

District 6220 Youth Protection Policy

Rotary Youth Exchange

1. Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth

District 6220 Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarian 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.

2. Definitions

Volunteer — Any adult involved with Rotary RYE activities who interacts directly with youth, whether supervised or unsupervised. Volunteers include, among others, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members; Rotarian counselors; Rotarians and non-Rotarians and their spouses and partners who work with students during activities or outings or who transport students to events; and host parents and other adult residents of the host home, including host siblings and other family members.

RYE program participant — Anyone who volunteers in the RYE program, whether child or adult.

3. Incorporation and Liability Insurance

The District 6220 RYE Program is a 501 (c) 3 under the name *District 6220 RYE Program, Inc.* The District 6220 RYE Program is insured under the District 6220 liability insurance policy with appropriate coverage and policy limits. This policy protects the organization from third-party claims and lawsuits alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers.

4. Club Compliance

The district governor is responsible for supervision and control of all youth activities in the district, including those associated with Rotary Youth Exchange. As prescribed by Central States RYE, Inc. (CSRYE), the District RYE Chair is designated as the District Governor's proxy and is the responsible party for all RYE activities. The District 6220 RYE Program Chair or other designee will monitor all

participating clubs and ensure that they comply with youth protection and Rotary Youth Exchange certification requirements.

All clubs that participate in Rotary Youth Exchange must follow district and RI RYE policy in regards to:

- A signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 6220 and RI Youth Exchange policies (**check commitment form**)
- Volunteers will be prohibited from contact with program participants until a written application, interview, reference check, mandated training and criminal background check have been conducted and clearance for unsupervised contact with program participants has been issued
- All club materials that advertise the Youth Exchange program, including brochures, applications, policies, and websites must meet district (and RI) requirements
- List of services in the area (rape and suicide hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.) Appendix A
- Youth-protection training

5. 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.

If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and the law enforcement investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth program participants with whom the accused may have future contact, as well as the accused. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated as a youth program volunteer. Reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to his or her former position is not guaranteed.

All Youth Exchange Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers that have direct, unsupervised contact with program participants must:

- Complete a volunteer agreement form
- Undergo a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices)
- Be interviewed, preferably in person
- Provide a list of personal references with contact information (it's recommended that references include no family members and no more than one Rotarian)
- Comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program

Youth Exchange host families must also meet these selection and screening requirements:

- Undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability, demonstrating:
 - Commitment to the safety and security of students
 - Appropriate motives for hosting a student that are 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
- Complete a written application
- Undergo home visits with and without notice, both before and during the placement; home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families

Note: All adult residents of the host home must meet all selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family or household staff who are full-time or part-time residents of the home.

Youth Exchange students must be appointed a Rotarian counselor who meets the criteria for all volunteers. Also:

- A counselor must not be a member of the student's host family. It is also recommended that counselors not hold another role of authority with respect to the student's exchange (e.g., school principal, club president, district Youth Exchange chair).
- Counselors must be able to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise, including instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

6. Participant Selection and Screening

All students interested in the District 6220 Youth Exchange program must meet district guidelines and:

- Complete a written application
- Be interviewed at the club and district levels
- Attend and participate in all club and district orientation and training sessions

All parents or legal guardians of Youth Exchange participants must also be interviewed at the club or district level to determine the student's suitability for program participation.

7. Training

District 6220 RYE will provide youth-protection training and information to all students and volunteers. District 6220 will oversee the training sessions. Specifically, District 6220 will:

- Adapt Rotary's Youth Protection Guide to reflect district guidelines, information on local customs and culture, and legal requirements
- Develop a training schedule that specifies who will be trained, how often, and how
- Conduct specialized training for those involved in Youth Exchange:
 - District governor
 - District Youth Exchange chair and district RYE committee members
 - Club Youth Exchange officer
 - Rotarian counselors
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events
 - Host families
 - Students (outbound and inbound)
- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance

8. Allegation Handling and Follow-Through

District 6220 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will handle them in accordance with the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines (Appendix B).

The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with official investigations when conducting its own independent review.

District 6220 may appoint a youth protection officer or district review committee to evaluate and review files, policies, and allegations regularly.

9. Travel by Youth

Please refer to Appendix C for the District 6220 Travel and Visitation Policy

10. District 6220 Youth Exchange Administration

The District 6220 Youth Exchange program must also:

- Confirm that all inbound students have insurance that meets or exceeds what is prescribed in the Rotary Code of Policies (CSRYE insurance meets RI requirements).
- Store participant and volunteer records securely on the YEAH Hub for 7 years after participation, in accordance with all applicable privacy laws.
- Each club will provide students a list of local services (rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.) See Appendix A. This list must include the following district and club contacts:
 - For inbound students: Rotarian counselor, host club president, host district Youth Exchange chair, host district Inbound Coordinator and host district governor
 - For outbound students: Rotarian counselor, sponsor club president, sponsor district Youth Exchange chair, sponsor district governor
- Provide each student with the names and contact information of at least two non-Rotarian resource people — one male and one female, who are not related to each other and do not have close ties to the host families or Rotarian counselor — who can help the students with any problems.
- Submit inbound program participants' data to RI before or shortly after the exchange begins. (CSRYE Responsible Officer)
- Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to students.

- Report all serious incidents (abuse or harassment allegations, accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI Youth Exchange staff within 72 hours.
- Prohibit placement of students outside of the district Youth Exchange program structure (“backdoor” exchanges).
- Establish criteria and procedures for a student’s removal from the host family and arrange for contingent, temporary housing in advance.
- Develop contingency hosting plans that include prescreened families.
- Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host inbound students.
- Ensure that long-term program participants have multiple host families. It is recommended that long-term program participants be placed with three host families during their exchange.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- Request a monthly report from each inbound and outbound program participant that includes information on current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The district Youth Exchange chair can then review the reports and assist program participants as needed.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL’S STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

Rotary International 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.

Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2006

Appendices for D6220 Youth Protection Policy

- Appendix A** **Sample RYE Contacts and Local Support Resources**
- Appendix B** **Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines**
- Appendix C** **District 6220 RYE Travel Policy**

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE RYE CONTACTS AND LOCAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

Rotary Club of Waupaca

Emergency Number for Police, Fire, Ambulance - 911

Host Club Youth Exchange Officer: Brett Grams ~ (715) 412-0703

bgrams@charter.net

Host Club Youth Exchange Counselor: Julie Kosobuchi ~ (920) 205-2773

juliekosobucki@yahoo.com

District Inbound Coordinator: Barbara Weikel-Wilson ~ (920) 495-3690;

bweikelwilson@gmail.com

District Student Youth Protection Officer: Mindie O'Neill ~ (920) 609-8761

ryemindieoneil@gmail.com

District Chair: Ellen Weingarten ~ (906) 869-6276; districtchairrye6220@gmail.com

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Sexual Assault Services - Family Crisis Center 24/7 Hotline (800) 472-3377 or (715)-343-7125

[Family Crisis Website](#)

Waupaca Alcohol & Drug Services - (715) 258-6305

Service [Website](#)

Waupaca Police Department - 715-258-4400 (non emergency)

APPENDIX B

DISTRICT 6220 ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES

Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth

The district 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 psychological abuse.

No tolerance for any abuse or harassment: Rotary International and its districts are committed to protecting the safety and security of all youth program participants and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. All allegations will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines.

The safety and well-being of program participants must always be top priority.

Definitions

Emotional, psychological or verbal abuse — The use of fear, humiliation, or verbal assault to control the behavior of another. Examples include rejecting the person, preventing them from developing normal social relationships, and making derogatory statements about their race, religion, abilities, intellect, tastes, or personal appearance.

Physical abuse — Physical contact intended to cause pain, injury, or other physical suffering or harm.

Neglect — Failure to provide the food, shelter, or medical or emotional care that is necessary to well-being.

Sexual abuse — Engaging in or arranging implicit or explicit sexual acts. This includes pressuring someone to perform a sexual act alone, or sexually engaging directly with another person of any

age or gender through force or coercion, or with anyone who is unable to give consent. Any sexual activity between a legal adult and a minor or youth program participant, or any nonconsensual sexual activity between peers, is considered sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can also include offenses that don't include touching, such as voyeurism, indecent exposure, stalking, electronic harassment, or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment — Sexual advances, requests for sexual acts, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted or directed at someone who is unwilling or unable to consent. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize someone or accustom them to inappropriate behavior. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual epithets or jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, gossip about someone's sex life, or comments about a person's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Giving private or secret gifts, including those of a sexual nature
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually suggestive objects or images
- Sexual leering or whistling
- Inappropriate physical contact, such as intentionally brushing against a person
- Obscene language or gestures, suggestive or insulting comments

Grooming — Establishing an emotional connection with someone to lower their inhibitions and gain their trust with the intent to be sexually abusive.

Consent — An informed, knowing, and voluntary permission for something to happen, including sexual activity.

Receiving a Report of Abuse or Harassment

Any adult to whom a program participant reports abuse or harassment must:

- **Listen attentively and stay calm** - Acknowledge that it takes courage to report abuse or harassment. Be supportive, but remain neutral; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.

- **Assure privacy but not confidentiality** - Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse or harassment to make it stop and to prevent it from happening to others.
- **Get information, but don't interrogate the participant** - Ask questions that establish facts: who, what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that they did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking why questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives, implying they are at fault, or suggesting that you don't believe them. Remember that your responsibility is to report this information to the proper authorities.
- **Be nonjudgmental and reassuring** - Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved — even the accused, because it could be someone they care about. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Emphasize that it was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
- **Be patient and understanding** - A person who has experienced trauma might find it difficult to talk about the details of their experience. Encourage them to report as much as they can or as they feel comfortable discussing. Try to minimize any need for them to explain their experience again.
- **Document the allegation** - Take confidential notes that include details such as dates and locations they reference, as soon after the report as you can. Try to use the young person's exact words.

Responding to an Allegation

The following steps must be taken immediately after alleged abuse or harassment is reported. Some of them may be performed by any program volunteer. Others, as specified, should be performed by a district officer.

1. Protect the young person.

Ensure the safety and security of the young person by removing them from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the young person that this is for their safety and is not a punishment.

Take immediate action to safeguard the young person's health and well-being, and get them medical or psychological care, if necessary. If both the person who reported the problem and the person who is accused are young people, provide support to both of them.

2. Report the allegations to appropriate authorities.

Immediately report all cases of abuse or harassment — first to XXXXXX for investigation and then to club and district leaders. The investigation of alleged abuse or harassment must be left entirely to law enforcement agencies. All investigations must be conducted by authorities that are not affiliated with Rotary.

In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the XXXXX, who will be the liaison to and seek guidance from the appropriate agencies. If the allegation involves this individual, the district governor or should be the main Rotary contact.

The district will cooperate with police and legal investigations.

The district has researched local, state or provincial, and national laws related to youth protection, including reporting allegations, and notes the following legal requirements, of which all volunteers must be aware:

3. Remove the accused person from contact with youth.

The district will remove the alleged offender from all contact with Rotary youth program participants until the matter is resolved.

Follow district-established criteria and procedures for removing a Rotary Youth Exchange student from a host family if the student makes an allegation against a host family member. Move the student to another host family that was screened in advance.

4. Avoid gossip and blame.

Do not tell anyone about the allegation other than those who need to know. Take care to protect the rights of everyone who is involved during the investigation.

The district maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any person who has been accused by enforcing the following procedures:

5. Follow up and implement safeguards.

All Rotary member and nonmember volunteers who know about an allegation must make sure that RI is informed of it within 72 hours. A district officer will provide ongoing status reports to RI.

The district will also make sure that the parents or legal guardians of the participants (whether they are accused or making the accusation) have been notified. The district will refer all involved young persons to an independent, nonRotary counselor who can provide them professional emotional support.

If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, or if the investigation is inconclusive, the district governor will appoint a committee to coordinate an independent review to ensure that district youth protection policies were followed, confirm that youth safety was treated as the highest priority, and determine whether any changes to district procedures are needed. This review is not responsible for determining the validity of any allegations. That can be done only by youth protection agency personnel or trained law enforcement professionals.

When the district is notified of the outcome of any investigation by law enforcement, whether criminal or not, it will contact everyone involved in the incident. The district will document all allegations and accusations, as well as the final outcome and the actions taken to resolve the situation. Patterns of inappropriate behavior must be identified and addressed.

APPENDIX C

DISTRICT 6220 RYE TRAVEL POLICY

Travel and Visitation Guidelines

The Rotary Youth Exchange program is a cultural and educational exchange program, and should NOT be considered a travel or tourism program. However, we recognize the value in permitting safe travel opportunities for our Inbound students, and we encourage travel with Host Families, Clubs, and Rotarians.

Travel within District Boundaries

Travel within District 6220 boundaries can be approved by the RYEO. Drivers providing transportation beyond a reasonable distance of the student's home (as determined by the RYEO) must be 25 years of age or older. Overnight visits within District 6220 boundaries can be approved by the RYEO. There must be a person in charge (defined as a responsible adult) and he/she must have a background check completed by the District 6220 Student Protection Officer.

If traveling with the host parent(s) the background check is done already and no further action is required.

Accompanied Travel Outside District Boundaries

Requests for accompanied travel outside of the District geographic boundaries is made through the District 6220 website (rye6220.org/(RYEO/Counselor)/"Click Here" password protected page), by the Rotary Youth Exchange Officer.

Travel outside the District boundaries must be approved by the RYEO and the District Inbound Coordinator, who will take into account a student's behavior, school attendance and grades, and other factors before granting permission to travel.

Drivers must be responsible adults aged 25 or over. Students may NOT travel in vehicles driven by persons under the age of 25 years.

Under no circumstances shall students make their own travel arrangements and then expect the Host Club and Host Family to agree.

Violations of this policy may be grounds for terminating the Exchange and returning the student to his or her home country.

Overnight visits outside of District 6220 boundaries require the District Inbound Coordinator's permission (RYEO completes travel form online at rye6220.org), and a background check for the responsible adult in charge is required. Travel permission and background checks are not necessary for official school sponsored trips (sports, choir, FFA, organized activities, etc.) when transportation is provided by the school, regardless of destination. It is mandatory to keep your RYEO and the District Inbound Coordinator informed about your travel plans. If the student is going to visit host family members (grandparents, aunt, etc.) with the host family, no other background checks are necessary, but must have travel permission as appropriate. Family visits (parents coming to the USA) are allowed during the months of March through May, and only after receiving approval from the Host Family, Host RYEO, and the District Inbound Coordinator. Travel outside the District with the student's family requires approval.

Unaccompanied (Independent) Travel Outside District Boundaries

Unaccompanied (independent) travel (i.e. flying to visit relatives or friends) requires the completion of the District 6220 Independent Travel Form (hard copy). Prior written permission must be received from

1. natural parent(s)
2. host family
3. Host RYEO
4. District Inbound Coordinator.

Students should NOT purchase tickets prior to permission being granted, a process that can take up to 10 days. A background check is required for the receiving adult(s).

Independent, unaccompanied travel may be approved under the following conditions:

1. Independent travel outside the District is allowed ONLY after approval of the District 6220 Independent Travel Form. Approval must be granted from

1. natural parent(s)
2. host family
3. Host RYEO
4. District Inbound Coordinator.

2. Full proposed itineraries must be provided and approved BEFORE PURCHASING ANY TICKETS.

3. A responsible adult must be on both ends of any air travel to drop off or meet the student. Bus travel is not permitted.

4. The District Student Protection Officer will conduct background checks on adults who will be hosting the student (the only exception is for the natural parents).

5. NO INDEPENDENT TRAVEL IS ALLOWED UNLESS PRIOR PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY HOST FAMILY, HOST RYEO, NATURAL PARENT(S), AND DISTRICT INBOUND COORDINATOR. THIS PERMISSION PROCESS CAN TAKE UP TO 10 DAYS. DO NOT PURCHASE TICKETS BEFORE PERMISSION TO TRAVEL IS GIVEN.

Regardless of the requirements above it is imperative that the RYEO have the appropriate contact information in the event of any travel situation. District 6220 Independent Travel Form must be completed for unaccompanied travel outside of District 6220. YOUTH EXCHANGE OFFICER MUST FILL ONLINE PERMISSION FORM AND SUBMIT TO DISTRICT INBOUND COORDINATOR