Rotary Club of Maryville
Youth Protection Policy

Purpose:

This policy is designed to comply with Rotary International and Rotary District policies. The intent is to clarify the expectation of how these International and District policies are applied at the Club level. This Policy does not address Youth Exchange policies as these are addressed in International and District Policies.

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth:

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

Definitions:

Club – Rotary Club of Maryville

District – Rotary District 6780

RI – Rotary International

Volunteer — Any adult involved with Rotary youth activities who interacts directly with youth, whether supervised or unsupervised.

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

Responsibility:

The Rotary Club President has the overall responsibility for managing and coordinating the club's youth activities, with support from the Youth Committee Chair and committee members.

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.

Volunteers interested in working with youth programs particularly in situations where the volunteer will be in an unsupervised contact with youth program participants must complete the Rotary online course Protecting Youth Program Participants

Volunteers should also review the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

Volunteers should certify to the Youth Committee Chair that they have completed the online course and reviewed the reporting guidelines before engaging in youth programs.

Conduct of Volunteers:

Contact:

Volunteers should take precautions to never be alone in a private place with a youth participant. Unsupervised contact could create an unsafe environment or lead to suspicions about the nature of a relationship. Another volunteer should always be present. If the youth participants are of different genders, then the volunteers present should be of each gender.

Communication:

To ensure communication is appropriate and transparent between volunteers and youth participant(s), all communications (e.g. email, text message, etc.) should have a second adult copied, whether it be another vetted volunteer, the student's parent / guardian, high school counselor, teacher, or Interact sponsor. This helps decrease the risk for misunderstandings or inappropriate interactions. Volunteers should not maintain private social media connections with a youth program participant and should only use social media to communicate to a closed page/group of several participants. Photos or personal information about a youth program participant should never be shared without the express permission and knowledge of their parent or legal guardian. Stories about and images of youth program participants should not be shared or posted until they have completed their program or activity, and only with the participant's and their parents' consent. Never tag a minor or share their username or handle online.

Travel:

The club may offer youth opportunities to travel outside of their home communities. Examples include a service-learning trip for Interactors or a RYLA camp. While these experiences enrich the lives of young people, all travel has inherent risks, for both the participants and the Rotary clubs that are involved.

At a minimum, organizers are required to obtain written permission from parents or legal guardians and give them program details and organizers contact information. Such permission is often given by email, but may also require other documentation.

Personal Information:

Confidential Information:

There may instance in which volunteers will need to be aware of medical, mental, or emotional conditions of youth participants. Volunteers shall keep that information confidential and only release that information to others with the permission of the parent or guardian.

Personally, identifiable information:

Personally, identifiable information (PII) constitutes any data that can pinpoint an individual, either by itself or when combined with other information. PII includes but is not limited to full name, address, phone number(s), email(s), and birthdate.

Volunteers should protect PII from inappropriate access, use or disclosure. Written or electronic records containing PII should be appropriately protected. Transmission of records containing PII (ex. RYLA applications) should be done in a reasonably secure method. Disposal of document containing PII should be done in a way to prevent inadvertent release of PII to third parties.

Images:

Images of youth program participants may not be shared in print or in electronic media (including social media) without a release signed by the participant and their parent / guardian.

Partnerships:

Rotarians cooperating with Interact Clubs shall follow all requirements and regulations of the partner high school. This may include but not be limited to showing identification when entering the school, wearing approved identification on campus, or other high school regulations

If our club should begin working or partnering with another local youth-serving organization, we will:

1. Ensure any organization we partner with has youth protection policies in place that meet or exceed Rotary's policies
2. Confirm the partner organization has a process to appropriately screen, vet, and train volunteers
3. Confirm the partner organization's program participants receive youth protection-related training and education

Reporting Abuse or Harassment:

Any volunteer participating in a youth program in any capacity is required to report incidences of abuse or harassment. This includes abuse or harassment of sexual, physical, emotional or verbal nature whether conducted in person or via electronic media.

Determining when inappropriate behavior becomes abuse is a decision for law enforcement agencies. If you're not sure whether something should be reported, contact your district youth protection officer. But if the behavior makes you or the young person uncomfortable, they are likely to be inappropriate.

Any claims of abuse or harassment that affects young people should be reported to a local law enforcement agency. Members should cooperate fully with the investigation. Clubs and districts must let law enforcement agencies determine what is criminal, allowing for a review that is fair for everyone involved.

Report any incidences of abuse to the Club President. The Club President must report the incident to the District Youth Protection Officer and to RI. The Club President will coordinate the reporting of the incident to the District Youth Protection Officer and RI.

Rotary members are required to report youth protection concerns or any actions that violate our youth protection policies to Rotary International within 72 hours of learning of an incident. Failing to report a youth protection concern can have serious consequences, including the termination of your membership.

The Rotary Club of Maryville will follow the District 6780 Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

Approved by the Board – February 18. 2026

Resources:

Rotary Youth Protection Resources and Reference https://my.rotary.org/en/knowledge-and-resources/resources-and-reference/youth-protection

Rotary International Youth Protection Policy https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/rotary-youth-protection-guide

Rotary District 6780 Youth Protection Policy Microsoft Word - D6780 youth protection policy final

Rotary Code of Policies. Sec. 2.120 https://my.rotary.org/document/rotary-code-policies

Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guideline https://my-cms.rotary.org/en/document/abuse-and-harassment-allegation-reporting-guidelines