



RoboNation, Inc.
Youth Protection Policy Acknowledgement
Effective Date: October 1, 2025 | **Policy Version:** 2025.1

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the **RoboNation, Inc. Youth Protection Policy**. I agree to:

- Follow all requirements and guidelines in the policy while participating in RoboNation programs or events in any capacity, including but not limited to official event hours, off-site activities, and any virtual engagements hosted by RoboNation.
- Immediately report any suspected abuse, misconduct, or policy violations as outlined in the policy, and in all cases within 24 hours.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of alleged misconduct or safety concerns.
- Provide truthful and complete information in any forms, applications, or background check documentation required for participation.
- Understand that failure to comply with this policy may result in removal from RoboNation events or programs and, when applicable, reporting to law enforcement or other authorities, and may also impact future eligibility to participate in RoboNation programs.

I understand that my role is contingent upon adherence to this policy and that RoboNation reserves the right to remove me from participation at any time if I am found to be in violation.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Role (circle one): **Staff** **Volunteer** **Chaperone** **Adult Participant** **Other**

Organization / Team (if applicable): _____

RoboNation, Inc.

Youth Protection Policy & Procedures

Effective Date: October 1, 2025 | Policy Version: 2025.1

1 Abuse Prevention Statement

RoboNation, Inc. (hereafter referred to as “RoboNation”) has a zero-tolerance policy for abuse, harassment, bullying, or any form of misconduct toward youth participants. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive environment where all youth are protected from harm both during official event hours and at any related activities we organize or sanction. All reports of suspected abuse or inappropriate conduct will be taken seriously, acted upon promptly, and handled in accordance with this policy and applicable law. Preventing abuse is a shared responsibility, and we expect every staff member, volunteer, and chaperone to uphold the highest standards of conduct at all times.

2 Purpose

RoboNation is committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and positive experience of all youth participants (see Definitions section) in our programs and events. This policy outlines required practices, prohibited behaviors, and response procedures to prevent and address misconduct.

3 Definitions

To ensure clarity and consistency, the following terms are used throughout this policy. These definitions establish how RoboNation distinguishes between youth, adults, and different roles in our programs and events.

- **Youth Participant:** Any individual under the age of 18, or any individual enrolled in secondary education (e.g., high school), regardless of age.
- **Adult Participant:** Any individual age 18 or older who is not enrolled in secondary education.
- **Chaperone:** An adult (age 21 or older) who has accepted responsibility for supervising and ensuring the safety of youth participants at RoboNation programs or events.
- **Volunteer:** An individual who provides time and services to RoboNation programs or events without financial compensation from RoboNation.
- **Staff:** Employees or contractors of RoboNation who are responsible for the design, management, or delivery of programs and events.
- **Misconduct:** Any behavior that violates the standards outlined in this policy, including but not limited to abuse, harassment, bullying, neglect, or inappropriate relationships.

4 Scope

This policy applies to all RoboNation **staff, volunteers, chaperones**, and adult participants who:

- Have regular contact with youth
- Hold supervisory authority
- Are in a position of trust, whether formal or informal, in which youth rely on them for safety, guidance, or support
- Have potential for one-on-one interaction with youth

5 Roles & Responsibilities for Compliance

Effective youth protection requires shared responsibility across the organization. The following roles are accountable for monitoring, administering, and enforcing this policy:

- **Executive Leadership (CEO/President or Designee):** Owns the Youth Protection Policy and ensures compliance with legal and funder requirements. Responsible for staff background checks and clearances, either directly or through a designated external administrator.

- **Programs & Events Team:** Serves as the primary administrator of this policy for volunteers and chaperones. Responsibilities include:
 - Implementing chaperone and supervision requirements at events.
 - Managing volunteer recruitment and volunteer and chaperone registration, including acknowledgement forms.
 - Conducting and documenting background checks and clearances for high-contact volunteer/chaperone roles.
 - Tracking training completion and distributing event-day policy summaries.
 - Monitoring compliance at events and addressing noncompliance, as needed.
- **Compliance/Legal Counsel:** Reviews the policy for legal sufficiency, supports investigations of reported incidents, and advises on disqualifying offenses and external reporting obligations.
- **All Staff, Volunteers, and Chaperones:** Are individually responsible for following this policy, completing required training, and promptly reporting any suspected misconduct or violations.

6 Supervision & Conduct Expectations

All adults in roles covered by this policy must adhere to the three-person rule: no one-on-one interaction between a non-related adult and a minor without another adult or youth present. Exceptions are limited to emergencies where another adult cannot be present, in which case the interaction must be brief and documented in writing to the event lead as soon as possible. Activities involving youth should be in visible, public areas whenever possible. Adults must remain on event premises and available while responsible for supervising youth.

6.1 Encouraged Practices

- Keep activities in open, visible areas where they can be easily observed by others.
- Encourage open and honest communication between youth and adults.
- Use encouragement and constructive discipline when addressing behavior.
- Limit physical contact to the following appropriate forms of affection:
 - Side hugs
 - Pats on the shoulder or back
 - Handshakes, high-fives, hand slaps, fist bumps
 - Verbal praise
 - Touching hands, shoulders, or arms

6.2 Prohibited and Discouraged Practices

- One-on-one in-person interaction with a non-related youth without another adult or youth present (three-person rule).
- One-on-one private online or digital communication with a youth without copying a parent or other adult.
- Transporting unrelated youth in a personal vehicle without prior written parental permission, except in urgent emergency or safety situations.
- Use of profane or degrading language.
- Failing to stop disrespectful language or behavior between youth, including sexual jokes, harassment, bullying, and hazing.
- Threatening or intentionally inflicting physical or psychological contact or injury upon a youth.
- Committing any sexual offense against a youth or engaging in any sexual contact with a youth.
- Making any kind of sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Verbal or nonverbal conduct including mental exploitation, degrading communication, or humiliating or threatening behavior.

- Bullying in any form, including:
 - Verbal – name calling, teasing
 - Social – spreading rumors, excluding others from activities, manipulating friendships
 - Physical – hitting, pushing, shoving, physical coercion
 - Group – intimidation, ostracizing
 - Criminal – injury, assault, sexual aggression
 - Cyberbullying – using social media, mobile phones, or computers to harm others
- Disciplinary activities involving isolation, humiliation, or ridicule.
- Encouraging youth to keep secrets.
- Giving praise or comments related to a youth's physical appearance.

Adults are expected to maintain professional boundaries at all times, model respectful behavior, and foster an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment for all youth participants.

7 Chaperone Requirements

To maintain a safe and well-supervised environment, every team must provide adequate adult chaperones during all official event hours. Chaperones must be actively engaged in supervision and physically present with youth participants at all times. RoboNation staff may verify chaperone ratios at check-in or during the event, and teams failing to meet these requirements may be restricted from participation until corrected.

7.1 Primary Chaperone Requirement

- Each team must have at least one unique primary chaperone assigned solely to that team.
- The primary chaperone for one team may also serve as a secondary chaperone for another team from the same organization.

7.2 Minimum Supervision Standards

- *Two-adult minimum:* Any group of six (6) or more youth must have at least two adult chaperones present.
- *Small teams:* Teams with five (5) or fewer youth may have one chaperone, though two are strongly recommended for safety and flexibility.
- *1:10 ratio:* At least one chaperone for every ten youth participants calculated across all youth and chaperones from an organization's teams present at the event. Example: Two teams with a combined 14 youth and three chaperones meet the requirement.

7.3 Other Chaperone Requirements

- The primary chaperone must be at least 21 years old.
- Chaperones must be able to respond promptly to youth needs, including emergencies, and should not be assigned other duties that prevent active supervision.

7.4 Outside Event Hours

When teams arrange their own lodging outside of official event accommodations, RoboNation strongly recommends a minimum of two adult chaperones for overnight travel. Responsibility for youth outside of official event hours rests solely with the team's sponsoring organization.

8 Volunteer Requirements

The following requirements apply to all event volunteers, regardless of role or affiliation. These standards outline eligibility, conduct, and responsibilities to ensure a safe and professional environment for all participants.

8.1 Minimum Age & Role Eligibility

Volunteers aged 18 or older may serve in any role, provided they meet role-specific qualifications and safety standards. Background checks are required for high-contact positions as outlined in Section 9.

Volunteers under 18 may participate in low-contact roles if they can perform their duties safely and in compliance with this policy. Minors are not permitted to serve in high-contact roles (i.e., positions involving direct custodial responsibility or extended one-on-one interaction with minors).

- **Ages 14–17** – May serve in low-contact roles if approved by the event lead, volunteer is paired with appropriate supervision, and their parent/guardian has provided written approval for participation.
- **Under 14** – May serve in low-contact roles only if all of the following conditions are met:
 - The role is in open, public areas within line-of-sight of multiple cleared adults;
 - Direct supervision is provided at all times by their own parent/guardian or an adult specifically designated in writing by their parent/guardian;
 - One supervising adult may oversee no more than two under-14 volunteers at a time; and
 - Their parent/guardian has provided written approval for participation.

8.2 Role Assignment & Responsibilities

Volunteers are assigned to roles based on event needs, their skills, and their eligibility under this policy.

- *Low-Contact Roles* involve brief or incidental interactions with youth in open, public spaces where multiple adults are present. Examples include score runners, registration assistants, and logistics support.
- *High-Contact Roles* involve direct custodial responsibility or the potential for extended one-on-one interaction with minors. Examples include safety officers with authority to attend to minors without another adult present.

Before beginning their shift, volunteers must complete any required training or orientation to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities. While on duty, volunteers are required to wear their event identification (such as a badge or shirt) so they are easily recognized by participants and staff. Volunteers should remain in their assigned role unless specifically directed otherwise by a RoboNation staff member or functional lead. Any safety concerns, incidents of misconduct, or violations of this policy must be reported immediately to a RoboNation staff member for prompt response and resolution.

8.3 Conduct & Professionalism

All volunteers are expected to model professionalism, inclusivity, and respect in their interactions with participants, spectators, staff, and fellow volunteers. Volunteers must follow the conduct standards in Section 6, including the three-person rule and prohibition of one-on-one contact with non-related minors. Volunteers may not use alcohol, cannabis, or illegal substances during event hours or when representing RoboNation.

9 Background Checks

RoboNation conducts background checks for certain staff, volunteer, and chaperone roles to ensure the safety of youth participants. Checks are performed by a qualified third-party vendor and may include criminal history and other relevant screenings. All background checks are conducted in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and applicable state laws. Written notice will be provided, and written consent is required before any background check is performed.

9.1 Staff Clearance

All RoboNation staff members are required to undergo a background check conducted by a contracted vendor qualified to perform such screenings. This check will include appropriate inquiries regarding any prior record of sexual abuse, violence, or other unlawful activity. Background checks for staff will be repeated at least once every five (5) years to ensure continued eligibility for roles involving youth interaction.

9.2 Volunteer and Chaperone Recruitment

Every chaperone and volunteer working with youth must complete an electronic application for each event in which they participate. This application will collect contact information, relevant experience (as applicable), and confirmation that the individual has read and agrees to comply with RoboNation's Youth Protection Policy. For those in high-contact roles requiring a background check, the application will also serve as the written consent for that screening.

9.3 Event Structure

RoboNation structures events to minimize the number of roles that require background checks by avoiding one-on-one or custodial situations for most volunteers. Volunteers may not transition from a non-checked role into a high-contact role during an event without prior clearance. Teams are responsible for providing their own chaperones to supervise youth at all times.

Roles Requiring Background Checks

Background checks are required for roles with direct custodial responsibility, overnight supervision, or potential extended one-on-one contact with minors during RoboNation events. Roles requiring background checks include:

- Team chaperones with overnight responsibility
- Any role meeting with youth without parents/chaperones present
- Medical staff and safety officers with authority to attend to minors without another adult present
- Lead volunteers or staff overseeing zones where unsupervised interactions could occur

Roles Not Requiring Background Checks

Background checks are not required for roles in open, public areas with only brief, incidental interaction with youth or roles that are supervised by a cleared lead volunteer or staff member. Examples of roles not requiring background checks include:

- Judges and course operations volunteers
- Logistics and registration volunteers
- Scorekeepers
- Announcers

9.4 Frequency of Background Checks

Background checks for high-contact volunteers and chaperones are valid for one year from the date of clearance. Individuals returning to these roles must complete a new background check annually before participating in any RoboNation program or event involving minors.

9.5 Acceptance of Existing Background Checks

RoboNation may accept a current background check from another organization (e.g., a school district, licensed youth-serving nonprofit, or government agency) if it:

- Was completed within the last 12 months;

- Meets RoboNation’s screening criteria (includes offenses against minors, sexual offenses, violent offenses, relevant drug offenses);
- Was issued by the volunteer’s current employer or organization in compliance with applicable law; and
- Includes official written documentation on organizational letterhead (or secure digital verification) confirming:
 - Date of check
 - Scope of offenses screened
 - Clearance to work with minors.

RoboNation reserves the right to require its own background check even when accepting an existing one if scope or recency does not meet standards.

9.6 Disqualifying Offenses

For purposes of this section, neither the age of the minor; the consent of the minor; nor any law establishing an “age of consent” in that state shall be relevant. No individual may be entrusted with the care or supervision of minors, or placed in a role involving direct oversight or control of minors, if they have been:

- Convicted of, received a probated sentence for, or admitted to any disqualifying offense listed below;
- Placed on deferred adjudication for any such offense; or
- Are currently facing pending criminal charges for any such offense until a determination of guilt or innocence has been made.

Disqualifying offenses include:

- *Sexual Offenses:* Any offense against a minor; sexual assault, indecency, engaging in sexual activity with a minor or adult, possession or promotion of child pornography (including that which is generated by artificial intelligence or other means), enticing a minor, bigamy, incest.
- *Violent Offenses:* Assault or injury to a minor or adult, abandoning or endangering a minor, family violence, cruelty to animals.
- *Other Serious Offenses:* Relevant drug-related offenses, any other offense that poses a risk to youth safety, or any offense against a minor as defined by applicable state or federal law.

9.7 Additional Discretion

If circumstances warrant, RoboNation may require a background check for persons in roles not otherwise identified in this policy. The scope of the check will be appropriate to the circumstances and the individual’s anticipated interaction with youth participants.

9.8 Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) Compliance

When a third-party vendor conducts a criminal history record check, the resulting report is considered a “consumer report” under the FCRA. Under the FCRA and applicable state laws, RoboNation has specific responsibilities, and applicants have specific rights, including:

1. Notification and Consent – Applicants are informed in writing that a background check will be conducted and must provide written consent through the electronic application.
2. Pre-Adverse Action Disclosure – If the report contains potentially disqualifying information, the applicant will receive a copy of the report and “A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act” before a final decision is made.
3. Adverse Action Notice – If adverse action is taken based on the report, the applicant will receive notice (oral, written, or electronic) including:

- The name, address, and phone number of the vendor that supplied the report
- A statement that the vendor did not make the adverse decision and cannot explain why it was made
- Notice of the applicant's right to dispute the accuracy or completeness of the report and to obtain an additional free copy of the report within 60 days

10 Abuse Definitions and Examples

The following definitions and examples apply to all individuals involved in RoboNation programs, including employees, volunteers, chaperones, and third parties. Abuse or misconduct may include but is not limited to the following.

Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a person under the age of 18, including grooming behaviors.

Sexual Activity with a Person Unable to Consent: Engaging in sexual contact with an individual who is legally incompetent or otherwise incapable of giving consent due to age, disability, intoxication, or other factors.

Physical Abuse or Violence: Actions such as rape, sexual battery, molestation, hitting, punching, choking, or any attempt to commit such acts. Physical abuse may result in injuries including bruises, broken bones, burns, or abrasions, especially when injuries are recurring.

Sexual Misconduct or Unwanted/Unwelcomed Sexual Contact: Intentional physical contact of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcomed, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone's neck or shoulders, or pulling against another's body or clothes.

Sexually Explicit Material: Displaying, distributing, or possessing pornographic or sexually explicit images, videos, posters, calendars, or objects in any form, including digital media.

Sexual Harassment and Hostile Environment: Unwelcome and inappropriate sexual advances, comments, jokes, innuendos, gestures, or messages (including via email, text, social media, or other digital means); exploitation; exposure; leering; stalking; or invasion of sexual privacy. A hostile environment exists when such conduct unreasonably interferes with a person's ability to participate in activities or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Coercion and Threats: Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment, participation, or affiliation with RoboNation.

Neglect: Failing to provide a child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essentials of life. Neglect also includes exposing a child to harmful substances (e.g., drugs, alcohol, pornography) or violent behavior.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse: Acts that harm a person's sense of identity, dignity, or self-worth, including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilizing, or other degrading treatment.

11 Reporting & Response

All suspected abuse or misconduct involving youth participants must be reported to RoboNation leadership immediately, and in all cases within 24 hours.

11.1 Suspected Child Sexual Abuse

Any suspicion, disclosure, or observed incident of child sexual abuse or neglect must be reported immediately to local law enforcement or the appropriate child protection agency, in compliance with applicable laws. Reports must also be made immediately to the RoboNation CEO/President or designated RoboNation Officer, who will, without delay and no later than 24 hours:

1. Ensure the immediate safety of the youth involved.
2. Remove the alleged perpetrator from contact with youth.
3. Notify law enforcement or child protection agencies, the Board of Directors, and legal counsel.

No internal investigation will be conducted prior to notification of authorities. RoboNation will fully cooperate with all official investigations. The alleged perpetrator may be temporarily suspended from participation in the event pending the outcome of the investigation.

11.2 Other Violations of This Policy

All other violations of the Youth Protection Policy (e.g., one-on-one contact breaches, inappropriate language, prohibited conduct) must be reported to a RoboNation staff member promptly, and no later than the end of the same event day.

The staff member receiving the report will:

- Document the incident using the designated reporting form
- Notify the RoboNation CEO/President

The RoboNation CEO/President or designated RoboNation Officer will determine appropriate next steps without delay and no later than 24 hours after the incident or disclosure, which may include:

- Temporary removal from duties during review
- Internal investigation by RoboNation staff or designated representatives
- Corrective action, retraining, or removal from the event or program

12 Training

Annual youth protection training is required for all RoboNation staff and for volunteers in high-contact roles, including but not limited to functional leads and safety officers. Completion of training may be verified by RoboNation upon request.

Chaperones provided by participating teams are expected to meet the youth protection training or certification requirements of their sponsoring organization. RoboNation does not verify or enforce external training requirements; responsibility rests with the sponsoring organization. To support consistent application of RoboNation's safety standards during event hours, all chaperones will be provided with a condensed event-day summary of this policy at or before the event. This summary will highlight key rules including supervision requirements, prohibited conduct, and incident reporting procedures so that expectations are clear and accessible without requiring review of the full policy on-site.

While RoboNation strongly encourages all chaperones to complete their sponsoring organization's youth protection training, RoboNation's role is to ensure safe conduct during official event hours through event design, supervision standards, and clear reporting processes.

12.1 Additional Training Resources

Training is recommended for all volunteers. RoboNation encourages the use of free and low-cost youth protection resources such as:

- Darkness to Light – www.d2l.org
- ChildWelfare.gov – www.childwelfare.gov
- ChildHelp – www.childhelp.org

13 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by RoboNation management. The annual review will confirm the policy remains current and effective; updates may be made as needed.

Formal approval of the policy will occur every three (3) years by the RoboNation CEO/President or their designee, unless earlier approval is required due to significant legal or procedural changes.

The Board of Directors will be informed of any substantive updates for awareness but is not required to formally approve the policy unless mandated by law, funder agreement, or governance documents.

14 Acknowledgement

All staff, volunteers, and chaperones must sign an acknowledgement form confirming they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this policy.