

Rotary International District 9620

Youth Protection Policy

1. PRINCIPLES OF THIS POLICY

1.1 Youth Programs

District 9620 supports the programs of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation, together with any District programs approved by the Board from time to time. District youth programs include, but are not limited to, Interact, RYLA, RYPEN, and Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE).

1.2 Introduction to this Policy

This Youth Protection Policy applies to those Rotary members and non-Rotary members who participate in D9620 Rotary Youth Programs. The summary is in accordance with rules and procedures set out in the Rotary International Youth Protection Guide and the expectations of our insurers.

As Rotaract and Rotaract members are now considered part of Rotary, where reference is made to Rotary club or Rotary member in this policy, the terms include Rotaract clubs and Rotaractors.

This policy also complies with legislative requirements mandated by the Queensland Government. Additional requirements might be necessary to conform with applicable legislation in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Nauru.

These requirements apply to all adult persons working with young people entrusted to their care and must be adhered to.

This Policy is the overarching policy for all Youth Protection matters. It should be read in conjunction with Guidelines and related documentation specific to individual Rotary Youth Programs, which provide additional detail on procedures relevant to those programs.

Rotary District 9620 wholeheartedly adopts the principles and practices of

- a) The Rotary 4-Way Test
- b) The Rotary Code of Conduct
- c) The Rotary Charter for Child Protection

1.3 The 4-Way Test

In January 1943, The Board of Directors of Rotary International agreed that the 4-Way Test should be used by all Rotary members as a practical yardstick in their business, community, and personal affairs.

THE 4-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do

- 1) Is it the TRUTH?
- 2) Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- 3) Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- 4) Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

1.4 Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth

Rotary District 9620 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all young people who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability Rotary members, spouses, 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.

1.5 Charter for Child Protection

1. Rotary International will not tolerate any form of abuse or harassment.
2. All children have the right to live free from harassment, intimidation, and abuse.
3. Breaking the silence on this issue is a responsible approach to this matter.
4. Allegations by children regarding breaches of this issue will be responded to promptly and with sensitivity.
5. Rotary Clubs and District Committees when planning and carrying out activities involving children will adhere to relevant legislation.
6. Appropriate 'Risk Assessment' and reporting procedures are to be established, including appropriate training programs.
7. Rotary's Youth Programs should be conducted in a professional manner, sensitive to all relevant issues.
8. A 'child' is a person under the age of eighteen years.
9. This Charter shall apply to all relevant programs of Rotary where Rotary members are involved in a 'person in authority' role.
10. Harassment and abuse prevention is a serious concern of youth programs around the world, including those sponsored by Rotary. A multi-faceted approach incorporates proper screening of host families, mandatory training and education of youth mentors and counsellors and effective management of abuse situations. Although harassment and sexual abuse cannot be uniformly prevented, it can be lessened through protective measures enacted by all volunteers who deal with youth. The safety and well-being of participants in Rotary programs and projects must always be the first priority.

1.5.1 Rotary International notes on Charter for Child Protection

All Rotary members and non-member volunteers who are interested in working with youth program participants must meet RI and District eligibility requirements. RI prohibits the membership and participation of any Rotary member or non-Rotary volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been known to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment or other act that violates the accepted standard of behavior in the community.

District 9620 will maintain confidential records of individuals prohibited from contact with youth and make sure that these prohibitions are implemented consistently throughout the District from year to year. People who are prohibited from working with youth also may not serve as District Interact Chair, Interact Club Adviser, District RYLA Chair, District Youth Exchange Chair, District Youth Protection Officer, or in any other locally appointed Club or District role in which they might have contact with youth.

If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and law enforcement's investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth program participants with whom the accused might have

future contact, as well as the accused. A person who has been cleared of charges may apply to continue as a youth program volunteer. Such reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to a former position is not guaranteed.

1.6 Reporting Procedure

District 9620 reports all serious incidents, which includes, but is not limited to medical emergencies, accidents, early returns, deaths, abuse and harassment, to RI through the online reporting hub <https://ri.isight.com/portal> or emailing youthprotection@rotary.org See MyRotary’s Youth Protection page <https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/learn-topic/youth-protection>

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Child	A child in a Rotary youth program under the age of 18 years.
2.2 Young person	A young person in a Rotary youth program under the age of 25 years.
2.3 Youth	For the purposes of this policy, a youth may be any young person involved in a Rotary program for New Generations (e.g., Rotary Youth Exchange, Interact, community service or youth service program or project beneficiary, etc) that is primarily focused on youth, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority and to whom Rotary may have a Duty of Care. This specifically includes children, who by law in Australia are generally defined as anyone under the age of 18 years. In most instances, a youth will be referred to as a student in this policy, without limiting the generality of the above definition.
2.4 RI	Rotary International
2.5 Rotary	For the purpose of this policy the term Rotary includes Rotaract
2. Rotary member	For the purpose of this policy the term Rotary member includes Rotarian and Rotaractor
2,7 RYE	Rotary Youth Exchange
2.9 RYP	Rotary Youth Program
2.10 Volunteer	<p>An adult involved in Rotary Youth Programs who has direct interaction either supervised or unsupervised with young people in a Rotary Youth Program. This includes but is not limited to, Rotary members and non-Rotary members, their spouses, partners, adult family or friends who may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) host students in their homes and/or for activities or outings b) drive students to and from events or functions, c) are Club and District Officers, Counsellors or Committee Members for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Interact ii. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) iii. Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN) iv. Rotary Youth Exchange or v. Other programs

2.11 Responsible Adult	A responsible adult is any adult who, in a family or group situation for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a child or young person, including school students.
2.12 Youth Program Participant	Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Program regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority, also referred to in this document as young people, children, child, youth, student or young person.
2.13 DIO	District Insurance Officer
2.11 CYPO	<p>Club Youth Protection Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Club Youth Protection Officer is an appropriate member in the Club who must not be the New Generations Director, the Youth Exchange Student Counsellor, the Rotary Adviser to an Interact Club or a member of any District Committee that deals with programs for New Generations. b. The duties of the Club Youth Protection Officer, include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. maintaining and safeguarding a register of Blue Card information – including the name of the person to whom the Blue Card has been issued, the number and expiry date of the card. b. registering their club as an Organisation on the Queensland Government Blue Card Services website and ensuring that all Blue Card holders involved with their club, be they Rotary member or non-Rotary member are linked to that portal. c. At the beginning of each Rotary year (By July 30th), forwarding to the District Youth Protection Officer a copy of the “Working with Children (Blue Card) Declaration form”. d. maintaining and safeguarding a register of Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration forms. Originals to be kept by the club and copies to be sent to the District Youth Protection Officer. e. ensuring all of the Club duties in relation to hosting and / or sponsoring a Youth Exchange student have been carried out before, during and after the period of exchange. f. completion and return of relevant check list, declarations and forms to the District Youth Protection Officer and District Youth Exchange Committee g. CYPO should be aware that failure to adhere to these responsibilities may negate insurance coverage of club activities and possibly place the club at risk of legal action.
2.12 DYPC	District Youth Protection Committee
2.12.1	<p>The District 9620 Youth Protection Committee will consist of a minimum of three adults to be drawn from the following: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The District Governor ii. The District Governor Elect iii. The District Governor Nominee

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. A Rotary member appointed by the District Governor to the position of Youth Protection Officer, (The DYPO may appoint an assistant to assist with administrative tasks) v. Other members, appointed or co-opted as the need arises, should include, where possible, at least one non-Rotarian and be from the following – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The District Committee Chairman/Representative of the program/program involved in the investigation, complaint or allegation b. The Club President; c. A Senior Police Officer; d. A Member with legal qualifications; e. A Member with qualifications and/or experience in counselling. vi. Should the District Governor be the subject of the complaint the immediate Past District Governor, who is available at the time, will be consulted. vii. Should the relevant Youth Protection Officer be the subject of the complaint, a senior Rotary member with relevant District experience, will be consulted.
2.12.2	<p>The duties of the District Youth Protection Committee include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. investigating all allegations of sexual abuse or harassment not investigated by the police. II. in matters where the Police do not consider an investigation is warranted, the District Youth Protection Committee will conduct an internal review of its policies and procedures to ensure that similar incidents do not occur in the future. III. ensuring any incidents of sexual harassment or abuse are correctly dealt with in accordance with Rotary International’s “Sexual Harassment and Abuse Reporting Guidelines” and with Rotary District 9620’s Youth Protection Policy. IV. arranging an independent qualified counsellor as needed for any student who has been sexually harassed or abused – where possible, this should be a non-Rotary member. V. reporting all allegations of sexual harassment or abuse to the District Governor. VI. reporting incidences of sexual harassment or allegations or abuse to Rotary International through the Manager, Norwest Office of Rotary International
2.13.. WWC (Blue card)	<p>Working with Children Card (Blue Card) is the terminology used for a criminal history check in Queensland confirming that there is nothing adverse known to Police that would prevent the person working with children.</p>

3. General Requirements for Clubs / Club Youth Protection Officers

All Rotary members will bear in mind paedophiles often appear as respectable, conscientious, hardworking people.

3.1 For insurance purposes, it is a requirement that all Clubs complete and return the **Club Insurance & Compliance Declaration** to their DIO by **30th April** each year.

- .1 All Rotary clubs will have a **Youth Protection Officer** whose duties involve managing the club's youth protection compliance procedures including insuring the completion of all required protection documentation.
- .2 The suitability of **all volunteers** assisting in RYPs will be carefully assessed in accordance with their roles as set out in the following two points.
- .3 Volunteers who could be alone with a young person for a period of time, being such time that might allow grooming or abuse to occur, are required to:
 - .3.1 complete a **Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration** (a requirement of RI and our Insurance provider)
 - .3.2 attend a comprehensive interview with a club or program leader
 - .3.3 provide three referees
 - .3.4 have a Working with Children check -WWC (Blue card)

Only after an authorised Rotary member has examined or carefully carried out all of the above and found the candidate to be a suitable person will they be allowed to work alone with a young person.

- .4 It is not mandatory for all Rotary members to be the holder of a WWC (Blue Card), however the Club must ensure that Rotary member and non-Rotary members without Blue Cards do not have any dealings with Young People (including children) in club activities or projects.
- .5 Club Youth Protection Officers are required to register all Blue card holders on the Queensland State Government Blue Card services portal and send a list to the DYPO by 30th July each Rotary Year.
- .6 **Only Clubs who are unable to access the Blue Card Services** website to register their own portal are advised to allow all blue card holders to be linked to Rotary International District 9620 Organisation portal using the **"Working with Children (Blue Card) declaration form – for clubs linking to the District portal"** form.
 - Linking of the blue card can only occur by the District Youth Protection Officer using the information provided on the above form.
 - Only the DYPO has access to this information and will share this with Police and the District Insurance Officer if required.
- .7 All other volunteers assisting in a Rotary Youth Program may be defined as a **"Responsible Adult"**

A **responsible adult** is any adult who, in a **family or group situation** for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a youth/student. The adult shall be in a position to offer the youth/student assistance, guidance or an educational, cultural or recreational experience. Use of responsible adult is a last resort measure, as an exception not the norm.

This adult will not have been police checked or formally reference checked because the experience or contact is such that there is virtually no opportunity for misconduct to occur.

The person responsible for the youth/student needs to be satisfied, in the same way a parent would be satisfied, that this adult is **suitable** for their own underage son or daughter to stay or associate with for a short period of time.

- .8 Wherever possible, it is desirable to have two or more **Responsible Adults** together with a young person at any one time.
- .9 The Queensland Government requires that any Rotary member responsible for storing documents which contain people's personal information such as medical records, even though they may not have direct contact alone with young people, be assessed in the same way as a **Volunteer** who is alone with a child.
- .10 It is an RI requirement that the Chairs of all Youth Committees, even though they may not have direct contact alone with young people, are assessed in the same way as a **Volunteer** who is alone with a child.
- .11 Where Rotary is assisting in a youth program which is under the control of another organisation such as a school, the protection requirements set out in this document still apply together with any additional requirement the other organisation may require.
- .12 Should a Rotary youth committee officially promote, select, and sponsor students for a program which is run by another organisation, e.g., the National Youth Science Forum, it is their responsibility to ensure the organisation has appropriate screening and safety procedures in place.
- .13 It is mandatory that during the Rotary year the various people involved in Rotary Youth Programs who are required to complete and submit compliance forms as set down in the respective program's manual(s) do so.
- .14 Declaration forms must be securely stored in accordance with District 9620 policy and made available only to authorised people who are required to see them.
- .15 Copies of all declaration forms must be sent to the District 9620 Youth Protection Officer for document retention purposes prior to commencement of the Program

This policy and all youth program manuals are to be reviewed annually or more frequently if needed. These updates will be done by the District Review Committee in consultation with the appropriate youth committees. Documents are to be labelled with the date of last revision and their review number.

Should a Rotary member, or any non-member adult, know or have a strong suspicion that a child has been abused, harassed, mistreated or neglected it is their legal obligation to notify all appropriate authorities immediately.

4. Requirements Relating to Young People

- 4.1 Young people on applying to participate in any Rotary Youth Program will be briefed on the requirements, scope and rules relating to that program. They will also be assessed to ensure they are suitable candidates.
- 4.2 Should they have a problem big or small we must do our utmost to give young people entrusted to Rotary's care whilst participating in a Rotary Youth Program, the confidence to seek our help knowing we will:
 - a) listen sympathetically,
 - b) respond promptly, effectively and with compassion.

- 4.3 Young people in Rotary Youth Programs will be briefed on and given a list of responsible people and organisations in and outside Rotary they can approach if they have an abuse or harassment issue.
- 4.4. We will stress, should they have a problem, they are free to approach whichever person on the list they feel most comfortable talking to.
- 4.5 A condition of joining or remaining in a Rotary Youth Program is that all participants agree to, and follow the rules and instructions relating to that program.
- 4.6 At the conclusion of a Youth Program, participants will be given the opportunity to offer comments about the program by way of a debrief. All comments will be seriously considered.

5. Requirements Relating to Allegations of Abuse

District 9620 will handle allegations of abuse and harassment seriously, in accordance with the District's Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

Young people who have been abused might be mentally traumatised and find it very difficult to talk of their experience. If they are to make a full disclosure, it is critical for those they may approach to treat them with care and compassion.

- 5.1 All adults who Rotary recommends a young person may contact if abused will be briefed and given the RI list of common-sense responses to follow should this happen.
- 5.2 The process following the advice of an allegation shall be:
 - a) Ensure the safety of the young person
 - b) Persuade them to go promptly (so forensic evidence if available is not lost) with them to the police
 - c) Notify the District Governor or if unavailable the District Youth Protection Officer
 - d) Report any incident or allegations to RI within 72 hours using the secure online reporting hub <https://ri.i-sight.com/portal> or by emailing youthprotection@rotary.org.
 - e) Notify District 9620 insurer Aon directly and the District Insurance Officer.

Do Not- a) contact the accused
b) talk about or tell others

- 5.3 In all matters where the police are involved, Rotary will fully support and allow them to investigate and report.
- 5.4 Where the police do not wish to investigate, the District Review Committee will conduct a thorough investigation using experts outside Rotary as necessary or as requested by the victim or the victim's legal guardians.
- 5.5 All Rotary members and those assisting in RYPs are to be aware of behavioural and mood changes among young people. Such changes might be the result of sexual abuse or harassment. If such changes are recognised, investigation of the possible cause should be tactfully undertaken calling upon outside professional assistance if needed.

6. Requirements Specific to Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE)

All Rotary members and non-Rotary members involved in District 9620 Youth Exchange Program must operate completely within the guidelines contained in the Club Counsellor and Host Families Manual, Youth Exchange Program District 9620 and associated documents, as supplied to them by the District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee. The following policies relate to the protection of students participating in the Youth Exchange Program. Full details of policy requirements specific to Rotary Youth Exchange are contained in the above mentioned manuals.

All Rotary member and non-member Youth Exchange volunteers who have direct, unsupervised contact with Youth Exchange Program participants must:

- Hold a current WWC/Blue Card as per Queensland law
- Complete a District 9620 Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration form, providing a list of 3 referees (who may not include family and only one Rotary member).
- Be interviewed in person by an authorized Club Representative or Youth Exchange Committee Chairperson.
- Comply with RI and District 9620 guidelines for the Youth Exchange program as outlined in the Club Counsellor and Host Families Manual, Youth Exchange Program District 9620

Youth Exchange Students are to be admired. At an early age they have shown the maturity to leave their family and friends to travel and study in another country where they know nobody. Assimilation to a new culture and in most instances a new language requires our help and understanding.

- 6.1 Rotary Youth Exchange is a District program administered for clubs by the District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee as prescribed in the Club Counsellor and Host Families Manual, Youth Exchange Program District 9620.
- 6.2 The District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee is required to ensure all parties involved with inbound and outbound exchanges, attend and receive comprehensive training of inbound and outbound students, inbound and outbound club counsellors, and all natural and host families.
- 6.3 All Rotary Clubs wishing to be involved in either sponsoring or hosting an exchange student need to apply to the District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee for certification. Rotary Clubs do so by submitting the required forms declaring they will abide by the requirements as outlined in the Club Counsellor and Host Families Manual, Youth Exchange Program District t 9620.

All clubs that participate in Rotary Youth Exchange must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- A signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with district and RI policies
- Confirmation that volunteers will be prohibited from contact with program participants until a written application, interview, reference check, 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
- Any club youth protection training materials

- 6.4 All District 9620 Rotary Youth Exchange students must be given an inbound and outbound Counsellor of the same sex to assist and guide them. This is a critical role requiring the appointment of an experienced person.
- 6.5 A Club Councillor must not hold a role of authority over the student's exchange (for example, a member of a student's host family, school principal, club president, or district or club Youth Exchange or Youth Protection Officer). • Counsellors must be able to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise, including instances of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse or harassment.
- 6.6 All young people in the District 9620 Rotary Youth Exchange Program will be given and briefed on a list of simple, common-sense actions they can take to keep themselves safe.
- 6.7 It is important the counsellors and the student are in regular communication before and during their time overseas or time hosted in Australia.
- 6.8 Specific rules have been designed for the District 9620 Youth Exchange Program and it is very important these rules are followed by all involved. These are outlined in the Club Counsellor and Host Families Manual, Youth Exchange Program District 9620, and in the Rotary International District 9620 Limited Youth Exchange Program Inbound Student Agreement.
- 6.9 Rotary Youth Exchange students are obliged to provide regular monthly reports for both their host and sponsoring countries. It is important that Counsellors ensure this is done.
- 6.10 All District 9620 host families will be carefully interviewed in the family home by two members of the Rotary club to ensure the suitability of the family situation and that of their home before their appointment is confirmed. One of these Rotary members should be the Club Youth Protection Officer.
 - 6.10.1 The interview with a host family determines suitability. It should demonstrate:
 - Commitment to the safety and security of students
 - Appropriate motives for hosting a student consistent with Rotary's 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
 - 6.10.2 Youth Exchange host families must also:
 - Undergo announced and unannounced home visits both before and during the placement; home visits must be conducted during each year the family participates, 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
- 6.11 The District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee is required by RI to have a dedicated mobile phone available 24 hours a day for emergency student contact.
- 6.12 The District 9620 Youth Exchange Committee is to ensure all Rotary Youth Exchange students have travel insurance in accordance with Rotary Code of Policies 46.060.10 before they leave their country of origin.
- 6.13 Youth Exchange travel outside of students' host communities or travel that is not customarily a part the exchange program, either with their host families or to attend Rotary events, must be

subject to the host district receiving authorization from the sending district in advance.

- 6.14 Report all incidents (including abuse or harassment allegations, accidents, crimes, early returns and death) that involve Youth Exchange Students as per District 9620 Youth Protection Policy Responsibilities relating to Allegations of Abuse.
- 6.15 Participant Selection and Screening -- All students who are interested in the district Youth Exchange program must meet district guidelines and:
- Complete a written application
 - Be interviewed by the sending club and/or district
 - 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 to participate in the program.
- 6.16 District training -- The district Youth Exchange program must provide youth protection training and information to all students and volunteers. The District Youth Protection Officer in conjunction with the District Learning and Development Officer will conduct the training sessions. The district will develop a schedule that specifies who will be trained, how often, and in what formats.
- The district will conduct specialized training for those involved in Rotary Youth Exchange:
 - District governor
 - District Youth Exchange officer and committee members
 - Club Youth Exchange officer(s) and committee members
 - Rotary counsellors
 - Other Rotary members and non-members who participate in Youth Exchange activities such as local tours or district events
 - Host families
 - Students (inbound and outbound)
- 6.17 The district will maintain records of Rotary Youth Exchange participation.

7. For More information refer to the following resources:

1. Rotary International – Rotary Youth Protection Guide
2. RI Online training “Protecting Youth Program Participants”.
3. Rotary International Zone 8 Insurance Committee
4. Aon Risk Solutions
5. District Youth Protection Policy and Manuals
6. District 9620 online Youth Protection training course

8. Documents

- 8.1 **Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form –**
<https://rotary9620.org/page/admin-youth-protection>

8.2 Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form may periodically require updating due to change of circumstances. Rotary Youth Declaration forms should be renewed every 3 years, in line with renewal of Queensland Government Working with Children (Blue Card). **The onus is on the individual Rotary member, in association with their Club or Rotary program to ensure the details held by RI are up to date.**

8.3 Linking a Rotary member or Program volunteer/applicant to your club portal using the Organisation Portal.

<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/8bb79832-e5d4-4aa6-ac7d-e465f75a66d2/resource/428ea755-67b8-4717-b59a-19a9e895dbde/download/linking-card-holders.pdf>