

Member Care Policy

(September 2026)

Preamble

As one of the core values of Rotary, fellowship guides and informs the priorities, culture, and actions of both individual members and the Rotary Club of Guelph (RCOG) as a whole. Guided by the Rotary Four-Way Test, this Policy is intended to focus on the Club's commitment to member care, ensuring all Members are extended the same beneficial level of fellowship and a continuum of care throughout significant life events, and in a timely manner.

Furthermore, it considers how best to utilize RCOG resources when offering member care.

The Policy recognizes and celebrates that individual member actions from friendships formed within RCOG may duplicate and/or augment the actions of this policy.

Policy Proposal

As an essential component of Rotary values, the RCOG is committed to ensuring all Members are acknowledged, supported and/or celebrated through major life events. These events include the natural pendulum of life - celebrations of birthdays, marriages, graduations, and the welcoming of new immediate family members. Conversely, member illnesses and accidents, immediate family deaths, and also the death of a RCOG member are equally worthy of attention and care.

Each year, the Club will identify a "Sunshine Ambassador" who will follow up on such life events, once known.

All members of the RCOG have an equal responsibility to notify the Club of key events involving a member. They should do so by simultaneously emailing:

- the Club President,
- the Chair of the Membership Experience Committee,
- the Club's designated "Sunshine Ambassador."

The names and emails of the above individuals should be readily accessible and up-to-date on the Club's website.

Next steps should be shared amongst these three people PLUS the member who reported on the event so that all are informed about the actions taken. Email is typically the preferred method of communicating this information.

Celebratory Events

Member Birthdays

Birthdays are recognized in the weekly Bulletin, during club announcements and with the singing of Happy Birthday at the Friday meeting that most closely aligns with the date of the birthday.

Members are also sent an official Rotary birthday card at the beginning of their birthday month. This card also serves as encouragement for the recipient to donate to Rotary International's global fund.

The Club member responsible for ensuring that the birthday card is sent shall be referred to as the **"Birthday Ambassador."**

Marriages, Birth of children, and Graduations of Members themselves

Option A - A congratulatory card is (when feasible) discreetly circulated and signed at a Club meeting so that all Club members in attendance have the opportunity to offer their remarks. The card is then mailed or delivered to the recipient.

AND/OR

Option B – the RCOG makes a donation in the name(s) of the person(s) we are recognizing e.g. the couple who has married, the baby, or the graduate. We could use pre-existing Club funds to make a predetermined donation (\$50) to a RCOG cause or project such as Polio eradication, tree planting, etc. A card reflecting this should be mailed or delivered to the recipient letting them know.

When timing and/or the situation suggests, the "Sunshine Ambassador" will assume responsibility for sending an appropriate card to the Member's home.

Member illnesses or accidents, immediate family deaths, or the death of a RCOG member.

Member illnesses or accidents

A "Thinking of you" card is (when feasible) discreetly circulated and signed at a Club meeting so that individual Club members have the opportunity to offer their remarks. Once Club members have had the opportunity to sign the card, it is mailed or delivered to the recipient. If Club members are offered the opportunity to sign, utilization of two cards is typically required to provide adequate writing space for members.

Alternatively, and as the situation presents, the "Sunshine Ambassador" will assume responsibility for sending a "Thinking of you" card to the Member's home.

Immediate family deaths

The RCOG President sends an email notifying all present and past Club members of the death, including celebration of life/funeral details/obituary notice, and/or other relevant information.

Club members will make their own decision as to whether to attend the funeral/celebration of life ceremony.

In all circumstances, the Chair of the Membership Experience Team, or designated member such as the “Sunshine Ambassador” will ensure that a card of condolences is sent to the Club member on the Club’s behalf.

Death of a RCOG member

It is the current practice of the RCOG to support the family of the deceased Club member. How this is best handled varies from family to family.

Club members are notified of the passing of the deceased through an email from the Club President.

Our Club’s website team usually posts an online announcement, in conjunction with background information from our Club Secretary about the deceased member, under the heading “Remembering ...(name of person)...”

The Club’s appointed “**Honour Guard Ambassador**” reaches out to the immediate family to ascertain if the family would appreciate a Rotary Honour Guard to be present during the Member’s farewell ceremony. The Honour Guard Ambassador, in turn, reaches out to the Club membership via email with details of the ceremony and the function of the Honour Guard.

This policy was approved by the RCOG Board of Directors on September 17, 2026