

YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

POLICY BASE

Rotary International (RI), District 5020 (the District) and the Rotary Club of Oak Bay (the Club) have zero-tolerance policies against abuse and harassment.

This policy is based on:

Rotary International's principle on youth protection¹:

Rotary International (RI) 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.

District 5020 Abuse and harassment prevention policy:

<http://www.clubrunner.ca/Data/5020/HTML/103407/Policy-Manual-v9a.pdf>;

In accordance with the intent of related human rights legislation in Canada and the United States of America, as well as in light of the objects of Rotary, it is the goal of District 5020 to provide a supportive environment, within which members, and those associated as volunteers or members of specific Rotary programs and activities, are treated with respect and dignity, free from harassment and abuse.

District 5020 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their abilities, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come in contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

The Rotary Club of Oak Bay (RCOB) policy on harassment and offensive behaviour:

<https://content.clubrunner.ca/697/Document/List>).

We are committed to providing an environment free of abuse, harassment and offensive behaviour. We will investigate all allegations of such behaviour. The behaviour may be a single act or series of acts that cause a lasting, negative impact. We will take appropriate action on any allegations that are found to be substantiated.

¹ For more information, see the RI Youth Protection Guide (775-EN *816)

<https://my.rotary.org/document/rotary-youth-protection-guide>

and District 5020 Youth Protection Policy:

<https://clubrunner.blob.core.windows.net/00000050092/en-ca/files/sitepage/youth-protection-information/district-5020-youth-protection-policy/District-Youth-Protection-Policy.pdf>

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POLICY

This policy applies to:

- Club members and adults affiliated with the Club who have a role in a Rotary youth program; and
- all youth participating in Club activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All Club members and other volunteers are expected to:

- not engage in unwelcome behaviour with youth;
- keep in mind the impact that their words and actions may have on the youth; and
- view their actions and words from the youth's perspective.

All Club members and others who have casual contact with youth are expected to:

- contribute to ensuring a safe environment for youth involved in Club activities and youth programs;
- be aware of the District policy and this policy on youth protection; and
- take the District youth protection training.

All those who have continued contact with youth must:

- complete the required District forms and background checks for the activity; and
- comply with the requirements for the activity.

WHAT TO DO

Any Oak Bay Rotarian or volunteer who:

- has a concern about a situation that could be abuse of power, harassment, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment must:
 - report it to the Club President-Elect), the President or the Club Youth Protection Officer; or
- receives a report or complaint about abuse or harassment must:
 - listen attentively and stay calm;
 - assure privacy but not confidentiality;
 - get the facts, but not interrogate;
 - be non-judgmental and reassuring;
 - keep a written record of the conversation;
 - ensure the safety and well-being of the youth;
 - not, under any circumstances, contact the alleged offender.

The Club President-elect and Club President will:

- have taken all appropriate training from the District on youth protection;
- be familiar with RI and District policies on youth protection;
- determine if the situation can be dealt with at the Club level (i.e., was unintentionally unacceptable, infrequent, and likely to be resolved through a conversation);
- apply the procedure in the Club policy on Harassment and offensive behaviour;
- escalate all other complaints or reports to the District within seven calendar days of receiving the complaint / report;

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- remove the person against whom the allegation of abuse or harassment has been made from all contact with youth until the matter is resolved; and
- provide support to the youth during and after the process.

The Board:

- will recommend revocation of membership to the Club members if the member is found to have committed the abuse or harassment;
- will prohibit the volunteer from all future Rotary activities if the allegation is founded against them;
- may reinstate a member or volunteer if the finding is inconclusive or if there is no law enforcement investigation; and
- may change duties or add safeguards as they consider appropriate.

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APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS

“abuse (of power)” means the misuse of influence, power or authority to:

- coerce another person to commit an act;
- manipulate a person to take a negative action if the person does not comply;
- bully or threaten a person in any way;
- commit an act for their own gain at a cost to another person; or
- threaten, humiliate, intimidate, isolate, unreasonably confine, punish or neglect.

“casual contact” means interaction with youth that is:

- occasional or infrequent and that doesn’t have a regular pattern;
- in a group setting; and
- has no reasonably foreseeable risk of abuse or harassment occurring.²

“continued contact” means interactions with youth that:

- are continuous and have a regular pattern;
- are continuous or frequent; or
- last more than 72 hours where the youth is in the custody of a volunteer.

“district” means Rotary District 5020.

“harassment” means any conduct by an adult or a youth’s peer(s) that:

- is directed at a youth or indirect through a situation;
- is offensive to another person;
- is discriminatory based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability;
- is based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital or family status, disability, or pardoned conviction;
- the person ought reasonably to have known may cause offence or harm; and
- the person affected considers demeaning, belittling, humiliating, intimidating, threatening or embarrassing.

“hostile environment” means:

- a single or cumulative situations that create an intimidating, offensive or disruptive environment.

“offensive behaviour” means any remark or act:

- that is considered to be in bad taste or mean-spirited; or
- which may impugn the reputation of another person or the Club.

“sexual abuse” means:

- any implicit or explicit sexual acts with a youth or forcing or encouraging a youth to engage in such acts;
- non-touching activities such as voyeurism, indecent exposure; photographing while nude or partially nude, or in a provocative pose; and
- exposing a youth to sexual or pornographic content, material or innuendo.

² For a more complete description, see the District 5020 Youth Protection Policy, pages 1 and 2:
<https://clubrunner.blob.core.windows.net/00000050092/en-ca/files/sitepage/youth-protection-information/district-5020-youth-protection-policy/District-Youth-Protection-Policy.pdf>

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“sexual harassment” means:

- any unwelcome visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature;
- any activity that subjects a youth to sexual conduct that creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating environment.

“volunteer” means any individual who interacts with youth in a Rotary or Club activity.

“youth” means a minor under age 18 who participates in a Rotary or Club activity.