



## RUGBYNY -GIRLS WEST Return to Play Guidelines February 20, 2021

The purpose of this document is to provide the clubs, players, coaches, and parents a framework to return to rugby. The information included is a culmination of resources provided by USA Rugby, World Rugby, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), NYSDOH and the Governor's office. It is important to remember that this document is not official medical advice, and was drafted based on state and local covid restrictions in place as of 2/20/2021 and that all members should look to local health officials when determining a return to play.

### **RugbyNY west Return to Play Checklist**

- Review USA Rugby - Return to Play Guidelines
- Review CDC considerations for youth sports
- Registered all players with USA Rugby
- Registered all coaches with USA Rugby
- Submit COVID19 Emergency Action plan to RugbyNY for filing
- Test and record attendance and temperatures of all staff, coaches, and players for every team activity, including in-person meetings, training, and matches

- Draft individual Covid risk screening form (either hard copy or online) To be filled out by all players and staff prior to attending any in person team function. Anyone with a positive response to the following will not be allowed to attend.
  - Experiencing any symptom of Covid 19
  - Travel outside of contiguous states in last 10 days.
  - Temperature above 100
  - Exposure to positive Covid 19 case in last 10 days.

### **RugbyNY West - Return To Play**

The goal of RugbyNY is to provide its members with a plan for a safe return to the pitch. It's important that all clubs, players, parents, and coaches review this information.

The state of NY recently opened the door the return to play for high-risk sports including rugby. Clubs are directed to their local Dept. of health guidelines and regulations. (Ex. Erie County DOH has stated high-risk sports can resume with certain restrictions.) The following guidelines meet all ECDOH recommendations. Clubs outside of Erie county will have to ensure they are in compliance with all local recommendations.

It is essential that all clubs following all established protocols.

- If any athlete or coach has a positive Covid 19 diagnostic test, all in person team activities will be suspended for 10 days.
- As with all positive Covid test in Erie county, contact tracing will be completed and any individual identified as close contacts will be placed in quarantine.

- Designate an Individual as Covid protocol coordinator (outside of coaches) who will be responsible for all maintaining records, contacts, reviewing assessments and monitoring compliance.
- Coaches and athletic staff must screen and monitor athletes for symptoms prior to and during games and practices. If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they must be sent home.
- ECDOH approves team travel to/ from Western NY and Finger lakes regions for competitions. NYS travel advisory will apply to any travel to non- contiguous states.
- Athletes are required to wear masks/ face covering when NOT playing or practicing. Players may wear masks while playing/practice at parents/athlete discretion.
- No locker rooms will be used. Players will socially distance as while changing pitch side.
- Teams should provide all payers and parents a list of proper protocols and self- assessment questions.
- Vaccination status does not alter the requirements.
- Spectators are limited to 2 per player and must socially distance from anyone not living in the same household.
- All equipment (including balls) will be sanitized before and after use
- Teams will have a supply of hand sanitizer, disinfectant, gloves and masks at all functions.
- Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during or after games and practices. Limit unnecessary physical contact with teammates, other athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Whenever possible, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared, all

equipment should be properly disinfected between users. Follow the CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting.

### **Rugby Specific Regulations**

- TECHNICAL ZONES:
  - The technical zone may be extended past the 22m line (for players only) in order for more social-distancing space for the teams.
  - If necessary, Teams should reduce game rosters to allow for more social distancing on sidelines. Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while in the technical zone.
  - Players and coaches will wear facemasks when in the technical zone.
  - Do not share uniforms, towels, **water bottles**, and other apparel and equipment. NO team water bottles on site.
  - No post game socials, team may briefly meet with social while socially distancing w/ masks after game, but no food, close or prolonged contact
- BALL:
  - The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest.
  - Clean the ball on a ball rotation to the sidelines.
  - Have ball individuals wear gloves and be supervised and directed by an adult staff member or member of coaching staff.
- FACE MASKS:
  - Face coverings are permitted, but not required by athletes during play

- Face coverings are required for all coaches and athletes who are in the technical zone
- TOOTH AND MOUTH PROTECTORS:
  - Athletes are should be instructed **to keep their mouth guards in their mouth** throughout the competition.
  - If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion.
  - Hands should also be washed or disinfected before doing so.
- WATER BREAKS:
  - Each match will have a water break every quarter, to allow athletes to receive hydration from their personal bottles.
  - Halftime of each match maybe extended to 5 minutes, to allow for proper hydration.
- GAME MODIFICATIONS:
  - Scrums and will temporarily be removed from competition
  - Play will instead be restarted with a controlled free-kick to the team who would have been given the opportunity to restart play.
  - This free-kick must be taken in front of the match official, and must be done so with their approval
  - No quick taps will be permitted for these restarts
  - Lineouts will be limited to 4 players, NO Intentional mauls.  
Sanction: free kick opposing side

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.

- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible.
- Everyone should have their own beverage container that is not shared.
- Cloth face coverings are permitted for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Non-essential personnel (Spectators) are NOT allowed to attend training sessions and are limited to 2 per player for matches this time. Indoor training facilities are limited to 50% normal capacity.
- Outdoor venues should be limited as needed to ensure social distancing and capped at 250. Signage should indicate above information for players and spectators.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES:**

- Teams should consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing.  
Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Student-Athletes should keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before doing so.

- Student-athletes are encouraged to develop healthy habits including, but not limited to, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and proper hydration.
- Bring and use your own water bottle.
- High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that you drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition. Student-athletes should follow established guidelines for hydration.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES:**

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Coaches should limit game day squad sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.

### **Parents**

Parents/Guardians should monitor their children of any symptoms prior to any sporting activities. Children who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home. (If there is doubt stay home).

## **Maintaining Healthy Environments (CDC)**

Youth sports organizations may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy environments.

### Cleaning and Disinfection

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the field, court, or play surface (e.g., drinking fountains) at least daily, or between uses as much as possible. Use of shared objects and equipment (e.g., balls, bats, gymnastics equipment) should be limited, or cleaned between use by each individual if possible.

Develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.

Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of

### **Shared Objects**

Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean, sanitize, or disinfect. Do not let players share towels, clothing, or other items they use to wipe their faces or hands.

Make sure there are adequate supplies of shared items to minimize sharing of equipment to the extent possible (e.g., protective gear, balls, bats, water bottles); otherwise, limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of players at a time and clean and disinfect between use.

### **Modified Layouts and Social (Physical) Distancing should be enforced**

Space players at least 6 feet apart on the field while participating in the sport (e.g., during warmup, skill building activities, simulation drills)

Discourage unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, or hugs.

Prioritize outdoor, as opposed to indoor, practice and play as much as possible.



Create distance between players when explaining drills or the rules of the game.

If keeping physical distance is difficult with players in competition or group practice, consider relying on individual skill work and drills.

Encourage players to wait in their cars with guardians until just before the beginning of a practice, warm-up, or game, instead of forming a group.

### **Limit the use of carpools or van pools.**

When riding in an automobile to a sports event, encourage players to ride to the sports event with persons living in their same household.

If practices or competition facilities must be shared, consider increasing the amount of time between practices and competitions to allow for one group to leave before another group enters the facility. If possible, allow time for cleaning and/or disinfecting.

### **Advise Sick Individuals of Home Isolation Criteria**

Sick coaches, staff members, umpires/officials, or players should not return until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.

### **Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick**

Make sure that coaches, staff, officials, players, and families know that sick individuals should not attend the youth sports activity, and that they should notify youth sports officials (e.g., the COVID-19 point of contact) if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 a confirmed case.

Immediately separate coaches, staff, officials, and players with COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath) at any youth sports activity. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are, and

follow CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick.  
Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home

### **Clean and Disinfect**

Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).

Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

### **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts**

In accordance with state and local privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, youth sports organizations should notify local health officials, youth sports program staff, officials, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws and regulations.

Advise those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and, and to follow up if symptoms develop.

**NOTE: All of the above guidelines are subject to change with CDC, NYS and local regulations. The Covid 19 pandemic is ever changing and coaches, players and parents should be prepared to adapt to new guidelines or recommendations as they are established.**