

Using District 5130's Crisis Communication and Management Policy

Who Should Know? Rotary Club Presidents, Leaders, Chairs, Members of the District Leadership Team, Committee Chairs, and Committee Members

What Should be Shared? Provide a full plan copy to every Club Member and District Staff person.

What Should Be Done Before a Crisis? Read the entire plan. Clubs and District Committees should hold dedicated training to discuss and understand the plan. All new Club members and District Committee Members should be educated about the plan. The Club President shall identify a primary information liaison who will communicate details to the Team and media representative.

If You Have a Question Before a Crisis? Ask your Club President, Assistant Governor, District Governor, or any individual on the Crisis Management Team.

What Should Be Done During a Crisis? Carefully re-read and follow this plan.

If You Still Have Questions During a Crisis? Do not guess or try to fix it yourself. Ask any individual on the Crisis Management Team for help.

If you Have a Suggestion After a Crisis? Share them with any individual on the Crisis Management Team.

Crisis Communication and Management Policy

Overview

Crisis communication and management in District 5130 is supervised by the District Governor's Crisis Communication and Management Team (hereinafter "Team"). The composition of that Team and their contact information is provided at the end of this document.

District 5130's Youth Protection Policies cover participants in the District's Youth Programs (DYP), including Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE), Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), Interact, and Club-based programs. When a crisis involves a participant of DYP, the District Youth Protections Policies, located on the District's home page at www.rotary5130.org, become a vital part of this Crisis Communication and Management Plan. The District RYE Crisis Management Protocol is attached to this policy as Exhibit A.

Introduction

Tragedy and crisis can strike at any time. Many types of events could cause a situation that would place a Rotary Club officer or board member, an entire club, the District Governor, or other Rotarians in a situation that requires their utmost and immediate attention.

Examples of such events include a traffic accident, a violent crime, a youth protection issue, or a simple case of bad judgment; a natural disaster such as a hurricane, earthquake, flood, or extreme weather event; or an event caused by an action or inaction of a Rotarian or non-Rotarian.

When such an event occurs, it is important to have a plan in place that can be followed to ensure that the matter is handled with the greatest possible care. Key objectives are to ensure that those involved in the incident are kept safe, that communication with those who need to know is completed quickly and professionally, and that all action is taken swiftly and professionally.

Additionally, in our internet-driven information age, written and video content can be transmitted in a matter of seconds, which makes it important that when a crisis erupts, our Rotary District responds with a clear message, presented honestly and in a timely manner.

What Constitutes a Crisis?

A crisis to implement the Rotary District 5130 crisis plan is an unanticipated, unusual event or occurrence arising out of, or closely related to, a Rotary Club project, event, or program that results in or is likely to result in physical or psychological harm, serious injury, or death to a participant, or that is or can be detrimental to the public image of Rotary.

Examples include a death or injury stemming either from natural disasters impacting a Rotary project, event, or program (such as a fire, flood, or earthquake) or human-caused (such as accidental or intentional mass casualty event). A crisis can include alleged criminal activity where the alleged victim or perpetrator is a Rotarian in a Rotary Club of the District.

If A Crisis Develops

1. You **DO NOT** have to handle this alone! Rotary has procedures available to help you get through the crisis.
2. Remember, if youth participants are involved, the Youth Protections Policies must be followed.
3. The Rotary Club president or other Rotarian who becomes aware of a crisis shall immediately contact the District Governor or the Chair of the Team. All DYP staff shall follow the detailed reporting procedures for their individual programs.
4. The District Governor or Chair of the Team will convene a meeting. The active members of the Team are appointed by the Governor and listed at the end of this document. Depending on the situation, additional team members could be appointed, including the Club President, a committee chair, an attorney, a counselor or social worker, and the Club Public Information chair.
5. Gather all the facts.
6. In situations requiring law enforcement or other emergency service involvement, the Team shall cooperate with law enforcement in all respects and receive guidance from the responsible law enforcement and emergency officials.
7. Provide timely briefings to all Rotary stakeholders.
8. District 5130 has designated Media Representatives in both the Northern and Southern parts of the District who have extensive experience working with the media and will manage the communication with all those individuals outside of the Team, club, and affected parties. The club shall identify a primary information liaison who will communicate details to the Team and media representative.
9. Instruct all Club members to refer press inquiries to the designated Team Media Representative.
10. District 5130 respects the privacy of all Rotarians and Rotary program participants. Do not release the name of any individual involved or the details of the crisis. The Team may release the names of those involved at the appropriate time.
11. Prepare a statement that accurately states the facts, expresses Rotary's position, and conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, commitment, etc.). Update as needed.
12. Develop key messages to help the Media Representative convey Rotary's position consistently and accurately.
13. Contact the RI PR Division (847-866-3245 or 847-866-3237) immediately if the issue could spread beyond the local press and attract the attention of regional, national, or international media.
14. The District Governor or Chair of the Team will notify the RI Legal Department within the required timeframe.

When the Media Contact You

If your Rotary Club President, event or activity chair, or some other Rotarian is contacted by the media, please keep the following guidelines in mind.

1. Follow the protocols set out above. Do not issue a statement or make a comment to the media other than referring them to the appropriate Team Media Representative.
2. Immediately contact the District Governor or Chair of the Team, even if you are doubtful of the urgency or importance of the matter. Let those responsible make the decision as to urgency and importance.
3. Immediately refer any media contact to the District Governor or Chair of the Team or, in an ongoing situation, the Team Media Representative. If you need time to confirm or determine the appropriate contact information, tell the reporter you will call back promptly.
4. When required, return media calls promptly but refer them to the Team Media Representative, as ignoring media can contribute to unnecessary speculation. Inform all members of the club and related individuals that Rotary will respond appropriately and as soon as possible but that all communication regarding the crisis will be through the district Team Media Representative.
5. The District Governor and/or Media Representative will be completely honest and truthful, will not say anything he/she is unsure of, and will not cover up or make excuses.
6. The District Governor or Media Representative will represent Rotary. When they speak, they are Rotary. No personal observations or speculations will be issued.
7. Monitor the media's local coverage of the issue for accuracy and tone and, where possible, provide links to the coverage to the Team Media Representative. If Rotary is misrepresented, let the Team Media Representative know, and they will convey the concern to the District Governor.
8. Remember that nothing said to the media is "off the record."

A Final Word

Remember: Clubs, district committees, and individuals are NOT to handle any crisis alone!

District 5130 and Rotary International have Rotarians with specialized knowledge who can relieve you of the responsibility of facing the media when your attention is needed to deal with the actual crisis.

The District Governor may decide what is the most appropriate course of action. Contact your District Governor or Crisis Management Chair when a crisis develops.

2024 - 2025 Crisis Management Team and Contact Information

The Crisis Management Team shall be comprised of the following positions and individuals. The current District Governor, District Governor Elect, and District Governor Nominee shall serve on the committee during their terms of office. The Immediate Past District Governor shall serve as Chair of the Crisis Management Team. The Vice Chair of the committee will be a past District Governor and shall serve a three-year term.

The District Public Image Chair, District Media Representatives for the North and South, District Youth Protection Officer, and Chair of the Rotary Youth Exchange Committee serving as the Assistant Youth Protection Officer shall be committee members during their terms of office. The District Legal Advisor appointed by the District Governor shall be a committee member.

Chair - Crisis Management Team PDG

Tom Boylan

Rotary@boylanpoint.com

707-495-3538

Vice Chair - Crisis Management Team PDG

Kathy Flamson

kmflamson@aol.com

707-481-0840

District Governor

Jim O'Grady

rotary@jimogrady.com

707-478-1705

District Governor-Elect Kristine Redko

kshoya@aol.com

707-535-6427

District Governor Nominee Jeff Kolin

jkolinrotary5130@gmail.com

310-975-9480

Public Image Tom Boylan
Rotary@boylanpoint.com
707-495-3538

Media Representative (North)
Cindy Denbo
denbo@sbcglobal.net
707-854-5800

Media Representative (South) Julie Montgomery
julielovesrotary@gmail.com
707-328-5905

District Legal Advisor
Michael Fish
mfish@andersonzeigler.com
415-517-8460

Youth Protection Officer PDG Wulff Reinhold's
wreinholdmpa@gmail.com
707-508-5819

Asst. Youth Protection Officer Haider Ajina
hmajina@gmail.com
707-499-6219

The Crisis Management Team shall be comprised of the following positions and individuals. The current District Governor, District Governor Elect, and District Governor Nominee shall serve on the committee during their terms of office. The Immediate Past District Governor shall serve as Chair of the Crisis Management Team. The Vice Chair of the committee will be a past District Governor and shall serve a three-year term.

The District Public Image Chair, District Media Representatives for the North and South, District Youth Protection Officer, and Chair of the Rotary Youth Exchange Committee serving as the Assistant Youth Protection Officer shall be committee members during their terms of office. The District Legal Advisor appointed by the District Governor shall be a committee member.



Rotary District 5130 YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM



CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

NEED FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

A crisis involving District 5130 Youth Exchange (YE) may involve international students hosted in our District or District 5130 students hosted in Districts overseas. A crisis may involve an individual student or a group of students within a region. A crisis may involve the death of a student; a transportation accident, food poisoning, building fire, and many other possibilities. Even if there are no serious injuries or illnesses, a crisis may exist because of public perception, especially in the case of an Inbound student's home embassy and the press.

One of the most important points to remember is Safety First! Take action immediately to protect the student, family or other person who needs protection. This may involve calling for medical or public safety assistance, removing the student from the home or situation or some other immediate action.

THE DISTRICT 5130 YE COMMITTEE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

The District 5130 Chair acts as the District Crisis Management Officer (DCMO). Additional team members may include the following:

- District Outbound Coordinator
- District Inbound Coordinator
- District Country Coordinator
- Other District YE Committee member(s), as assigned by the Chair
- Club YE Committee members, if appropriate

See the Contact page of <https://ye5130.org/> for Contact information details. Other contact information is provided in Appendix B.

ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT 5130 YE COMMITTEE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

Procedures proposed in this Crisis Management Plan incorporate many of Rotary International's "Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies", which are included as Appendix A.

All persons should recognize and appreciate that timely, accurate and concise information is critical to effectively manage a crisis.

Unless otherwise noted, the DCMO will be the point person for contact during the course of the crisis. All inquiries shall be directed to the DCMO. Depending on the seriousness of the crisis, other individuals may be named to assist.

If the DCMO will not be accessible via the listed contact information, the DCMO will provide temporary contact information to the District Crisis Management Team. In the event the DCMO will be inaccessible, the District Country Coordinator will become the contact person and leader of the District Crisis Management Team. In the event that neither the DCMO or District Country Coordinator are available, then a team member will be appointed.

The DCMO or designee will be the spokesperson for the media. **NO ONE should speak to the media except the DCMO or their designee!** Simply provide the media with the name and contact information of the DCMO or their designee.

District Crisis Management Team Members are expected to respond to the crisis **immediately** upon notification. If circumstances prohibit an immediate response, the DCMO shall be notified so these duties can be reassigned to other available individuals.

Additional District Crisis Team Members will endeavor to remain accessible in the event of an emergency. If members will be away and not accessible (i.e. not checking phone messages and/or e-mail), they will notify the DCMO of their absence.

INBOUND CRISIS PROCEDURE – for one or several students

This guideline addresses an emergency involving an individual student or a group of the District's inbound students.

In the event of a crisis such as death, serious injury, serious illness, natural or other disaster or other problem deemed serious by the Host Club, the **Host Club Youth Exchange Officer (YEO)** shall contact the DCMO immediately and provide the following details at a minimum:

1. Name of student(s) involved.
2. Home country(ies) of student(s) involved, including sponsor district number(s), if possible.
3. Host Club name(s).
4. Name and contact information for local Rotarian(s) to be contacted in this specific emergency.
5. Sufficient details involving the crisis.
6. Be sure to take a few moments to document and make written notes of what happened (answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how as specifically as possible) and to outline next steps. Thinking through a plan of action before anything further is done will help to avoid problems later.

Upon notification of the crisis, the **DCMO** will immediately take over management of the crisis, including:

1. Make all necessary internal (within District) communications:
 - Contact all members of the District Crisis Management Team and relay crisis information and status updates throughout the crisis.
 - Request any necessary assistance from team members relative to the crisis. This may include research or other procedures. The DCMO may also include or ask for assistance from the Club and others outside of the District Crisis Management

Team. All parties will work together to create solutions. The team should use the Rotary International “Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies” as a baseline.

- Communication should also be extended to the current District Governor and all other members of the District 5130 Youth Exchange Committee not affected by the crisis.
2. Make all necessary external (out of District) communications:
 - Contact and relay crisis information to Rotary International and provide status updates throughout the crisis.
 - Contact and relay crisis information to WESSEX and provide status updates throughout the crisis.
 - Contact and advise others such as Embassy/Consulate for the student.
 - Contact and advise counterpart officers in student’s Sponsoring District.
 - Contact insurance companies, if appropriate
 3. Others who may need to be informed and not necessarily identified previously above include:
 - Parents/Legal Guardians
 - Host family(ies), club counselor(s)
 - Host and Sponsoring District Governors
 - Host Rotary Club
 - Local Rotary Club (if crisis occurs while away from the host area)

OUTBOUND CRISIS PROCEDURE – for one or several students

This guideline addresses an emergency involving a District 5130 student(s) hosted by a District overseas.

In the event someone is notified of a crisis such as death, serious injury, serious illness, natural or other disaster or other serious problem involving a District 5130 Outbound Student, the person who receives the information shall contact the **DCMO** immediately and provide the following details at a minimum:

1. Name student(s) involved.
2. Name of Sponsor Rotary Club in District 5130.
3. Name of Host Rotary Club(s) of student(s) involved, including host district number, if possible.
4. Name and contact information for the Responsible Officer for the overseas region where crisis is occurring and who should be contacted in this specific emergency.
5. Sufficient details involving the crisis.
6. Be sure to take a few moments to document and make notes of what happened (answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why and how as specifically as possible) and to outline next steps. Thinking through the plan of action before anything further is done will help to avoid problems later.

Upon notification of the crisis, the **DCMO** will immediately take over management of the crisis, including:

1. Make all necessary internal (within District) communications:

- Contact all members of the District Crisis Management Team and relay crisis information and status throughout the crisis.
 - Request any necessary assistance from team members relative to the crisis. This may include research or other procedures. The team should use the Rotary International “Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies” as a baseline.
 - Communication should also be extended to the current District Governor and all other members of the District 5130 Youth Exchange Committee not affected by the crisis.
2. Keep in contact with the Responsible Officer for the region where the crisis is occurring and work through the Responsible Officer to resolve the crisis.
 3. Others who may need to be informed and not necessarily identified previously above include:
 - Parents/Legal Guardians
 - Host family(ies), club counselor(s)
 - Host and Sponsoring District Governors
 - Host Rotary Club
 - Local Rotary Club (if crisis occurs while away from the host area)

POST CRISIS REPORTING AND WRAPUP

The DCMO will determine when the crisis has ended and will notify the District Crisis Management Team. While the immediacy of the crisis may have passed, there remains a need for additional follow through.

Within one month after the crisis has ended, the District Crisis Management Team, along with others (if needed), will review the effectiveness of the District Crisis Management Plan. The team should determine what worked well and consider any improvements which may be necessary in the event of any future crisis. In addition, the DCMO, with the help of the Crisis Management Team, will write a report summarizing the incident and submit to the District Governor.

Any proposed/recommended changes to the Crisis Management process should be summarized and presented to the District 5130 YE Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

APPENDIX A

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH EXCHANGE EMERGENCIES

Although they are rare, unfortunate emergency situations do occasionally arise during Youth Exchange activities. Preparation for any possibility is an essential part of a Youth Exchange program. How the student's family and the media perceive the emergency was handled will have a direct impact on the program. The following guidelines outline how to prepare in advance for a possible emergency, the individuals to contact should an emergency occur, and the steps to follow during an emergency.

Tips for Emergency Preparedness

- The district Inbound Counselor should have copies of the airline ticket and passport should the student be traveling or in case the student's documents are not accessible through the club counselor.
- The district Inbound Coordinator should obtain consent from the student's parents or legal guardians to reissue a student's passport in the event it is lost, stolen, or inaccessible at time of departure.
- The district Inbound Coordinator should share with the sponsoring Youth Exchange Officer the student's itinerary and know who will meet the student at the airport upon arrival.
- District 5130 will pay for the student to return to finish the exchange after being evacuated in the case of political or civil unrest.
- The District Inbound Coordinator and current host family should know details regarding all of the student's travel plans and should ascertain that these travel plans have been approved by the natural parents/legal guardians of the student, especially if the student is traveling to another city or country during the exchange.
- The student's parents should issue a written authorization letter (or powers of attorney) naming the host Rotarian counselor, host families, and another Rotarian of the host/receiving club (preferably the host club president), any of whom is to act for the parent in the event of injury or death. This is very important because most government departments and local authorities require it. Some districts have the parents/legal guardians sign a number of parental consent forms separate from the application form to ensure that each host family and counselor has a copy of the form. The letter should also authorize the incurring of:
 - Funeral expenses (cost of claiming body, embalming, casket, compliance with legal and government fees, and transportation of casket/body, cremation cost, etc.) to be reimbursed from the insurance policy;

APPENDIX A (continued)

- Expenses of authorized persons (Rotarian counselor and/or host parent) to act on behalf of parent (transportation and hotel charges for travel to place of accident, etc.), to be reimbursed from the insurance policy. The handling of expenses is important as not every host club can afford to incur such immediate expenses. The ability of the club or district to handle immediate costs can prevent a tragic situation from becoming worse. The host Rotarian is committed to treat the student as though he/she is his/her own child and will do everything a natural parent would do if faced with similar circumstances.
- However, if a host Rotarian has to spend a substantial amount of money for immediate needs, other Rotarians may be discouraged from becoming host parents and counselors in the future.

It is therefore recommended that District 5130 establish an emergency fund to cover immediate expenses in the event of a tragedy. The insurance money received will reimburse this fund. Many hosting districts require the students to have an emergency fund to assist in the event of an emergency.

APPENDIX B

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DISTRICT 5130

This information should be updated any time positions change and reviewed at least annually for accuracy.

	Name	1Phone	2Phone	email
Rotary International	Carissa Coons	847-866-3421		Carissa.Coons@rotary.org
Wessex	Charlie Kocher	541-210-4397		chair@rotarywessex.org
DCMO/Chair	Carlton Nielsen	707-498-8000		carltonnielsen@gmail.com
Country Coordinator	Haider Ajina	707-499-6219		hmajina@gmail.com
Inbound Coordinator	Nancy Dean	707-845-5468		Rotary.nancydean@gmail.com
Outbound Coordinator	Brian Lovell	+1 707 834 3856	+1 707 839 9662	blovell47@gmail.com

APPENDIX C

CLUB ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT IN CRISIS RESPONSE

The Club plays an important role in responding to a crisis. Each club's RYE Committee will act as the Crisis Management Committee. Each committee member should be given a copy of the Crisis Management section of the District Manual and all should be aware of the District Policies on Crisis Management.

When a tragic event occurs, things need to be done quickly. Tasks should be assigned to the various members of the club/district committee. The important thing is to document the crisis details and inform the DCMO immediately, so the DCMO can take over the management and handling of the crisis.

Suggested Club Crisis Management Team members are listed below. Your Club may choose to add other persons to your Committee as the need arises.

- Club Youth Exchange Officer (YEO)
- Club Counselors (both inbound and outbound)
- Other Club Youth Exchange Committee members
- Club President
- Current Host Parents

Finances

The Club should work with the District Crisis Management Team to ensure payment for any expenses incurred are paid immediately. The DCMO should approve the expenses to be incurred. The District Youth Exchange Committee will support the Club, as long as the DCMO is involved in the decision to incur the expense.

The goal is to not add burden to the student's family in the midst of the crisis. The matters need to be handled and after the immediacy of the crisis situation has been resolved, the Club and District can work together to resolve the financial matters, such as pursuing insurance reimbursements, and requesting additional funds from the parents, or other suitable resolution.

APPENDIX D

DEATH OF A STUDENT

When a tragic event occurs, things need to be done quickly. Tasks should be assigned to the various members of the club/district emergency committee.

Procedures to follow when the death of a student occurs:

- Ascertain that the deceased is the student.
- Contact all of the individuals noted above for immediate internal or external communications
- Contact the student's Parents/Legal guardians. Obtain clear instructions (ideally written) concerning burial, cremation or return of body. Ask about memorial services and give consideration to the religion of the deceased.
- Check with local police for local regulations and obtain a copy of the police report. Reclaim the deceased's possessions, especially the passport.
- Check with the local hospital and mortuary for the claiming of the body and regarding an autopsy. Obtain the death certificate.
- Contact a local undertaker and embalmer. Ensure that the embalmer possesses an internationally recognized practice license so that the embalmed body may cross national borders. (This is to prevent the spread of disease.) Obtain the embalmer's certificate. Order a suitable casket and arrange transportation to student's home country, or arrange for burial or cremation, according to the parents' wishes.
- Obtain the "sealing certificate." For the casket to cross national borders, the inside must be metal-lined and sealed. Sealing must be officially witnessed, to prevent smuggling. In order for a sealed casket to leave the country, an export permit is required. For the sealed casket to enter the student's home country, an import permit is required. An established undertaker should be able to deal with these matters. The embassy can assist in obtaining the two permits.
- Appoint a reputable air-transport agent to airlift the casket to the student's home country. This is to ensure that all connecting flights are correctly scheduled without risk of the casket being accidentally off-loaded at an intermediate airport. The arrival flight details should be provided to the deceased's parents/guardians so they can make arrangements to receive the casket. Give copies of the death certificate, embalming certificate, casket sealing certificate, import and export permits, and passport to the transport company. These documents must accompany the casket on the airplane.
- Hold a memorial service for the student. Remember to write a complete report to your district governor. Send copies to Rotary International and to the student's home district and Rotary club.