



Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct

Authorisation

Authorisation: District Governor Name:	[Insert Name]
District Governor Signature	
Date	[Insert Date]
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Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this Code of Conduct, please contact your local Rotary club, or telephone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450.

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets the standard of behaviour expected of everyone who takes part in a Rotary or Rotaract activity of Rotary District 9815 (the District) and its clubs. It is a key part of how we keep children and young people safe, and how we treat one another. The Code reflects our core values of fellowship, integrity, diversity, service, and leadership.

The Code applies at all club, District, Zone, and Rotary International meetings, training events, and anywhere else a member represents Rotary — including My Rotary, social media, and any other online environment.

2. Scope

This Code of Conduct is the operating rulebook for the *Rotary District 9815 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2026* (the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*). The *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* describes the Code in these terms:

Our Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours, including between adults, and children and young people. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments. (Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Section 5)

Read this Code together with the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* and the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting*.

The Code applies to:

- Rotary and Rotaract members and volunteers — in any role;
- contractors, service providers, and visitors — for the duration of their engagement with the District or its clubs;
- any other person involved in a Rotary activity, whether or not they are in direct contact with children and young people; and
- all club, District, Zone, and Rotary International settings — physical and online — in which a person represents Rotary.

3. Important: child-safety concerns are handled separately

If conduct under this Code gives rise to an incident, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of child abuse, the matter is *not* handled under this Code. It must be reported immediately under the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting*.

This applies regardless of who raises the concern — a child or young person, a parent or carer, another Rotary or Rotaract member, the person whose conduct is in question, or anyone else.

If anyone is in immediate danger, call Victoria Police on 000.

4. Definitions

The following terms are used throughout this Code. Where a term has a defined meaning in legislation or in the V3.0 Rotary Club and DIO Handbook 2026, that meaning applies.

Term	Meaning
Young person	A person under 18 years of age.
Child-connected work	Work that involves contact with children or young people, whether direct or indirect, as part of a Rotary or Rotaract activity.
CYPO	Club Youth Protection Officer.
DYPO	District Youth Protection Officer.
DIO	District Insurance Officer.
Reportable allegation	An allegation, suspicion, or complaint of reportable conduct under the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme. The five categories are listed in the Responding and Reporting Procedure.
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, queer, asexual, and questioning. Used inclusively throughout this Code.

5. General expectations of everyone

All members and other participants — including Rotary program participants, alumni, project partners, volunteers, and representatives of Rotary — are expected to comply with this Code, be considerate, and contribute to a collaborative, positive, and healthy environment in which everyone is respected and valued.

5.1 Use respectful language

When you first meet someone, introduce yourself and explain how you would like to be addressed, including your preferred pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, or others). Call others by their preferred name rather than a nickname that is easier to pronounce.

When addressing larger groups, use gender-neutral words to avoid making assumptions. Use active listening to deepen your understanding of others.

Be conscious of language and adapt as needed, depending on the region or cultural background of the person you are speaking with — some wording is acceptable in some cultures and not in others. Avoid slang or idioms that do not translate across cultures, or be deliberate in explaining them. Speak plainly and avoid acronyms and jargon that not everyone may understand.

If you are curious about someone's cultural background, faith, sexual orientation, gender, or another characteristic, ask if they are open to sharing more about themselves. Don't ask if the topic is not relevant to your conversation. Foster a culture of conversation across generations, and avoid describing anyone by their age.

5.2 Be supportive

- be an ally and advocate for others, and be ready to step in when you see a need;
- if you see or hear something inappropriate, address it in a way that offers support to those affected; and
- uphold the Code, build this culture in your club, and address any issues as they arise.

5.3 Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment

- ensure every member and participant can fully take part in any meeting, event, or activity that you organise, in person or online — by offering an accessible venue, simultaneous interpretation, closed captioning or transcripts, and any other resources people need. Ask people what they need at the point they register or join;
- review club or program traditions and stop or change activities that may be offensive or alienating to a particular group;
- create a welcoming environment and include everyone in conversations, projects, and events;
- pay attention to non-verbal communication — eye contact, facial expressions, tone of voice, personal space, gestures, and posture — and how it affects your ability to engage with and relate to others;
- know the important dates of various religions, and schedule events and activities in a way that is inclusive and considerate of people who observe them;
- be aware of people's dietary and health needs; and
- open opportunities for everyone to hold leadership roles in your club and District, and to engage with your community partners.

5.4 Celebrate diversity

- increase your club's awareness, understanding, and acceptance of people with disability;
- celebrate a range of cultural events and religious observances, rather than always running service projects or hosting events tied to a single culture or religion;
- acknowledge and celebrate significant dates relevant to diversity;
- avoid stereotyping and mocking any specific group; and
- acknowledge and celebrate different genders.

6. Working with children and young people

This Section sets out behaviours expected, and behaviours that are not acceptable, when adults interact with children and young people in any Rotary or Rotaract setting. It applies to everyone described in Section 2.

6.1 Acceptable behaviours

As Rotary and Rotaract members, volunteers, service providers, and any other member of our community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- always upholding our commitment to child safety and following the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*;
- treating children, young people, and their families with respect — in Rotary settings and outside Rotary settings as part of normal social and community life;
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they disclose that they, or another child, have been abused or are worried about safety;

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- promoting the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; children and young people with disability; international students (including Rotary Youth Exchange participants); children and young people unable to live at home; and children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+;
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child or young person — one-to-one interactions are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Club Youth Protection Officer (CYPO) and the District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO);
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting*; and
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child or young person is safe and protected from harm.

6.2 Unacceptable behaviours

As Rotary and Rotaract members, volunteers, service providers, and members of our community involved in child-connected work, we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse or harm;
- develop a relationship with any child or young person taking part in our programs that could be seen as favouritism or amount to grooming behaviour (for example, by offering gifts);
- display behaviours, or engage with children or young people in our programs, in ways that are not justified by the context;
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person in our programs;
- discuss intimate topics, or use sexualised language, except where needed to deliver appropriate curriculum or professional guidance;
- treat a child or young person unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender identity, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity;
- communicate directly with a child or young person in our programs through personal or private contact channels (including social media, email, instant messaging, and texting), except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to Rotary activities, or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter;
- photograph or video a child or young person in a Rotary setting, except where required in an official Rotary capacity or for duty-of-care purposes, and only with appropriate consent;
- consume excessive alcohol or take illicit drugs in a Rotary setting or at Rotary events where children or young people are present; or
- have contact with any child or young person in our programs outside program hours, except where needed to deliver the program or professional guidance, and only with parental permission.

7. Breaches of this Code

All Rotary and Rotaract members, volunteers, contractors, and other members of the community who breach this Code may be subject to disciplinary action under District or Rotary International policies and procedures, a relevant professional code, or terms of engagement.

Where a reportable allegation is made, the matter is managed under District or Rotary International policies and procedures, and may be referred to Victoria Police. Rotary is committed to maintaining an environment free of any form of harassment, broadly defined as any conduct — verbal or physical — that denigrates, insults, or offends a person or group based on any characteristic, including age, ethnicity,

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race, colour, disability, religion, socio-economic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

7.1 If you are notified of, or suspect, a breach

If conduct under this Code involves a child or young person — including an incident, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of child abuse — see Section 3 above. The matter is handled under the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting*, not this Code.

For breaches that do not involve a child or young person (for example, adult-only harassment, or conduct between adults), tell a club officer (Club President or Club Secretary) or a District leader (District Governor, District Governor Elect, or District Governance Chair). The District Insurance Officer (DIO) is notified in parallel of any matter that may give rise to an insurance claim under the Rotary National Insurance Programme. The District Governance Chair supports the District Governor on any escalated complaint or incident.

Mandatory reporting obligations under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) apply to certain professions and continue to apply regardless of any internal Rotary process — a mandatory reporter who has formed a reasonable belief discharges that obligation independently.

7.2 Confidentiality and records

All reports under this Code are handled with appropriate confidentiality. Records of any incident, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of child abuse are stored confidentially and indefinitely — in Victoria there is no time limit on civil claims for personal injury arising from physical or sexual abuse of a minor (Limitation of Actions Amendment (Child Abuse) Act 2015 (Vic)).

8. Communication

This Code of Conduct is shared across the District and its clubs by:

- publishing it on the District website;
- including it in induction processes for club and District personnel; and
- including it in annual training for Club Youth Protection Officers, run by the District Youth Protection Officer.

9. Privacy

The District and its clubs collect, use, and disclose information about conduct matters in accordance with privacy laws and other relevant laws. For information on how we handle that information, see our privacy policy at rotary9815.org.au/privacy.

10. Related policies and procedures

This Code is read together with our other related documents, including:

D9815 Policies

Rotary District 9815 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2026 (the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*).

D9815 Child Safety and Wellbeing Risk Register.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (rotary.org/dei).

D9815 Privacy Policy (rotary9815.org.au/privacy).

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D9815 Codes and Procedures

Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Volunteer Accreditation.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Online Interactions with Young People.

District 9815 Procedures

District 9815 Procedure: Complaints — sits beside the Child Safety and Wellbeing suite as a general-purpose District procedure.

Plain Language Guides

D9815 Child Safety and Wellbeing Infographic.

D9815 Club Guide.

D9815 Volunteer Accreditation — Plain Language Guide.

Rotary International, Zone, and broader governance

Rotary International's governance documents (my.rotary.org), including the Rotary Code of Policies, Manual of Procedure, and Rotary's constitutional documents.

V3.0 Rotary Club and DIO Handbook 2026 (issued by the Zone Insurance and Protection Committee in conjunction with Aon Risk Services).

V2.0c Club Rotary Handbook Appendices 2026 — Forms F1 to F14.

Rotary International Youth Protection Guide.

Rotary Code of Policies (January 2026), particularly s2.120 (Youth Protection).

11. Approval and review

The District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO), supported by the District Insurance Officer (DIO) and the District Governance Chair, reviews this Code of Conduct at least every two years, in line with the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*.

Earlier reviews are undertaken after any significant child safety incident, or where Rotary International, the V3.0 Handbook, the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the Reportable Conduct Scheme, or other relevant legislation changes in a way that affects this Code.

Appendix A — Version History

The table below records the full version history of this Code. The most recent version is at the bottom of the list; the original version is at the top. The current authorisation block is at the front of this Code.

Version	Date	Changes	Authorised
1.0	22 September 2022	First publication (District 9820 Board).	
2.0	4 May 2026	Refresh from D9820 to D9815. Aligned with V3.0 Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy (1 May 2026). Adopted V3.0 Handbook role names (DYPO, CYPO, DIO) and added the District Governance Chair. LGBTIQ+ updated to LGBTIQA+ throughout. Added DIO and Governance Chair to the breach-reporting chain. Updated regulator from CCYP to the Social Services Regulator (SSR). Section 6 Related policies and procedures restructured into the three-tier format. Title changed from “Child Safety Code of Conduct” to “Child Protection Code of Conduct” to align with the then-master Policy (renamed Rotary District 9815 Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy 2026). Section 5 procedural detail moved to a new Appendix A.	B.Rogers
3.0	13 May 2026	Major rebuild to align with master Policy v4.1 (“260513 CSW Policy Child Safety and Wellbeing v4.1.docx”) and the v2.4 suite Procedure style. Terminology throughout: “Child Protection” → “Child Safety and Wellbeing” (title, cover, header, footer, and every internal reference). “Rotary International District 9815” corrected to “Rotary District 9815”. New Section 3 Important: child-safety concerns are handled separately, matching the suite carve-out pattern. Section ordering aligned with the suite (Purpose → Scope → Important → Definitions → [body] → Reporting lines → Communication → Privacy → Related policies → Approval and review). Section 6 Related policies restructured into the four-tier suite pattern. Filename and version-stamp updated; this remains a Code (not a Procedure).	B.Rogers

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3.1	13 May 2026	Hyperlinks added to every italicised cross-reference to another suite document, so readers can click straight through to the related Policy, Procedure, Code, or Plain Language Guide. Targets are relative filenames (suite is assumed to sit in a single folder or drive). No change to body content.	B.Rogers
3.2	14 May 2026	Section 10 Related policies and procedures restructured: new “District 9815 Procedures” sub-heading added between “D9815 Codes and Procedures” and “Plain Language Guides”, with the Complaints Procedure moved from “D9815 Policies” into the new sub-heading. The move reflects that Complaints is now a Procedure (not a Policy) and sits beside, rather than inside, the Child Safety and Wellbeing suite.	B.Rogers
3.3	15 May 2026	Front-of-document restructure: the combined Version History and Authorisation table has been split. The Authorisation block now sits at the front of the document (so readers can see who signed off this version immediately). The full Version History is now a back-of-document appendix. No change to substantive content. § symbol replaced with the word “Section” throughout as a stylistic consistency pass (carried out across the suite).	B.Rogers
3.4	15 May 2026	Cross-reference update: hyperlink to the Online Interactions Procedure re-pointed from v1.5 to v1.7 (the live version after the suite-alignment rebuild of 15 May 2026). Filename version stamp bumped to v3.4. No substantive content change.	B.Rogers
3.5	15 May 2026	Suite-wide cross-reference rule change. All hyperlinks pointing at sibling suite documents removed; each cross-reference now appears as the document title only, plain text with a light-grey placeholder highlight, indicating where a working link will be inserted once the District website hosts the suite. Working external URLs (legislation, Service Victoria, Rotary International learning, rotary.org/dei , rotary9815.org.au/privacy) are unchanged. The body-text parenthetical filename references that previously sat beside each	B.Rogers

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		cross-reference have been removed; the Registry of CSW Documents (in preparation) is the canonical record of filenames and versions across the suite.	
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