Return to Play COVID-19 Safety Plan
Rugby Washington

*Updated with Set Pieces & Illness Protocol*

Summary
Rugby Washington recognizes that the health and safety of the players, coaches, and community are of the utmost importance. This document outlines our commitment to adhering to the federal, state, and local restrictions/directives while also providing a safe environment to resume sporting activities.

Nothing in this document should be substituted for professional medical advice nor does it supersede any federal, state, or local restrictions/directives.

This Return to Play Safety Plan applies to Rugby, and supersedes the previous return to play document which applied only to Touch Rugby.


Phase and COVID-19 Activity Level Guidance
The policies outlined in this document apply generally across all Washington State phases for re-opening. They do not override the restrictions or policies in place for each respective phase, and where applicable the Phase guidance will permit what on field activity and attendance limits are allowed.

Each club will follow the updated guidance published on March 26, 2021 and in force until further notice.

In addition, each club will follow the updated county, city and local field guidance for youth sporting activities as applicable.

How Clubs Should Prepare for Return to Play
1- Each Club is required to appoint a COVID-19 Manager

The manager should have operational knowledge regarding COVID-19. Where possible, clinical knowledge of COVID-19 is preferable, but if not the COVID-19 manager should have access to appropriate clinical advice. The manager will coordinate efforts within their organizations for a phased approach to training and play. They will coordinate with teams and competitions providing information and strategic support. The manager will be the primary contact point for escalation of identified COVID-19 cases.
2- Insurance

Each Club should ensure that they are adequately insured for return to play. Clubs must understand that their insurance may be voided if they do not follow the policies of the Rugby WA Return to Play COVID-19 Safety Plan outlined in this document.

Clubs are encouraged to develop their own Covid-19 specific waivers. These waivers must stand alone in a registration package and should not be included with other liability waivers. Rugby WA will require signed waivers by all participants, which will be administered through our registration platform.

3- Documents and Policies

All Clubs are required to read and understand this Rugby WA Return to Play COVID-19 Safety Plan. This plan details club policies for return to activity, practicing, playing, sanitizing, social distancing, spectator expectations, etc. In doing so, clubs need to be sure to comply with local laws and any policies implemented by government or local authorities.

4- Education:

Coaches and Team Managers must complete the “World Rugby COVID-19: Return to Play Awareness for Administrators” and “COVID-19: Return to Play Awareness Coaches and Players” before attending training sessions. Courses can be found here – https://playerwelfare.worldrugby.org/covid-19-courses

**Practice Procedures for Return to Play**

**General**

These guidelines can and will be updated as needed in the current phase and as the transition to subsequent phases occur.

- Continue to wear masks at all times, even during contact activities. If a mask falls off at any time, that person is required to leave the activity and fix their mask immediately.
  - Gaiters or similar masks worn around the neck are NOT allowed during any contact activities due to safety risks.
- Contact is allowed in limited quantities using tackle, ruck, and/or tag situations. Engaging in tackle or rucks should only be done within the same designated groups and in short durations to remain consistent and limit close contact.
  - Scrums, line outs, and mauls are allowed at trainings with limited close contact.
  - **Close contact** is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 2 meters of a person for at least 15 minutes. This means every second spent in close contact is added together.
    - **If a team has a 10 minute scrum/line out session, this time is added on top of time spent in close contact during other drills/games**
    - Continue to practice social distancing and use bags/pads as much as possible.
• Continue the practice of physical distancing of 6 feet or more among athletes when not engaged in sporting activities, huddles and team meetings must be physically distanced. This includes the separation of personal equipment.
• Hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes or equivalent must be available at all time on the field for players and coaches
• Players must NOT attend organized team activities if they or anyone in their household feels sick or has symptoms that indicate illness. Symptoms include, but are not limited to, having a: fever, sore throat, runny nose, ear ache, congestion, cough, etc.
• Players must NOT to attend organized team activities if they, or anyone in their household have been exposed to any person who has been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus. Refer to Illness or Suspected Illness/Close Contact for more details.
• NO sharing of personal equipment, snacks, water, etc. of any kind between players and/or coaches.
• Practices are to be organized into age groups. Each group is to train in separate parts of the field separated by a buffer zone of 6 feet.
• Team equipment must only be handled by the coach. Any team equipment such as a rugby ball, that is shared between players must be sanitized BEFORE and AFTER use by each individual, group, or each team organized activity.
• Parents present before, during, and after practice MUST STAY AWAY and are NOT ALLOWED in designated arrival and training areas and MUST maintain social distancing requirements and recommendations.
• No spectators are allowed except for one parent/guardian/caregiver for each minor-aged participant. Spectators must maintain physical distance of at least six (6) feet between each person and wear facial coverings at all times. No spectators allowed for participants 18 and older.
  o Maximum of 100 people on the field including coaches, players, and spectators.
• All individuals attending an in-person rugby activity or facility must be registered through SportLoMo registration database prior to training. This facilitates the acknowledgements of the updated waiver and ensures participants are insured to take part in the rugby activities.
• All individuals attending an in-person activity (athlete, staff, volunteer) must have their attendance recorded, preferably through the SportLoMo application, but alternatively through any electronic or paper method. Attendance rosters must be kept on file for 2 months after the practice, match, or trip.
• Coaches must go through the same check-in process as players, and follow the same guidelines as players regarding masks, handling of personal equipment, social distancing, etc.
Field Organization

Check-In ➔ Kit Area ➔ Training Area ➔ Spectators ➔ Pick Up

Arriving for Practice

- Carpooling is strongly discouraged. Only players from the same household should travel to practice together.
- Players arriving for practice are to maintain social distancing in the check-in area and must wear face coverings at all times.
- Check-in areas are to be determined and clearly marked by the club. Dugouts are NOT recommended as a designated check-in area as they are usually the primary way to enter and exit a field. Their location also NEEDS TO AVOID crossover traffic between groups.
- Players will be asked if they have any symptoms as per the Health Self-Check (Appendix 1). Players answering YES will not be allowed to enter the facility or practice.
- **Players do not need to be read all questions on the field. They may read the list of questions in advance of screening and simply state that they have gone through the Health Self-Check (Annex 1) and that they are answering 'No' to all questions (this simplification is designed to speed-up the screening process for large groups).**
- Players will have their temperature checked. A temperature above 99.6 F will not be allowed to enter the facility or practice. If a fever is found, the athlete should contact their local physician and self-isolate for 14 days unless a negative test is confirmed beforehand.
Players cleared (through self-check and temperature check) will proceed to their designated kit area. Each group must have a separate kit area.

Each kit area must have hand sanitizer available at all times

Upon arrival to their designated kit area, players must SANITIZE their hands.

Within each designated kit area coaches are recommended to mark locations for players’ kit with cones, or any other suitable marker to maintain social distancing requirements.

Coaches must direct players to move between the kit area and the training area and ensure players sanitize their hands every time they enter the kit area.

During Practice

Players and coaches are to maintain social distancing during warm-ups. This includes during band work, stretches, throwing, etc.

During training activities and drills coaches must enforce social distancing as much as they can, in particular during instructional periods when players are not actively engaging in a drill/game. Use of game-like protocols for younger players is encouraged.

Groups are to STAY together within their designated kit and training areas.

Players must leave their equipment (including water bottles) in the designated kit area, and sanitize their hands prior to touching their equipment at each water break or when returning to the designated kit area for any reason.

Players are responsible for moving their own equipment between training activities and drills. In NO INSTANCE should a player handle or touch another player’s equipment. If this does occur, involved players are to immediately head to their designated kit area and sanitize their hands and the impacted equipment.

After practice

At the conclusion of practice, players and coaches are to head to their designated kit area and prepare for departure. Players are to gather their equipment in the same manner that they would normally depart practice and then SANITIZE their hands. IF POSSIBLE, it is recommended that players sanitize their equipment prior to leaving practice.

Groups are to be released and directed to the pick-up area in sequence ensuring separation from the other groups.

Players departing practice must maintain social distancing until leaving the practice location/facility and must wear face coverings.

Coaches must SANITIZE any team equipment used during practice prior to leaving the originally designated kit area.

Players and parents must leave the fields directly after practice to allow the next group to have access to the field for their scheduled practice time.

Players and coaches must throw away or take any garbage with them.

Competition (when phase approved)

Group size under local government and facility approved amount. Total gathering at any one game cannot exceed 200 individuals.

Teams will turn up on time for their scheduled game, leaving immediately after the game is completed from the facility.

Teams will remain on separate sides of the fields.
• Where multiple games are being played simultaneously, a buffer zone of 6 feet will be used to maintain separation.
• Referees will ensure equipment is sanitized between events.
• Referees MUST bring their own personal whistle and pen.
• Parents, family and friends present before, during, and after the game MUST STAY AWAY and are NOT ALLOWED in designated arrival and team areas and MUST maintain social distancing requirements and recommendations. Congregating on the sidelines is NOT allowed.

Masks
• Players must wear masks while not actively participating in a competitive game. Players must wear masks at all times during practices and games.
• Non-players must be wearing their mask at all times. Masks can be temporarily removed while eating or drinking, but proper social distancing must be maintained during this period.
• Players are allowed to remove their masks briefly if needed to catch their breath, so long as they move away from other participants and observe a doubled social distance (12ft) to any other participant.
• Coaches are allowed to remove their masks briefly to address a group more effectively so long as they move away from other participants and observe a doubled social distance (12ft) to any other participant.

Social Distancing
• No high-fives, handshakes, and/or hugs at any point. There will be no gatherings larger than the maximum number as set forth by local, state, or federal guidelines.
• Players not actively participating should practice social distancing.

Equipment
• Players should bring their own:
  o Water bottle(s)
  o Hand sanitizer
  o Snacks
  o Tape, if needed
• People should not share their equipment. Coaches will handle any team equipment and will be sanitized before/after use.
• The club or competition organizer must provide a hand sanitizer stations for people who forget to bring their own.

Illness or Suspected Illness/Close Contact
• If a player or coach is sick, experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, not feeling well, or suspected to have recently been in contact with someone who has been exposed to COVID-19, player or coach must:
  o Immediately notify organizer Representative, Club, and Rugby WA
  o Follow the published Washington state guidance on COVID-19 exposure
  o If necessary, seek professional, medical advice
    o EITHER:
      • Self-isolate for fourteen (14) days without symptoms
• After the fourteen-day self-isolation period, the person must be symptom free for at least three (3) consecutive days before returning to play
  • Take a COVID-19 test no sooner than three (3) days from exposure, successfully provide a negative test result, and remain symptom-free since exposure
  • Negative test result must be presented to COVID Manager before returning to the field
    o Please refer to the Department of Health Guidelines for more information

General Player Safety
In addition to the general health guidelines published by local, state, and federal authorities we recommend players should:
• Take their temperature daily. It’s better to detect a fever before coming to the field.
• Thoroughly wash hands before/after training or games.
• Do not share equipment or touch other people’s equipment. Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after training or games.
• Practice social distancing at the field when not actively participating.
• No group celebrations, hugs, high fives, cheers, etc.
• Notify COVID-19 and Rugby WA immediately if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, not feeling well, or have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Contact Tracing Protocol
If a person who has recently been to a training or game notifies the organizer and Rugby WA they are ill or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 then Team will:
• Notify all participants who have been to a training or game where the person was present, they may have been exposed to COVID-19.
• Instruct all players, coaches, and admins who were in contact with said person(s) to EITHER:
  o Self-isolate for fourteen (14) days without symptoms
    • During the fourteen-day self-isolation period, the person must be symptom free for at least three (3) consecutive days before returning to play.
  o Take a COVID-19 test no sooner than three (3) days from exposure, successfully provide a negative test result, and remain symptom-free since exposure
    • Negative test result must be presented to COVID Manager before returning to the field
    o Please refer to the Department of Health Guidelines for more information

If a person who has recently been to a training or game notifies COVID-19 Manager they have tested positive for COVID-19 then Club will:
• Suspend all on-field operations for the teams directly affected for at least seven (7) days Per Department of Health
  o Teams can resume training with ONLY those players, coaches, and admins who EITHER:
• Self-isolate for fourteen (14) days without symptoms
  • During the fourteen-day self-isolation period, the person must be symptom free for at least three (3) consecutive days before returning to play.
• Take a COVID-19 test no sooner than three (3) days from exposure, successfully provide a negative test result, and remain symptom-free since exposure
  • Negative test result must be presented to COVID Manager before returning to the field

Continuous Re-evaluation and Improvement
This plan will receive regular reviews and updates as COVID-19 prevention/protection measures evolve. To be effective, any changes will be communicated to club members by email and social media as soon as practical so changes can be applied.
Rugby Washington COVID-19 Attestation & Agreement

By signing below, the Participant (or their legal guardian, as applicable) attests that the Participant:

- Does not knowingly have COVID-19;
- Is not experiencing any known symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or malaise;
- Has not travelled internationally during the past 14 days;
- Has not frequented a COVID-19 high risk area within the United States during the last 14 days;
- Has not, in the past 14 days, knowingly come into contact with someone who has COVID-19, who has known symptoms of COVID-19, or is self-quarantining after returning to home; and
- Has been following government recommended guidelines in respect of COVID-19, including practicing physical distancing.

Furthermore, by signing below, the Participant (or their legal guardian, as applicable) agrees that while attending or participating in the Organization’s events or attending at the Organization’s facilities, the Participant:

- Will follow the laws, recommended guidelines, and protocols issued by the state government and health officials in respect of COVID-19, including practicing physical distancing, and will do so to the best of the Participant’s ability while participating in the Organization’s events or attending at the Organization’s facilities;
- Will follow the guidelines and protocols mandated by the Organization in respect of COVID-19;
- Will, in the event that the Participant experiences any symptoms of illness such as a fever, cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or malaise, immediately:
  - Inform the Organization’s COVID Manager; and
  - Immediately depart from the event or facility.

FOR PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19

By signing below, the Participant (named below) or the Participant (or their legal guardian, as applicable) attests that the Participant has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19, but cleared as non-contagious by provincial or local public health authorities and has provided to the Organization, in conjunction with this DAILY COVID-19 ATTESTATION AND AGREEMENT, written confirmation from a medical doctor of the same.

PRINT NAME: ________________________________  DATE OF BIRTH: _______________

GUARDIAN NAME (if applicable): ________________________________

SIGNATURE: _________________________________  TODAY’S DATE: _______________
Appendix 1

ATHLETE/COACH/REF/AT/VOLUNTEER HEALTH SELF-CHECK

The below “health self-check” should be used by athletes and families before gathering for any type of fitness or rugby training.

Are you currently diagnosed with or believe you may have COVID-19?  Yes  No
Have you had any of the below symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
    High temperature (fever)  Yes  No
    A new continuous cough  Yes  No
    New unexplained shortness of breath  Yes  No
Have you been in contact with a COVID-19 confirmed or suspect case in the previous 14 days?  Yes  No  Maybe

If you have answered YES to any of these questions you should stay at home and inform your Club COVID Manager and medical practitioner. You should follow your local government’s current Public Health guidance.