



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

MULTI-DISTRIKT 1910-1920

JUGENDDIENST – YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME



24.01.07 E. Zeller

Appendix 2

REPORTING GUIDELINES FOR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR HARASSMENT

A: Introduction

These reporting guidelines have been developed in connection with the Student Protection Policy associated to the Youth Exchange programs of the Multi District MD 1910-1920.

In the Sub Districts of D 1910 all duties referring to the “District Chairman” refer to the regional “Youth Service Chairmen” (in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia). The MDYE Chairman should be kept informed by the local Chairman about all steps to be taken.

B: Definitions

In the Policy and in the Guidelines:

“*Abuse*” means physical, emotional or sexual abuse

- a) “Physical abuse” means the intentional use of force to the body that result in injury. It may be a single incident or a serious or pattern of incidents.
- b) “Emotional abuse” means chronic exposure to alcohol or drug abuse, verbal attacks on a person’s sense of self, repeated rejection or humiliation. It also means exposure to domestic abuse, isolation or existing in the environment of fear and/or anxiety.
- c) “Sexual abuse” means improper and unwanted exposure to sexual contact, activity or behaviour. It includes any sexual touching, intercourse or exploitation.

“*Harassment*” means any contact by an individual that is directed at, and offensive to, another person or persons and which the individual know, or ought reasonably to have known, would cause offence to harm. It comprises of any objectionable act, comment or display that belittles, demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment or any act of intimidation.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Conduct that erodes the dignity of the victim, particularly based on the victim's colour, race, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability
- b) Unwelcome and demeaning remarks, jokes and innuendos about race, religion, age, national origin, marital status, colour or disability
- c) Use, display or distribution of racist, pornographic, derogatory or other offensive written material
- d) Practical jokes based on race, sex or other discriminatory grounds
- e) Verbal use of threats
- f) Inappropriate or offensive gestures

“Sexual harassment” means any unwanted or unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel offended or intimidated.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Uninvited or unwanted touching
- b) Uninvited or unwanted kisses or embraces
- c) Crude or sexist jokes or comments
- d) Sex-based insults, taunts, teasing or name-calling
- e) Making sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures
- f) Staring or leering at a person or at parts of a their body
- g) Making promises or threats in return for sexual favours
- h) Making requests for sex or sexual favours
- i) Repeated invitations to go out after prior refusal
- j) Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions
- k) Persistent or unwelcome questions or insinuations or comments about a person's private or sex life
- l) Offensive phone calls
- m) Sexual assault

“Complainant” means the protected person making an allegation of abuse and/or harassment either directly or through another person.

“Respondent” means the person against whom a complainant has made an allegation of abuse and/or harassment.

C: Procedures for an Adult Receiving Allegation

Any adult to whom a complainant reports an incident of abuse or harassment should comply with the following guidelines.

1. Receive Report from Complainant

(a) Listen attentively and calm.

Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror or disbelief.

- (b) *Assure privacy but not confidentiality.*
Explain that you have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it does not happen to other protected persons
- (c) *Get the facts, but don't interrogate.*
Ask the complainant questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the complainant that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the complainant's story to the proper authorities.
- (d) *Be non-judgemental and reassure the complainant.*
Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the complainant. Assure the complainant that the situation was not his or her fault and that he or she was brave and mature to come to you.
- (e) *Record*
Keep a written record of the conversation with the complainant as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the complainant's words and record only what has been told you.

2. *Protect the Complainant*

Ensure the safety and the well-being of the complainant. If you or the complainant have any concerns regarding his or her safety, immediately remove the complainant from the situation and from all contact with the respondent. Reassure the complainant that it is for his or her own safety and it is not a punishment. If there are no safety concerns, determine if the complainant would nonetheless prefer to be removed or cease contact and comply with the complainant's wishes.

3. *Report to District Chair*

Immediately upon receiving the complainant (and no later than three working days) report the allegation to the district chair responsible for the program, activity or event in which the alleged incident or incidents occurred. The District Chair will keep the District Governor advised and report to appropriate law enforcement agency.

4. *Ensure Privacy is Respected*

Avoid gossip and blame. Do not tell anyone about the allegation other than those whom these guidelines require to be told. Expect as required by these guidelines all information with respect to the allegation must be kept strictly private and confidential to protect the rights of both the complainant and the respondent.

5. *Follow up*

Once the case has been reported to the District Chair, your role is complete.

You may wish to follow up to ensure that the steps are being taken to address the situation. You must not however contact the respondent about the allegation.

D: Procedures in Response to Allegation

The District Chair who receives the report of an allegation has the primary responsibility for responding to an allegation and should comply with the following guidelines.

The District Chair should ensure that the District Governor is fully advised of the steps being taken to deal with the allegation. Where appropriate the District Governor may wish to become directly involved in some or all the steps set up below.

The District Chair should keep the complainant's counsellor fully advised of all steps being taken.

Unless otherwise specified, these steps must be taken immediately following receipt of a report of an allegation of abuse and/or harassment, and no later than three working days thereafter.

1. Confirm that the complainant has been removed from the situation immediately and from all contact with respondent.
2. The District Chair and the District Governor shall immediately report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
The responsibility for investigation of the complaint lies with the law enforcement agency, and all District personnel should cooperate with any police investigation.
The District chair should ask the police to keep him or her advised of the progress of the investigation.
3. If the police decline to investigate, the District Chair should complete an investigation plan.
Depending on the nature of the complaint, its severity, and the facts surrounding the case, one or more of the following options can be discussed with the complainant – remember that if a youth is involved he or she has the right to have an adult present at all times and to be represented by an adult.
 - a) pursuing an informal resolution of the complaint
 - b) proceeding with a formal investigation
 - c) taking advantage of counselling, mediation and other resources
 - d) exploring other possible avenues of recourse
4. Ensure the complainant received immediate support services
5. Offer the complainant an independent, non-Rotarian counsellor to represent his or her interest. Ask the appropriate social service or law enforcement agency to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian nor in any way involved with the program, activity or event in question.

6. Determine with the complainant's counsellor whether his or her parents should be contacted and whether the complainant should have the option of either staying in the country or return home.
7. While investigations are being conducted, remove the respondent from any contact in Rotary programs, activities or events with all protected persons including the complainant.
8. Either the District Governor or the District Chair must inform Rotary International of the allegation within 72 hours of the time a district officer learns of the incident and provide follow-up reports of steps being taken, outcome of all investigations and resulting actions.
9. Complete as quickly as possible the investigation in accordance with the investigation plan and provide a report on the findings made to the respondent, the complainant and the District Governor.

E: Understanding the Needs of the complainant

There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the complainant after an allegation is reported. The complainant is likely to feel embarrassed, confused and maybe become withdrawn.

The complainant may in addition appear to be avoiding members of the host family or hosting Rotary Club. After a report of harassment or abuse complainants may or may not want to remain on their exchange. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting club depending on the circumstances. In some cases a complainant may wish to remain in the country, but change to different host club.

It may be difficult for club members, volunteers and host families who become aware of the complaint to understand how the complainant is feeling, but it would be helpful for the complainants to know that the club remains a support for them. Club members, volunteers and host families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the complainant of their support at all times.

F: Appropriate Behaviour for Others Aware of the Allegation

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of a complainant. Club members who become aware of the allegation should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any investigation. Club members who become aware of the allegation should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter of investigation.

Comments made about a complainant in support of a respondent or about a respondent in support of a complainant are inconsistent with our Rotary

ideals. Furthermore adverse comments made against either a complainant or a respondent could lead to a defamation claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the person about whom those comments are made.

G: Sanctions

If the allegation made against a respondent are found to be true, in addition to and independent from any civil or criminal legal consequence

- a) a Rotarian who is found to have abused and/or harassed a protected person will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including a lifetime ban from Rotary International.
- b) the participation in district programs, activities and events of any non-Rotarian who is found to have abused and/or harassed a protected person will be curtailed or prohibited as appropriate and any such non-Rotarian will not be invited to join any Rotary Club in the District.

E. Zeller, MD 1910-1920 ,24.1.07
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