

Attachment B
Rotary District 6900
Recommendations to Clubs
Regarding Prevention of Abuse and Harassment

Introduction

District 6900 has adopted the Rotary District 6900 Policy for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment (the “District Policy”) and the Rotary District 6900 Reporting Guidelines for Allegations of Abuse and Harassment (the “District Guidelines”) in an effort to enhance existing protections at both a club and District level for youth and vulnerable persons who are involved in Rotary programs, activities or events. Please refer to the District Policy for definition of terms used here such as “abuse”, “harassment” and “protected person”.

The District strongly recommends that each club adopt the District Policy and apply the District Guidelines so that there is a consistent approach to these issues throughout our District. The specific recommendations below will assist clubs in that process. Whenever abuse or harassment is specifically alleged, the club’s policy and guidelines must apply. If a club has not developed its own policy and guidelines, the District Policy and Guidelines shall be applied.

Even if no allegation is made, but you become aware of conduct to which the District Policy and Guidelines might apply, refer to these helpful documents to see if they are in fact applicable. Use common sense to determine if the situation requires taking the steps that are explained, but if there is any doubt, always err on the side of protection of youth and vulnerable persons.

Recommendations for Rotary Clubs:

1. Establish a club policy on the prevention of abuse and harassment.

We recommend that each club either specifically adopt by resolution the District Policy, which is attached, or draft its own policy which includes the District Policy by reference.

2. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse or harassment.

Adopt or adapt the District Guidelines that are attached as schedule “B” to the District Policy.

Rotarians and volunteers should know they have a legal, ethical and moral responsibility to report abuse and/or harassment to the appropriate authorities. Clubs should promote an attitude that reporting suspicions and/or taking action are the right things to do.

Individual Rotarians should not attempt to deal with a problem alone. For all Rotary programs, activities or events involving youth or vulnerable persons, reporting must adhere to the club or District Guidelines. In addition, for Youth Exchange all complaints, allegations or suspicions should be reported immediately to the student's Rotarian counselor and they in turn must report to the District Youth Exchange Chair.

Debriefing sessions following a reported incident are excellent for improving procedures and identifying new training requirements. Such sessions also provide an opportunity to establish a written record of the incident.

3. Introduce a process where protected persons can talk in confidence and safely with an independent person.

Ensure that youth and vulnerable persons are aware that they have the right to talk privately to someone responsible for their overall safety and welfare. It is important that protected persons know who this individual is and how to contact him or her.

With respect to Youth Exchange, this person would be the student's Rotarian counselor.

4. Prepare Rotarians and volunteers to work effectively with all protected persons.

Make the club policies clear and explain effective procedures for various programs, activities and events. A copy of the club's policy to prevent abuse or harassment and instructions on what to do if abuse or harassment is discovered or suspected should be provided to each Rotarian and volunteer at each such program, activity or event. If there is no such policy, the District Policy and Guidelines should be provided instead.

5. Plan club activities so as to minimize situations where abuse or harassment may occur.

Resources should be organized in such a way that protected persons have a supervisor of the same gender. Avoid situations in which one adult supervises one youth or vulnerable person. For example, another adult should accompany a Rotarian providing transportation to one child.

6. Ensure all Rotarians and other volunteers have clear roles.

Depending on the nature of the program, activity or event and the extent of involvement, clubs should consider giving everyone involved a written description of their roles and the tasks involved. This can be a simple document, and preparing it will help to make clear the priorities, the risks, and how the risks can be minimized.

7. Ensure supervision as a means of protecting youth and vulnerable persons.

An individual should be designated in each Rotary program, activity or event who is responsible for protecting youth and vulnerable persons from abuse or harassment. The designated individual should be provided with the club policy and guidelines or the District Policy and Guidelines and ensure that he or she understands the material.

8. Reinforce our ethical, moral and legal responsibilities in everything we do.

All Rotary clubs, individual Rotarians, and volunteers are responsible for protecting the safety and security of everyone encountered in the provision of services to our community. We have a special obligation to youth and vulnerable persons. Rotarians are obliged to intervene if they become aware of information about abuse and/or harassment of a person through their involvement with a Rotary club program, activity or event.

Rotarians are obliged to do those things that protect and reinforce the physical and emotional safety and security of themselves and others. This includes operating a motor vehicle safely, ensuring the proper use of safety equipment, avoiding the use of illegal drugs, and avoiding the consumption of alcohol while providing service to others.

Rotarians are obliged to take appropriate action when they observe other Rotarians or volunteers behaving in ways that contradict the values contained in our District and club policies.