

Rotaract Club of Toronto Ethics Policy

This policy recognizes the Rotaract Club of Toronto Board as a body that has a responsibility to create, enforce and protect equitable practices and environments within the Rotaract Club of Toronto. This policy is guided by Rotary's Four Way Test.

Section 1: Definitions

1. Equity refers to the practice of creating and maintaining spaces free from judgment, harassment, or discrimination on the basis of an individual(s)'s race, ethnicity, sex, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, religion, class, accent, nationality and/or ability. Note, that this list of equity violations is not exhaustive and any actions that infringes upon the safety or equality of an individual(s) can also be considered an equity issue.
2. Harassment refers to any conduct by an individual that is directed at, and offensive to, another person or persons and which the individual knew, or ought reasonably to have known, would cause offense or harm. It comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that belittles, demeans, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment or any act of intimidation or threat. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Conduct that erodes the dignity of the victim.
 - b. Unwelcome and demeaning remarks, jokes, and innuendos about race, religion, age, national origin, marital status, colour, or disability.
 - c. Verbal abuse or threats.
 - d. Inappropriate or offensive gestures.
3. Ethics Complaint refers to the formal complaint of an equity violation or harassment concern which occurred as a result of participation in the Rotaract Club of Toronto. An equity complaint can be filed in response to any issue identified as a violation by the definitions of equity and harassment set out in this policy.

Section 2: Aims

1. To ensure that all spaces and events created and maintained by the Rotaract Club of Toronto are safe and equitable for anyone who participates in them.
2. To ensure that complainants have access to mechanisms of complaint or recourse within the Rotaract Club of Toronto.

3. To provide clear guidelines for Board members and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee members when determining courses of actions in relation to matters of equity within the Club.

Section 3: Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee Structure and Responsibilities

1. The roles of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee are as follows:
 - a. The President of the Rotaract Club of Toronto: The President is responsible for providing guidance to the committee on how to conduct ethical processes and ensure it is done so in an equitable manner.
 - b. The Past-President of the Rotaract Club of Toronto: The Past-President is responsible for assisting the President in providing guidance to the committee for smooth operation of ethical processes conducted by the committee.
 - c. The Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee Chair: A member of the Rotaract Club of Toronto and would be primarily responsible for managing the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee and all ethics complaints which includes the documentation, recording, communication and coordination of all complaints.
 - d. Equity Officers: Up to three members from the Rotaract Club of Toronto who are not part of the Steering Committee, decided through an application process organized by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee Chair, President and Past-President: This should be done within the first month of the Rotary year and voted on by the Rotaract Club of Toronto Board. Preference should be given to members who add diversity to the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion committee. These members are responsible for supporting the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee Chair's goals and aims for the Committee.
2. It is highly suggested that all Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee members sign a confidentiality agreement and be announced to the Club in the newsletter and at a general club meeting and that reasons are given as to why each one has been selected. Club members should be encouraged to email any Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member with concerns regarding the process or selection to encourage accountability and transparency.
3. Each Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member must undergo formal equity training decided by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee within the first three months of the Rotary year.

4. It is also recommended that the Rotaract Club of Toronto host one general club meeting dedicated to ethics policy training each Rotary year which would be organized by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee.
5. If the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee Chair must recuse themselves from the Ethics Complaint process due to being named as a Respondent, Complainant or have a conflict of interest or bias in the matter, then the remaining committee members must vote on who the new lead will be for that specific Ethics Complaint if applicable. The new lead could be a member within the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or if all Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee members would be unsuitable then the Committee could reach out to the following in this order: Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Public Image Director.
6. If one of the members of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee are Respondents, Complainant or have a conflict of interest or bias, they must recuse themselves from all discussion and voting of the Ethics Complaint and the rest of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee is responsible for continuing investigation and resolution. If all members of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee are Respondents in the complaint or disclose a conflict of interest or bias, the Rotaract Club of Toronto Board becomes the investigating body, however any board members that are with Respondents or disclose a conflict of interest or bias must also recuse themselves.
7. All documents and notes related to an Ethics Complaint must be documented and stored on a Google Drive that is secure and accessible only to current members of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee.
8. Members of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee should remember the following principles:
 - a. Investigate thoroughly.
 - b. Know, protect and enforce the rights and responsibilities of the Complainant and Respondent.
 - c. Recognize and prioritize confidentiality in handling Ethics Complaints.
 - d. However when individuals are put in immediate danger, confidentiality may be forfeited to ensure an individual(s) safety and if at any time it appears that the behaviour complained about is of an indictable nature, the appropriate law authority shall be advised immediately by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member(s).
 - e. It is important to involve the Police or Family Services early in the process so as to avoid the loss of evidence and comply with the Legislation. Rotary and by extension Rotaract should never be seen as impeding justice in any way.
 - f. When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of a Complainant.

- g. Club members who become aware of the allegation should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any investigation.
 - h. Club members who become aware of the allegation should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigation. Comments made about a Complainant in support of a Respondent or about a Respondent in support of a Complainant are inconsistent with Rotary values.
 - i. Furthermore, adverse comments made against either a Complainant or a Respondent without basis could lead to a defamation claim filed against involved Club(s) or person(s).
9. In-person meetings may be virtual based on recommendation of health authorities or based on preferences of the parties involved; however, the preferences of the Complainant and Respondent should be prioritized.
10. All meetings should have comprehensive meeting minutes detailing any votes, decisions or action items.
11. If another person outside of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee requests the meeting minutes, names and/or details they should only be provided on a need to know basis if for resolution escalation or legal reasons and as much as possible names should be omitted to protect confidentiality and ensure anonymity as much as possible.

Section 4: Ethics Complaint Procedure

Submission of Ethics Complaint

1. An Ethics Complaint can be filed in response to any issue identified as an ethics violation as defined in this policy, see Section 1 and 2.
2. An Ethics Complaint can be filed by an individual for themselves or on behalf of another individual(s) or group of individual(s) which may or may not include themselves.
 - a. If an Ethics Complaint is filed on behalf of another individual(s), the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee will contact the impacted individual(s) and will only proceed with the Ethics Complaint Procedure if at least one of the impacted individual(s) agree to proceed as the Complainant.
3. An Ethics Complaint can be communicated verbally or in writing however it must be clearly indicated that it is a formal complaint. Complaints can be made to any Rotaract Club of Toronto board member or member of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee who would then in an email or in-person meeting bring it to the attention of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee.

- a. Orally - Complaints can be given to any member of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee orally however they must consent to being recorded or provide details for notes that will be shared with the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or Rotaract Club of Toronto Board. The member receiving the complaint should either keep a recording or notes from the conversation. These notes taken must be reviewed by the Complainant before they are able to be recorded as an official complaint. The Complainant must provide an email for further communication related to the Ethics Complaint. The Complainant may indicate if they feel any Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or Board members may be biased or have a conflict of interest.
- b. Written - If an individual(s) makes a complaint in writing, it is suggested they send an email including a detailed description of their complaint to a Board member of the Rotaract Club of Toronto, a member of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee email and the matter must be brought to the attention of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee. The Complainant must provide an email for further communication related to the Ethics Complaint. The Complainant may indicate if they feel any Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or Board members may be biased or have a conflict of interest.
- c. Electronic Form - all forms of complaints can be submitted and/or recorded as anonymous at the Complainant's request though it should be noted that if the Ethics Complaint proceeds to investigation then anonymity may not be possible. The Complainant must provide an email for further communication related to the Ethics Complaint. The Complainant may indicate if they feel any Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee or Board members may be biased or have a conflict of interest.

Investigation of an Ethics Complaint

4. Once an Ethics Complaint has been received by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee, the Committee will determine who will be investigating the matter taking into considering any biases or conflict of interest that has been disclosed and begin the investigation in as timely a manner as possible and an Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee in-person meeting should be held within a week of the complaint to discuss the matter and decide on an appropriate course of action. The investigation and conclusion of each case should be completed in a timely manner.
5. The Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee may refuse to investigate an Ethics Complaint. If they do so, then it must be for at least one of the following reasons:
 - a. The subject-matter of the complaint is not in alignment with the Rotary codes of conduct.
 - b. The complaint is frivolous or vexatious or is not made in good faith.

- c. The Complainant has not a sufficient personal interest in the subject-matter of the complaint.
 - d. The nature of the Ethics Complaint is outside the scope of the Rotaract Club of Toronto and/or is required by legislation to be reported to Police or Family Service in which case the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee will support the Complainant to the best of their ability.
6. In any case where the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee decides not to investigate or further investigate an Ethics Complaint, they shall inform the Complainant of that decision by email as soon as possible and include the reasons as to why they will not be proceeding; the Complainant must be reasonably sure that the investigation has been unbiased or they may request an in-person meeting with the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee.
7. If the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee decides to proceed with the investigation of the Ethics Complaint then member(s) of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee shall meet with the Complainant and obtain as much information as possible. Care shall be taken to be supportive of the Complainant without showing any bias.
 - a. The Complainant should have their rights and responsibilities explained.
 - b. The Complainant should put their statement in writing or sign the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member(s)' notes on completion. Ensure dates, times and names are accurate.
8. The Respondent will be notified by email of the Ethics Complaint and the Complainant should note at this point the Respondent may be made aware of their identity, if necessary, for the Respondent's response. A member(s) of the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee shall then meet with the Respondent disclosing the particulars of the Ethics Complaint and receive a statement from the Respondent where the following guidelines should be followed:
 - a. It is critical to meet in a private area away from others.
 - b. The Respondent should have their rights and responsibilities explained.
 - c. The Respondent should put their statement in writing or sign the Harassment Officer(s) notes on completion. Ensure dates, times and names are accurate.
9. An Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member(s) shall meet with all witnesses named by the Complainant and Respondent and with any others who appear to be involved in the complaint.
 - a. Make sure all witnesses are interviewed, including those named by the Complainant and Respondent and any others that may appear to have knowledge about the incident or behaviour in question. The investigation should be fair, comprehensive and documented. Complainant's and Respondant's anonymity must be respected as much as possible.

Resolution of an Ethics Complaint

10. Once the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee member(s) has completed the investigation, the findings (with the statements of anonymized witnesses) shall be delivered to the Complainant and the Respondent who shall be given seven days to respond in writing.
11. On receipt of the responses (if any), the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee, excluding any Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee members who have recused themselves, shall deliver their findings to the Rotaract Club of Toronto Board, excluding any Rotaract Club of Toronto Board members who have recused themselves. The Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee shall make a full disclosure of their findings and provide any details needed to formulate a resolution process.
12. Complaint proceedings should generally follow a stepwise process in terms of escalation of outcomes and consequences. There must be consistent procedures in place, which facilitate and expedite complaint and its resolution and most importantly provide recommendations that could consist of the following options for resolutions to the conflict:
 - a. An apology, verbal or written.
 - b. Anti-oppression or educational programming.
 - c. Face-to-face mediation.
 - d. Disqualification from a Board position.
 - e. Temporary suspension, banning or loss of membership from the Rotaract Club of Toronto.

Section 5: Special Circumstances

1. In cases where one or more people approach the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee with disclosure or complaint related to sexual violence, they are expected to extend a higher duty of care to the Complainant in regards to confidentiality and support. It is not the committee's duty to investigate complaints made of sexual violence, but rather ensure the club community is made safe for the victim and others.
 - a. Support: please be aware of general and specific support services for sexual violence survivors. In the event that someone discloses to you, present as many options for the next steps without expressing a personal preference for which option they choose. Next steps can include: seeking medical attention (STI Testing, pregnancy tests, and sexual violence kits are available at many hospitals, service and/or health centers), seeking a support professional or counsellor, speaking to a friend or loved one.

- b. Reporting: please be aware of general and reporting services for sexual violence survivors. Again, present as many options for the next steps without expressing a personal preference for which option they choose. The next steps for reporting can include but are not limited to: reporting to their institution's administration, reporting to the perpetrator's administration, reporting to the police, application for a restraining order.
- c. Rotaract Proceedings: The Board member who has received a complaint in regards to sexual violence should prioritize the needs and wishes of the survivor on how they wish to proceed in regards to personal support and reporting. However, in fulfilling the mandate to keep the spaces equitable and safe, the Board member is obliged to speak to the perpetrator about the way they occupy spaces and enact violence. Depending on the survivor's wishes regarding anonymity, these follow-up conversations can be highly specific or vague. However, the Board member that has this conversation should be aware of the next steps to take including but not limited to suspending or banning the member from further Rotaract involvement if authorities deem the complaint to have grounds.

Section 6: Rights and Responsibilities of the Complainant and Respondent

The Complainant

- 1. The Complainant has the right, under the principle of duty to act fairly:
 - a. To be treated fairly.
 - b. To submit a complaint and have it reviewed in a prompt, sensitive manner, without fear of embarrassment or reprisal.
 - c. To be given due counseling and provided with needed assistance.
 - d. To obtain information about the review of the complaint, subject to confidentiality measures when taken to protect the privacy or security of other parties.
 - e. To be informed about any corrective, disciplinary or administrative measures implemented as the result of a founded complaint.
 - f. To appeal the decision aimed to resolve the complaint.
 - g. Where possible and appropriate, to request that the perceived Respondent cease the offending behaviour.
- 2. The Complainant also has the responsibility:
 - a. To clearly state the allegations of the complaint, providing sufficient detail to facilitate assessment and resolution and to do so in writing if requested.
 - b. To participate in a co-operative manner in the resolution process.
 - c. To use discretion in discussing the complaint with others.

The Respondent

- 3. The Respondent has the right, under the principle of duty to act fairly:

- a. To be treated fairly.
 - b. To be notified promptly that a complaint has been made against them.
 - c. To be informed of the allegations. In the case of a formal complaint, the details will be provided in writing.
 - d. To respond to the allegations.
 - e. To be given due counseling and provided with needed assistance.
 - f. To obtain information about the complaint, subject to confidentiality measures when taken to protect the privacy or security of other parties.
 - g. That documentation related to the complaint shall be sealed if the complaint is not founded or after the matter has been dealt with.
 - h. To appeal the decision aimed to resolve the complaint.
4. The Respondent has the responsibility:
- a. To abide by the decision presented by the Diversity, Ethics and Inclusion Committee and/or Rotaract Club of Toronto Board.
 - b. To promptly and clearly respond to allegations of a complaint, providing sufficient detail to facilitate assessment and resolution, and to do so in writing if requested.
 - c. To participate in a co-operative manner in the resolution process.
 - d. To use discretion in discussing the complaint with others.