 Emergency contact list includes: sending club counselor, host and sending club presidents, host and sending district governors, host and sending district chairs, and two non-Rotarian resource people (both male and female).
- District 7120 will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the exchange begins.
- District 7120 provides emergency contact phone numbers to Youth Exchange students. These are located on the Emergency Contact list and on the back of their RI ID Card.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.
- Appoint an independent lawyer, therapist, or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
- Report all criminal allegations to RI within 72 hours.
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures annually by District Chairs.

## **8. Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

District 7120 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accordance with the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

## **9. Follow-through and Review Guidelines**

District 7120 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will ensure that each allegation is investigated thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with other investigations when conducting its own independent reviews

## **10. Club Compliance**

District 7120 will monitor all participating clubs within the district and ensure that they comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. All clubs that wish to apply to the district for certification must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- All materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Exchange program, including promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.
- List of services in the area (rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- Club abuse and harassment prevention training program materials

Participating clubs must agree to carry out the following:

- Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 7120 and RI policies.
- If not coordinated by the district, conduct criminal background checks and reference checks for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to, adult residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all

Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact with youth. All volunteers must complete and sign the Youth Volunteer Affidavit.

- Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both before and during the placement.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- Follow the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines.
- Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District 7120 Youth Exchange program structure (so-called backdoor exchanges).
- Set procedures for removal of a student from the host family, including establishing criteria for moving a student and locating available back-up temporary housing in advance.
- Develop contingency hosting plans that include prescreened, 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 multiple host families.
- Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list, including information for dentists, doctors, places of worship, counselors, suicide and rape crisis hotlines, etc.
- 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 at least three people — both males and females who are not related to each other and do not have close ties to the host families or club counselor — who can help the students with any issues or problems as found on the Emergency Contact List.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, deaths) involving Youth Exchange students to the District's Student Protection Officer.
- Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.

### **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 into contact.

*Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002*

## **District 7120 Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all youth program participants and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. **The safety and well-being of young people must always be the first priority.**

### **Definitions**

- **Sexual abuse.** Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex. This includes nontouching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.
- **Sexual harassment.** 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 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, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of 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

### **Who should determine if it is abuse or harassment?**

Upon hearing allegations, adults should not determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Instead, after ensuring the safety of the student, the adult should immediately report all allegations to District 7120's Student Protection Officer.

## **Guidelines for Incident Reporting**

**For all allegations of abuse or neglect:**

### **FIRST**

- **What to do if your exchange student tells you of Harassment and/or Abuse**
  - **Listen attentively & acknowledge** that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
  - **Remain calm and make sure student feels safe**
  - **Encourage student** to share with you what happened and who was involved
  - **Make detailed notes** including date & time – ask questions that establishes facts: who what, when, Where and how. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking “why” questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives. Remember that your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.
  - **Don't promise to keep secrets** & explain the necessity of informing Protection Officer
  - **Protect the student** ensuring their safety and well-being by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the youth that this is being done for his or her safety and is not a punishment.
  - **Avoid Gossip and Blame** don't tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Be careful to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.
  - **District 7120 maintains the privacy** (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person by enforcing the following procedures: Discuss only with those required by the guidelines and limit details to report avoiding email discussions or other social media options
  - **Don't challenge the offender** - don't contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of noncriminal harassment, the district governor is responsible for follow-through and can designate this task to the district youth protection officer or district review committee.

## SECOND

- **Contact the Student Protection Officer (SPO) who will**
  - Gather facts on allegation
  - Contact appropriate authorities immediately of all sexual abuse or harassment. First to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation and then to the club and district leadership for follow-through. A signed, written report (LDSS 2221A Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment must be filed by a mandated report with 48 hours of an oral report. Submit the report with the local child protective services. In District 7120 the appropriate law enforcement office is where the incident took place.
  - Contact the Youth Services Chairperson immediately
  - Service as point of contact for all agencies involved
  - Advocate for the victim to assure help is provided
  - Act as link to the professional care agencies
  - Document all details
  - Serve as primary contact for student, parents, host family, Social Services, police, other authorities
  - Act as link to professional caring agencies
  - Offer student independent non-Rotarian counseling
  - Remove abuser from all contact with victim and other students

## THIRD

- The SPO will contact the district chair who will:
  - Notify District Governor & keep him/her informed
  - Notify Youth Services Director & keep him/her informed
  - Notify Host Club Chair/Counselor/President
  - Notify Country Officer (Youth Exchange)
  - Determine who will contact students parents & Sponsor Rotary District
  - Notify Rotary International within 72 hours.
  - Emphasize confidentiality of information and need to not speculate or comment
  - Assure proper authorities are contacted
  - Assure students parents or legal guardian have been notified
  - Provide student option of staying or going home once stabilized
  - Remove abuser from all contact with victim and other students
  - Cooperate with police involved in investigation

### **The following should be noted:**

1. District 7120 has a zero tolerance policy for abuse and harassment.
2. Any adult involved in A Rotary Youth program against whom an allegation is made will be removed from all contact with youth until the matter is resolved.
3. Any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment will be terminated from Rotary club membership.
4. Any non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment will be prohibited from working with Rotary youth.

### **For all incidents involving accidents, early return, crimes, etc.:**

#### **Youth Exchange Only**

- Notify the district chair immediately (or vice chair if the chair is unavailable)
- Students will meet with their counselor and /or the youth exchange chair and the district chair. It will be the responsibility of the district chair to determine if the infraction warrants removal from the program. Removal will be immediate in cases where:
  - violence has been threatened
  - the student has been expelled from school

If the incident does not warrant early return, the district chair will write an incident report that will include the problem, a plan for improvement and the consequences for failure to improve (early return home). The student and district chair will sign the document and receive copies. The district chair will keep copies on file until such time as the student returns home. Should the student fail to improve, the student will be sent home using the steps below.

- The district chair will notify the District Governor, Youth Services Director, Rotary International, the country officer, the host club counselor and youth exchange officer.
- The club youth exchange officer will notify the host club president and the student's natural parents. The host club youth exchange chair will make plans for the immediate and direct route return of the student to the country of origin.
- The country officer will notify the sponsor district contact.

## **Follow-through Procedures**

The District 7120 youth protection officer must ensure that the following steps are taken immediately after an abuse allegation is reported.

- Confirm that the youth program participant has been removed from the situation immediately and has no contact with the alleged abuser or harasser.
- If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the district youth protection officer or district review committee should coordinate an independent review of the allegations.
- Ensure that the student receives immediate support services.
- Offer the young person an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the youth program.
- Contact the student's parents or legal guardian.
  - 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. If the student and the student's parents choose for the student to return home, consult with police before making travel arrangements. If an investigation is pending, the police may not approve of the student leaving the country.
- Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with any other young participants in Rotary programs and activities while investigations are conducted.
- Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
- Inform the district governor and Youth Services Director of the allegation. Either the district governor, district youth protection officer, or other district youth program chair must inform RI of the allegation within 72 hours and provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the status of investigations.
- After the authorities have completed their investigation, the district must follow through to make sure the situation is being addressed. Specifically, District 7120 will conduct an independent and thorough review of any allegations of sexual abuse or harassment.

## **Post-allegation Report Considerations**

### **Responding to the needs of the youth program participant**

- District 7120 will adopt a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting a young person after an allegation report. The youth program participant is likely to feel embarrassed or confused and may become withdrawn.
- After a report of harassment or abuse, students may have mixed feelings about remaining on their exchange. If they do choose to stay, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary club. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in country but change to a different host club.
- Although club members and host families may have trouble understanding how the student is feeling, the student would find it helpful to know that the club continues to be reassuring and supportive. Club members and host families may feel ambivalent about their roles and unclear about their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

## **Addressing issues within the club**

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of youth. Club members should not speculate or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Rotarians must not become involved in investigations. Making comments about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers violates both the Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth and Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

### **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 into contact.

*Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002*



## **District 7120 Youth Exchange Crisis Management Plan**

- **Safety and Medical help for involved student(s)**
  - Immediate response to scene or hospital – **Rotary Club YEO/Counselor and/or District Committee member and/or Host Family member**
  - Coordinate information on students with hospital and authorities - **Rotary Club YEO/Counselor and/or District Committee member and/or Host Family member**
  - Notify and coordinate information to
    - i. District Leadership to be notified: - **District Chair**
      1. District Chair will inform: **District Governor, District Youth Services Director, District Inbound Chair, District Outbound Chair, Student Protection Officer, District Youth Exchange Insurance Officer**
      2. Rotary International: [youthexchange@rotary.org](mailto:youthexchange@rotary.org) - **District Chair**
  - Notify the Department of State: - **District Chair**
  - Notify and coordinate information to involved students country YE personnel – **Country Officer/ District Inbound Chair**
  - Notify student's Medical Insurance Agency – **YE Insurance Officer**
- **Isolation – Anonymity of students from media**
  - The District Governor will annually appoint a **Public Information Officer** for Youth Exchange who will provide information to the media
    - i. This person must be familiar with the laws regarding name release and have good contact with the authorities
    - ii. In case of crisis all information to the news media will be handled by the **Public Information Officer**. ALL communications must be reviewed by the District Governor.
    - iii. Everyone on the crisis team must defer comments to the **Public Information Officer**
- **In case of death – Proper notification of families/next of kin**
  - Procedures established by law in area of jurisdiction must be followed – **District Chair**
  - Due to modern communication systems i.e. Internet, cell phones etc. the normal procedures may be circumvented by involved person without knowing the consequences of their actions
  - International notification may have to route through a Consulate of State Department Officer. This may cause delays that will allow other communication listed about to be the initial notification path.
  - Notify school districts of all program students for preparation of grief counseling for students and friends – **District Chair, District Inbound Chair, Club YEO**
  - Process of repatriation –seek out funeral homes with international capability - **District Youth Exchange Insurance Officer**
    - i. Create task lists involving all involved parties and resources - **District Chair**
- **Proper notification structure – District Chair**
  - Notification of involved host families
    - i. Assign this task to the **Inbound District Chair** of the Student's Rotary Club.
    - ii. This may be the time to inform international partners of involved student country
  - Notification of non-involved host families and students
    - i. Assign the task to **Outbound District Chair** of each active Rotary Club hosting and Inbound Student
    - ii. This is the time to inform all other international partners
- **Notification of outbound families and students**
  - If the incident occurs during the season of student outbound selection, your group to notify will include these students and families
  - Assign the task to **Club YEO** of current outbound students and families
- **Notification of all other Rotary Partners and friends – District Chair**
  - Information by now will be released by authorities. New media will have all information they can make new out of.

- Public memorial services will be planned for students
  - i. Make plans for a private memorial service for inbound students and host families
- Plan group counseling for all students and crisis team

**8. Continuing professional care of involved students and families**

- Arrangements must be made for continuing care for involved students and families
- Arrange at least one professional counseling session for each involved student and family