



**Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum**

# **YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

**ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 6, 2018  
REVISED SEPTEMBER 28, 2018**

## **1. Purpose**

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum understands the importance of protecting youth in the community and in our programs and therefore wishes to provide a safe and secure working environment. The R&GVRRM Board of Trustees has adopted this policy in order to provide practices that will protect youth volunteers from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior and also protect adult museum volunteers from false accusations. All museum volunteers will be made familiar with this policy and its procedures, and a copy will be posted in a clear and conspicuous area. In this case, “Youth” refers to any museum volunteer under the age of 18.

## **2. Responsibilities of Museum Volunteers**

- All museum volunteers are responsible for monitoring behavior and intervening when necessary.
- Physical violence, sexual activity, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, unauthorized weapons, hazing, discrimination, harassment, initiation rites, bullying, cyber-bullying, theft, verbal insults, drugs, alcohol, and other indecent behavior have no place within R&GVRRM and may result in suspension or revocation of membership in accordance with Article II, Section 5 of the by-laws.
- Suspected abuse must be reported to the proper authority through the chain of command immediately.

## **3. Supervision of Youth Volunteers**

Supervision of activities, facilities and volunteers will be designed to protect both youth and adult volunteers at all times.

- Volunteers under the age of 16 require supervision from a parent or guardian while participating in museum activities.
- Adult museum volunteers will never be alone with an individual youth where they are not observable by others.
- Adult museum volunteers will utilize constructive methods for maintaining a safe working environment and managing youth behavior.
- All sites of operation will have access to telephone or radio communication on location during operating hours.
- To ensure a safe working environment, facilities will be well lighted indoors and out.
- Appropriate attire is required for all activities.

- Adult volunteers will avoid changing clothes in front of youth.
- Volunteers, guests, and contractors will sign-in upon entering the museum property.

#### **4. Communication and Contact with Youth**

It is understood that museum volunteers will develop positive relationships with youth while involved in R&GVRRM programs. The following practices will be followed to ensure the protection of both youth and adult volunteers.

- Adult museum volunteers will appear and behave in a manner consistent with the mission and values of R&GVRRM at all times while on or off duty; including electronic, written and verbal communications.
- In situations requiring a personal conference, the meeting is to be conducted with the knowledge and in view of other adults and/or youth.
- Private online communications (including, but not limited to email, texting, phone calls, chat, IM, Facebook, etc.) to youth volunteers must include another adult museum volunteer or parent/guardian.
- All forms of bullying and harassment including verbal, physical, and cyberbullying are prohibited.

#### **5. Conflict Resolution**

In the event of a conflict that cannot be resolved on site, or requires either an investigation or further discussion and training of rules and policy, the following parties must be present:

1. The adult volunteer and one additional museum officer or trustee
2. The youth volunteer and at least one parent or guardian

When required, discipline must be constructive. Corporal punishment is never permitted. Disciplinary activities involving isolation, humiliation, or ridicule are also prohibited.

If the dispute cannot be settled in a reasonable matter following the meeting, matters that require discipline or suspension will be referred to the Board of Trustees for resolution.

Questions regarding the application of this policy should be directed to museum management, including Department Superintendents and Board of Trustees.

—Adopted September 6, 2018