Youth Protection Policy

Protecting Youth, Your Rotary Club, and You

Proposed Revision May 2026

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION 2
II. DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES 2
III. VOLUNTEER CERTIFICATION/YOUTH INVOLVEMENT LIMITATIONS 6
IV. TRAINING IN YOUTH PROTECTION 8
V. AWARENESS AND PREVENTION 8
VI. ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES 8
Appendix A: Media Release Form 9
Appendix B: Procedure for Obtaining District Background Check 10
Appendix C: Youth Protection Policy Compliance Affidavit 11
Appendix D: District 7570 Youth Travel Permission Form 12

TERMINOLOGY

D7570 = DISTRICT 7570
DYPO – DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER
DYPP = DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY
ESSEX = EASTERN STATES STUDENT EXCHANGE
RYLA = ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS
YE = YOUTH EXCHANGE
YP = YOUTH PROTECTION

I. INTRODUCTION

Rotary International (RI) has a long and successful history of providing service to youth. Each year more than 250,000 young people participate in Rotary International youth programs such as Interact, EarlyAct, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and Rotary Youth Exchange (YE). In addition, many club and District mentoring programs, immunization efforts, job training programs, literacy projects, and other initiatives are designed specifically to help young people.

RI takes youth protection very seriously. This policy focuses on Youth Protection and adopts the principles and practices outlined in the Rotary International governing document, the "**Rotary Youth Protection Guide**."

Rotary International and District 7570 (D7570) strive to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians and other adult volunteers must safeguard the youth and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

1. OVERVIEW OF DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY (DYPP)

   D7570 has developed a DYPP that meets the requirements of RI for Rotary Youth Programs. The policy is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants, both youth and adults, in D7570 Youth Programs. The implementation of this policy will provide protection for youth and require all club officers and directors to perform due diligence in the selection and supervision of volunteers participating in District sponsored youth programs.

2. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

   The DYPP will apply to all Adults participating in youth programs. DYPP orientation and training will be provided to all youth service program volunteers.

II. DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. VOLUNTEERS
   - A. Adults participating in Rotary youth programs with limited or infrequent contact, such as at club meetings, seminars, community events, or fundraisers.
   - B. Do not need a background check (see Certified Volunteers)

2. BACKGROUND CHECK
   - A. A process used by the District to verify that an individual is who they claim to be and checks law enforcement record for criminal history. The DYPO can approve alternative background checks such as those made for public school employees or law enforcement.

B. Frequency is determined by DYPO.
C. Required to be a certified volunteer.
D. In general, a background check need not be conducted for adults who will have only non-supervisory casual or occasional interaction with youth, such as club meetings, service projects, conference seminars, community events, and fundraisers.
E. Inquiries as to the necessity of a background check should be made to the DYPO.
F. The procedure is detailed in Appendix B.

3. CERTIFIED VOLUNTEERS
   A. Adult volunteers who have cleared a background check to become certified.
   B. Certification is required because they are transporting youth or have a supervisory role (minimum age 21) when present with and in control of youth for a Rotary Youth Activity.
   C. Youth Exchange officers, approved volunteers, and host families are considered certified as they are subject to the ESSEX Youth Exchange Protection Policy and the ESSEX background check.

4. YOUTH ACTIVITY SUPERVISORS
   A. Supervisory role includes, but is not limited to, Interact and EarlyAct advisors, RYLA organizers, and chaperones. Examples are:
      a) Activity leader (at any time during the Activity).
      b) Driver of a vehicle transporting youth for the Activity. If transporting a single youth, the Certified Volunteer must have written or electronic permission from an adult family member who lives with the youth.
      c) Spending overnight in the same residence as youth involved in the Activity.
   B. Supervisors, if not already certain that background checks are current for their volunteers who fit the policy requirement for needing a background check, must provide a list a week in advance of the activity to the DYPO (or designee).

5. DISTRICT YOUTH PROTECTION OFFICER (DYPO)
   A. Assist, as needed, in delivering training in Youth Protection (YP)
   B. Assist Clubs and District Committees with YP issues
   C. Determine what alternative background checks are acceptable, such as those made for public school employees or law enforcement.
   D. Receive and process volunteer background checks requested by D7570 (or a designee approved by the DG), using the industry provider approved by the DG.

E. Retain Background Check results for at least 2 years. Note: Approved alternative background checks results, such as those made for public school employees or law enforcement, are housed in their respective systems.

F. By December 1 of each year, provide to the DG an annual review and program evaluation of the District's DYPP which will take into account any current Virginia, Tennessee, Federal, and Rotary Youth Protection policies, laws, and practices. Report to the DG any suggestions deemed necessary to provide YP to D7570 in a manner consistent with requirements of RI.

G. Monitor the DYPP in D7570 and its administration at both the District and Club levels, including complaint proceedings and a record of all allegations made under the DYPP.

H. The DYPO (or designee) receives all background check results and will promptly send a notice to the appropriate person (club president or District committee chair) indicating that a volunteer applicant is certified. The DYPO will promptly notify the DG if a candidate is "disqualified." The DYPO will maintain confidentiality and will discuss with the DG the proper course of action to take regarding the disqualified applicant, and will notify the club president or District chair, whichever is applicable.

I. The DYPO will maintain a list of individuals whose names have been submitted and status of their background check.

6. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

   A. The District Governor (DG) shall confirm that D7570 will comply with RI Youth Protection Policies, incorporation, general liability insurance requirements, and any requirements added after the effective date of the D7570 DYPP.

   B. The DG will appoint the DYPO

   C. The District shall provide an independent contractor licensed to provide professional background screening services. The independent contractor will maintain records for at least 2 years of all volunteers for whom background checks are processed under this policy.

   D. A Youth Protection Compliance Committee may be appointed by the DG.

7. DISTRICT COMMITTEE CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

   A. Chairs of District committees that provide services to youth and have contact with youth will require members of their committee to read the DYPP and will ensure compliance.

   B. Chairs of District committees that provide services to youth and have contact with youth are required to certify to the DYPO annually that the committee will comply with the District Youth Protection Policy *(see Appendix C).*

8. CLUB PRESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
    A. Club presidents will inform club members of the requirements of the youth protection policy using club newsletters, announcements at weekly meetings and website announcements, as appropriate.
    B. Club Youth Exchange, RYLA, Interact, EarlyAct and Rotaract chairs will be required to read this policy and will assist in providing the necessary training for each volunteer and in organizing the volunteers to complete the background checks.
    C. Presidents of clubs are required to annually certify *(see Appendix C)* to the DYPO that their club will comply with the District Youth Protection Policy.

9. CLUB RESPONSIBILITY
    A. Comply with this policy.
    B. The club will ensure that each volunteer participates in a volunteer training session on DYPP. The volunteer training may be conducted in a training session sponsored either by the club, the District, or a District committee. A training session shall consist of a review of the DYPP, and specific guidelines related to the specific youth program.
    C. It is recommended that each club have a designated Youth Coordinator to ensure all youth protection policies herein are achieved.

10. YOUTH
    A. Youth are defined as individuals under the age of eighteen. Certain youth activities may specify that regardless of age, the attendee cannot drive themselves.

11. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEDIA PUBLICATIONS
    A. A waiver (see *Photo Release Form – Appendix A)* signed by youth's parent/guardian must be on file prior to the publication or distribution of any image of any youth participating in a Rotary sponsored event who is not a registered member of EarlyAct or Interact (*their membership includes media release approval).* This includes any images used in Rotary International publications. All Rotary and affiliated organizations must ensure thoughtful and restrained use of photos/media clips and images. The event-sponsoring District or Club must maintain a file including these signed waivers for a minimum of 3 years from date of signature. All photographers, photography, or media information must have prior approval of the chair of the Rotary sponsored event.

12. DISTRICT LIABILITY INSURANCE

A. The U.S. Rotary Club and District Liability Insurance Program provides general liability insurance coverage to all active U.S. Rotary clubs and Districts for their liability arising out of bodily injury and property damage to a third party, subject to policy terms and conditions. Volunteers are included in the Named Insured on the general liability policy.

III. VOLUNTEER CERTIFICATION/YOUTH INVOLVEMENT LIMITATIONS

1. VOLUNTEER SCREENING AND CERTIFICATION

A. Background Checks must be conducted on all adult volunteers who have a supervisory role or significant interaction with youth (see CERTIFIED VOLUNTEERS). Additionally, all District officials, committee chairs, club, or District officers who may have a supervisory role or significant interaction with youth must be certified.

B. To become certified, the individual must:

a) Submit for and clear a Background Check
b) Meet Rotary International/District eligibility requirements for working with youth.
c) Participate in District or Club Youth Protection orientation or training.
d) Understand and comply with the DYPP.

2. POLICIES OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

A. If Rotary volunteers participate in school-based youth activities or youth activities with outside organizations, they must abide by all youth protection policies of the applicable school District or outside organization.

3. ACTIVITIES INVOLVING OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS

A. If Youth activities involve overnight stays, all volunteers/chaperones must be “certified” through the background screening required by this policy. Adults and youth of the same gender may occupy dormitory or double accommodation if separation barriers or privacy zones exist to keep sleeping areas and dressing areas separated from youth areas. If separate bathroom facilities are not available for male/female and youth/adults, separate times will be scheduled and posted. If a youth indicates “Other” as gender, the activity supervisor will follow up to handle on a case-by-case basis.

B. In all coed youth activities involving overnight stays, youth must be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult certified volunteer.

C. RYLA overnight chaperones and Youth Exchange certified volunteers have special training. For any other overnight activity, the adults involved must complete the "Youth Protection Training" and the "Youth Protection Attestation" quiz in the MyRotary Learning Center. Send the result to the Youth Activity Supervisor who will forward to the DYPO

D. Volunteers/Chaperones will not enter the room of any youth unless accompanied by another chaperone, and only in exigent or emergency situations.

E. While attending overnight RYLA events, all volunteers/chaperones will abide by the policies and guidelines set forth by the RYLA committee. ONE-ON-ONE CONTACT

4. ONE-ON-ONE CONTACT

A. One-on-one contact between an adult and youth is not permitted with two limited exceptions set forth below. In situations that require personal meetings, the meetings are to be conducted in view of other adults and/or youth.

- ❖ Exception #1: Host family members and YE approved volunteers may meet with Rotary Youth Exchange Students one-on-one.
- ❖ Exception #2: Certified Volunteers may transport a single youth to and from Rotaract / Rotary club meetings and other Rotary events as long as there is written or electronic permission from an adult family member who lives with the youth.

B. Volunteers/chaperones are not permitted to leave a scheduled event with any youth, unless previously approved for specific reasons by the Youth Activity Supervisor.

5. YOUTH TRAVEL

A. Youth travel outside of the local community must comply with the youth protection policy as noted below. Each club or District Committee may develop their own permission slip or utilize the sample form (Appendix D).

B. Obtain written permission from the parents or legal guardians of program participants

C. Give parents and legal guardians details about the travel, including locations, accommodations, itineraries, and the organizers contact information.

D. If the family member driving does not live in the same household as the youth, we need a Youth Travel Permission Form (see Appendix D) from an adult family member who does.

IV. TRAINING IN YOUTH PROTECTION

1. VOLUNTEER TRAINING
    A. Volunteers will receive training in accordance with this policy and guidelines established for specific events and/or activities. Volunteers will also be oriented with and abide by all policies established by schools and colleges where Rotary sponsored events or activities may take place.
    B. Although not every Rotaract and Rotarian will be involved with youth activities, they must be aware of District Youth Protection Policies. Each Rotaract and Rotary Club in District 7570 shall annually offer Youth Protection Policy orientation during a club meeting and make the policy available to its members.

2. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING
    A. D7570 shall ensure that all District leaders, officers, committee chairs, and appointed organizers of youth programs are trained in the D7570 DYPP.

V. AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

1. See Section 4 "Awareness and Prevention" in the Rotary Youth Protection Guide

VI. ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES

1. See Section 5 "Responding and Reporting" in the Rotary Youth Protection Guide

It is the goal of District 7570 to ensure a safe environment for all youth in Rotary and Rotaract sponsored events as well as ensuring that all adult volunteers adhere to these policies and guidelines. Failure to abide by these guidelines may warrant an additional investigation by Rotary District officials. This policy shall be reviewed and updated by Rotary District 7570 officials annually.

Appendix A: Media Release Form



For any youth not a member of Interact, EarlyAct, or Youth Exchange who participates in a Rotary Youth Program

I hereby grant Rotary International, Rotary Clubs of District 7570, their Rotarian members, program personnel of Rotary youth programs (including, but not limited to, Interact, EarlyAct, RYLA and Youth Exchange), volunteers, associates, and designated representatives

- permission to use my likeness in all publications, including websites, without payment or any other consideration.

- permission to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, distribute, print, publish, electronically or otherwise, the photo(s) and or video(s) for their programs, events, bulletins, newsletters, websites, or any other lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect the final product, including spoken, written, or electronic copy related to the use of media.

I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of Rotary District 7570, or its program personnel, volunteers, associates, and designated representatives and will not be returned.

I hereby hold and release and forever discharge Rotary International, Rotary Clubs of District 7570, their Rotarian members, program personnel of Rotary youth programs (including but not limited to Interact, EarlyAct, RYLA and Youth Exchange), volunteers, associates and designated representatives from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other person acting on my behalf, or on the behalf of my estate, have or may have by reason of this authorization.

_____ _____

(Signature) (Date)

_____

(Printed Name)

If the person signing above is under age 18, there must be consent from a parent or guardian, as follows:

I hereby certify that I am the parent or guardian of _____, named above, and do hereby give my consent without reservation to the forgoing on behalf of person named above.

_____ _____

(Parent/Guardian's Signature) (Date)

_____

(Parent/Guardian's Printed Name)

Appendix B: Procedure for Obtaining District Background Check

Rotary District 7570

Rotary Youth Exchange approved volunteers, primary/secondary school employees, and law enforcement officers have acceptable screening and do not need a District Background Check. Volunteers must email the District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO) or designee from their school or law enforcement email account to verify their employment. Including a photo of their employee badge is recommended.

The DYPO will provide their email address, and that of the designee, in their annual communication to District and Club leaders requesting updated Youth Protection Policy Compliance Affidavit.

District 7570 contracts with an industry provider for the background checks required by the District Youth Protection Policy (DYPP). It is the responsibility of each Youth Activity Supervisor to ensure compliance with the DYPP. If the supervisor cannot confirm that background checks are current, they must submit a volunteer list to the DYPO (or designee) at least one week before the activity. The District website has a page in the Youth Protection section for requesting a District background check or submitting a list of names to be checked. The page asks for the volunteer's name, email address, cell phone number (optional), and the club to be billed for the check. The information is entered into the industry provider's system by the DYPO (or designee).

The volunteer is sent an email by the provider with a secure link to provide personal information (SS#, DOB, address, etc.) so that the provider can perform the background check. It is important that the volunteer be instructed to complete the submission of all information and authorize the background check electronically in one Internet session. If the submission is interrupted, it will be necessary to have the District Youth Protection Officer request the provider to start the process over and this will cause a delay.

The cost for an individual background check is included in the annual budget approved at District Legislative Assembly (DLA). Committees or Clubs conducting youth-related activities must budget for background checks and they will be billed by the District Treasurer.

Disqualifying Criteria

For any negative result, the District Youth Protection Officer will review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. The District Youth Protection Officer will refer all cases to the District Governor. If a person is charged with any criminal offense classified as misdemeanors, they may be suspended pending the disposition of the case.

Appendix C: Youth Protection Policy Compliance Affidavit

Rotary District 7570

STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

Protecting Youth, your Rotary Club, and You

Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotaract and Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotaract, 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.

District 7570 has developed a Youth Protection Policy that will meet the requirements of Rotary International for the Youth Exchange Program (YE), Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and Interact. The policy is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants, both youth and adults, in district Rotary youth service programs. The implementation of the policy will provide protection for the youth involved in district sponsored Rotary programs and require all club officers and directors to perform due diligence in the selection and supervision of volunteers participating in district sponsored youth service programs.

I certify, in accordance with Rotary District 7570 Youth Protection Policy, in my Rotaract, Rotary leadership role (district officer, district committee chair, club president, club president-elect, appointed organizer of youth programs), that I shall comply, uphold and support said policy in its entirety. I shall also ensure that all officers or organizers of youth related programs under my direction, receive a copy and familiarize themselves with said policy, through training or orientation conducted by myself or other designated persons, of the requirement to comply with the Rotary District 7570 Youth Protection Policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Club name _____

Rotary, Rotaract Leadership Position (Please Circle Your Position

District Officer District Committee Chair Club President Club President-Elect

Rotary Member Youth Program Organizer Rotary Volunteer

This Affidavit shall be renewed and completed annually at District training seminars administered for District Officers, District Committee Chairs, Club Presidents, Club President-Elect, and other Youth Program Organizers. Completed affidavits shall be kept on file by the District Youth Protection Officer.

Appendix D: District 7570 Youth Travel Permission Form

Rotary District 7570

Youth Name_____Date of Birth_____

Sex: Male_____ Female_____ Youth Cell # _____

High School _____Sponsoring Rotary Club_____

Rotaract / Rotary Contact Name_____Phone #_____

Youth Home Address_____

Parent/Guardian who resides with youth _____

Home Phone_____Work Phone_____Cell Phone_____

Emergency Contact (if unable to reach parent/guardian) _____

Home Phone_____Work Phone_____Cell Phone_____

Significant medical information/allergies/medication in case of an emergency:

_____

Dates(s) of travel_____

Travel Specifics (Destination, Accommodations, Itinerary, etc.)

_____

_____

I give permission for my youth _____to travel with the

_____ Rotary Club per the travel arrangements listed above.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (in same residence as youth) Date