

ROTARY DISTRICT 6400 CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction

Tragedy and crisis can occur at any time. Examples of this include: a violent crime, traffic accident, a youth protection issue, or bad judgment. Other events caused by an action or inaction of a Rotary club member or non-Rotary member may lead to a situation that could place a Rotary club officer, board member, an entire club, the District Governor, or other Rotary members in a situation that requires immediate attention. This plan does not supersede any local governmental laws or policies that pertain to crisis situations.

When such an event occurs, it is important to have procedures and a plan in place to follow that will ensure that the situation is handled with the utmost care; that those involved in the incident are safe; that communication with the appropriate parties is completed quickly, accurately and professionally; and that any action taken is done swiftly and professionally when needed.

In an age when much information is received immediately from the internet, written and video content can be transmitted in a matter of seconds, making it important that when a crisis occurs, Rotary District 6400 can respond with a clear message, presented honestly and in a timely manner.

Crisis Definition

For purposes of implementing the Rotary District 6400 Crisis Management Plan is defined as 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, death to a participant, or that is, or can be detrimental to the public image of Rotary. Examples could include a death or injury stemming from a natural disaster that impacts a Rotary project, event or program (i.e. fire, flood, earthquake), or human caused (i.e. accidental or intentional mass casualty event). A crisis might include suspected illegal activities or any other event where the victim or suspected offender is a Rotary member, a Rotary club, or Rotary District that impacts people or property in a substantial, negative manner.

Crisis events may, but not necessarily, involve youth involved in Rotary functions and programs, such as RYLA, Interact, and Youth Exchange. Such youth programs have carefully designed youth protection policies. Rotary District 6400's Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy take precedence over this Crisis Management Plan and needs to be followed prior to implementing steps in this plan. Every effort should be made to provide simultaneous notification of the situation to the District Governor.

Purpose of this Policy

In the event of a crisis situation, it is imperative to follow the established guidelines that will ensure that communication to Rotary members and the public is accurate, timely and consistent. Also critical is to provide immediate care and protection of all individuals and their families that are involved in the situation.

It is the policy of Rotary District 6400 to provide the highest level of transparency and cooperation that is consistent with applicable laws and government policies.

Crisis Management Policy and Parameters

1. The sitting District Governor is the only officer of Rotary International in the District. As such, they are the main contact between the District and Rotary International, and between the District and the Club, event or activity manager of the Rotary activity involved in the crisis situation.
2. The District Governor holds final responsibility for Crisis Management in the District. In the absence of the District Governor, or in the case of their inability to act, then the following individuals, in the order listed, shall hold final responsibility:
 - A. Vice District Governor
 - B. Immediate Past District Governor
 - C. District Governor Elect
3. The District Governor shall appoint annually a Crisis Management Team as part of the District Leadership Team to provide support and guidance as needed.
4. Only the District Governor, or their designate, as set forth in Item 2 above, has the authority to activate the Crisis Management Team, or involve individual members of the team, when required.
5. An individual Rotary club president or designee will represent an individual club if the incident requires, as requested by the District Governor.

Crisis Management Team

The purpose of a Crisis Management Team is to provide support and guidance as needed. A Crisis Management Team (CMT) will be established annually as part of the District Leadership Team.

The core CMT shall be composed of:

1. District Governor, Chair
2. Vice Governor
3. Immediate Past District Governor
4. District Governor-Elect
5. District Governor-Nominee

Depending on the nature of the crisis, the CMT may include any, or all, of the following positions as determined by the District Governor:

1. District Youth Protection Officer
2. An attorney who is familiar with local laws and can provide immediate advice on confidentiality, potential legal action and liability.
3. District Public Image Chair
4. District Communications Chair
5. An incident spokesperson who may serve as a liaison to the media, who may, or may not be the District Communications or Public Image Chair
6. District Treasurer

In addition, others may be asked to serve on the CMT for a specific incident, as required and determined by the District Governor.

1. Assistant Governor for the area of the incident
2. Chair of the committee responsible for the activity where the incident originated, if appropriate
3. Individuals or companies at the request of the District Governor

Crisis Management Team Education

All members of the CMT should be familiar with the most recent edition of Rotary International Media Crisis Handbook 515-EN-(507) and the Rotary Youth Protection Guide 775-EN-(2) and District 6400 Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy

All members of the Media Contact Team should review the media relations training in the Rotary Learning Center

All members of the CMT will adhere to the District's Confidentiality Agreement.- see attachment.

Crisis Management Procedures

1. The Rotary club president or other Rotary member who becomes aware of a crisis situation shall first determine if appropriate authorities have been called into action (i.e. law enforcement, medical personnel, or fire responders). The next step is to immediately contact and consult with the District Governor. If the District Governor is not available, contact the next person on the CMT team list, in the order listed. All youth protection program staff shall follow the detailed reporting procedures of the District's Youth Protection and Abuse and Harassment Policy before contacting the District Governor, although every effort should be made to simultaneously notify the District Governor.
2. The District Governor, or designee determines the need to consult the CMT, and decides if the team, or specific members of the CMT should be activated. The

District Governor has sole discretion and authority to determine which members of the CMT team, if any, should be activated.

3. The District Governor will notify members of the CMT that they have chosen to active in response to the crisis.
4. The District Governor will confirm that law enforcement has been contacted, if applicable and not already involved.
5. In situations requiring law enforcement, or other emergency service involvement, the CMT will cooperate with public authorities and follow the direction of responsible public officials.
6. The District Governor will contact Rotary International and the current Rotary International Director assigned to District 6400.
7. The District Governor will designate an incident spokesperson, if there is not already one designated. The incident spokesperson should be knowledgeable of the situation, communicates well and is comfortable interacting with the media.
8. The District Governor will direct the incident spokesperson to prepare a statement that accurately states the facts of situation, expresses Rotary's position, and conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, commitment, etc.). The incident spokesperson will develop talking points to be used as reference for the Media Resource Team that keeps the messages simple and focused. The incident spokesperson shall update the statements and talking points as needed.
9. The District Governor will inform the club presidents and Assistant Governors to communicate appropriate and approved information to any affected clubs, and instruct all club members to refer media inquiries to the incident spokesperson.
10. The District Governor may communicate with Assistant Governors, District Leadership Team members, clubs and/or individual Rotary members if needed.
11. The District Governor will notify Rotary International and the Rotary International Director of any significant changes in the crisis and media involvement.
12. The District Governor will seek further assistance from Rotary International regarding media inquiries as needed.

Media Contacts

If a Rotary club president, event or activity chair or other member is contacted by the media, please use the following guidelines:

1. The goal is to have an organized media response through the incident spokesperson. Follow the procedures as outlined. Do not issue a statement or make comments to the media, other than referring them to the incident spokesperson. Ignoring media requests can contribute to unnecessary speculation, but it is the responsibility of the incident spokesperson to communicate facts and positions of Rotary to the media.
 - a. For purposes of District 6400 Crisis Management Plan, the definition of media includes, but is not limited to the following:

- i. Traditional print media, such as newspapers
 - ii. Broadcast media, such as television and streaming services
 - iii. Social media platforms
 - iv. Online sources, such as bloggers. Bloggers may include an untrained citizen journalist who captures an event through photographs, video or audio recordings capable of putting online visual, audio and text from the site of the crisis incident.
2. The District Governor and the incident spokesperson will designate a Media Resource Team who can assist the incident spokesperson with media interactions in order to divide the workload. Each team member may have a designated area to follow and report back to the incident spokesperson. Designated areas may include local news, or a variety of social media platforms, thereby providing the District Governor and incident spokesperson to maintain control of messages appearing on social media. Contact information for the incident spokesperson will be provided to anyone reasonably anticipated to be contacted by the media, along with instructions to refer all inquiries to the incident spokesperson. The incident spokesperson may refer an inquiry to a member of the Media Resource Team.
 3. Any Rotary member contacted by the media shall refer the inquiring media representative to the District Governor, or the incident spokesperson, without comment. The District Governor shall be contacted immediately, or designate, even if in doubt of the urgency or importance of the matter.
 4. If time is needed to confirm or determine the District Governor or incident spokesperson contact information, tell the inquirer that you, or a Rotary representative will call back promptly.
 5. Before issuing any statement, Rotary International Public Image and Press Relations staff should review and approve the statement.
 6. The District Governor and/or incident spokesperson will be honest and truthful, will not communicate information that they are not sure of, and will not cover up or provide excuses.
 7. Since the District Governor and incident spokesperson represent Rotary, no personal observations or speculative comments shall be made.
 8. While monitoring media coverage of an incident, if Rotary or the situation is misrepresented, inform the incident spokesperson and District Governor for action, if needed.
 9. Off the record comments shall not be made.

Conclusion

Clubs, district committees and individuals are not to handle a crisis alone. The District and Rotary International can provide resources for media response so that attention can be focused on dealing with the actual situation. Contact your District Governor as soon as you think a possible situation is developing or has developed.

Each year, the District Governor shall complete the information for the Crisis Management Team and distribute to club and district leadership.

Core Crisis Management Team Members	Name	Cell Phone Number
Incident Spokesperson		
District Governor		
Vice Governor		
Immediate Past District Governor		
District Governor-Elect		
District Governor-Nominee		
Ad Hoc Committee Members	Shall be members in good standing of District 6400	
Youth Protection Officer		
Legal Advisor		
Financial Advisor		
Public Image Chair		
Communications Chair		
Rotary International Resources for Crisis Management Team		
RI Director		
Club and District Support		
Chief Public Image Officer		
Risk Manager		
Youth Programs Manager		
Rotary Insurance Manager		
Other		

Adopted by the District 6400 Board of Directors, dated: April 5, 2023