



## COVID-19 Return to Play Policy & Recommendations

[ncr.rugby](http://ncr.rugby)

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Effective February 15, 2021

Rev. 1 – September 11, 2021

## Eligible to Return to Play

Each institution will decide when it is safe for their students to return to contact sports. NCR does not endorse returning to contact prior to the approval from any team's institution.

- Each team must follow all local ordinances regarding masking, social distancing, gathering limitations for indoor and outdoor events, COVID vaccination and testing requirements, and contact sport restrictions.
- Return to Play Guidelines will be adjusted as necessary, but will follow the CDC on all testing, quarantine, vaccination, and return to activity guidance. The CDC guidance can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

## Return to Full Contact

Any extended period of time without consistent contact training will require an extended period of time to return safely to full competition.

- a. Prior to returning to contact training, players must commit to individual fitness preparation even under social distancing/non-contact practice scenarios. This step is crucial to individual safety upon returning to game-like competition.
- b. Teams returning to contact training should complete a minimum of six (6) full contact training sessions over the course of three (3) weeks to prepare for a game-like competition. Game-like competition includes intrasquad scrimmage or matches against other opponents.
- c. Players who fail to complete a minimum six (6) full contact training sessions should not return to game-like competition until they complete at least six (6) practices.

## Important Terms Defined in accordance with [FDA](#)

- Antigen Testing: Tests for proteins specific to the virus, which means it tests for active COVID-19 cases. Results are usually available within 15 minutes after testing
- Mask: Be sure your mask or face covering covers both your mouth and nose at all times in accordance to [CDC guidelines](#)
- PCR Testing: Tests for the genetic material of the virus, meaning it can detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic patients. This is the “gold standard” of COVID-19 testing and results are usually available 3-5 days after testing. Some providers may return results sooner through rapid testing PCR, which can often provide same day results, but need to be sought out.
- Social Distancing: Maintain at least 6 feet of space between all parties.

- Symptom Check: Please be conscious of any of the following symptoms within the week prior to engaging in any team events (including but not limited to practices, games, social events, etc.): Fever, Cough, Headaches, Fatigue, Muscle or body aches, Loss of taste, Loss of smell, Sore Throat, Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea
- 24/48/72 hours: 1 day, 2 days, 3 days

### **Return to Play Protocol for Local Competition**

Local competition is encouraged when it is determined to be safe by Institutional, Local, and State guidelines and ordinances. The NCR Return to Play (RTP) Protocol for players, coaches, referees, and fans should be applied and mutually agreed upon by each team participating in the competition so that expectations and protocols can be aligned and met by all parties involved. Results of regularities/irregularities of Daily Symptom Checks, Antigen Tests, and PCR tests should be submitted to the opponent(s) no later than 24 hours prior to the match kickoff. Antibody testing will be accepted.

Home teams will be required to communicate any COVID-related requirements to conference coordinators, visiting teams, and the local referee societies once scheduled competition is known. Home teams will also be required to update conference coordinators, visiting teams, and local referee societies as colleges and universities update any COVID-related requirements as they occur.

### **Return to Play Protocol for NCR Regional and National Events**

NCR will require all teams participating in a National or Regional NCR Event to adhere to the same RTP Protocol Level for that event. Each event may have a separate RTP Protocol Level requirement independent of other NCR Events. RTP Protocol Level will be based on local, state, and regional health guidelines as well as participating teams' institutional requirements. Announced RTP Protocol Level may change based on changing local and regional health conditions. Announced Events may be changed, relocated, postponed or cancelled based on changing local and regional health conditions. NCR will attempt to make initial RTP Protocol Level announcements at least 4 weeks ahead of its events.

- RTP Protocols Level Required as of August 7, 2021:
  - National NCR Events RTP Protocol: TBD
  - Regional NCR Events RTP Protocol: TBD

### **Actions After a Positive Test Result**

Notify all stakeholders (institution, local public health, etc.), NCR Men's or Women's director, as well as all those in attendance of the event (teammates, coach, referee, opponents, medical staff) immediately after an athlete tests positive for COVID-19 so required quarantine, contact tracing, healthcare protocols and other

actions can be implemented. It is important to note that providing the name of the positive student athlete(s) is not necessary, in accordance with HIPAA regulations.

- Men's Director Steve Hiatt: [hiatt@ncr.rugby](mailto:hiatt@ncr.rugby)
- Women's Director Angela Smarto: [smarto@ncr.rugby](mailto:smarto@ncr.rugby)

### **Resuming Athletics Post Positive COVID-19 Infection**

Individuals may react differently upon recovery from a COVID-19 illness. Some athletes may take longer than others to return to athletic activity. It is important the player feels healthy enough to resume athletic participation. The player must understand the personal risks before resuming any athletic activity. All athletes recovering from a COVID-19 illness should consult their physicians, institutional medical department, or other medical professionals for specific RTP guidance after recovering from COVID-19.

### **Accounting for Vaccination**

NCR encourages those who wish to be vaccinated early and widespread adoption of all available FDA approved COVID-19 vaccines.

## National Collegiate Rugby Return to Play Player Protocol

	<i>Week leading to match</i>	<i>Day of Match</i>	<i>Days following Match</i>
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 48 hours and 24 hours leading to day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 2 hours prior to kick off               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Traveling team complete check before leaving for event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 24 hours and 48 hours after day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Report positive cases to the opponent up until 7 days after the match</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 72 hours, 48 hours, and 24 hours leading to day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• PCR Test within 72 hours of Departure*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 2 hours prior to kick off               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Traveling team complete check before leaving for event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 24 hours and 48 hours after day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Report positive cases to the opponent up until 7 days after the match</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 72 hours, 48 hours, and 24 hours leading to day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• PCR Test within 48 hours of Match*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 24 hours prior to kick off               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Traveling team complete check before leaving for event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily Symptom Checklist 24 hours and 48 hours after day of match               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Report positive cases to the opponent up until 7 days after the match</li> </ul>

**\*No testing needed if vaccine proof is provided**

## National Collegiate Rugby Return to Play Participant Protocol

*Masks are required to be worn by all coaches, referees, fans, and medical staff.*

*Social distance practices are required by all players, coaches, referees, fans, and medical staff while on match grounds.*

<b>Players &amp; Coaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See RTP Protocol Level for all appropriate regulations</li> <li>● Upon arrival to pitch, remain in designated areas not interacting with opponent, referee, or fan</li> <li>● During match, team and coach will remain in technical zone</li> </ul>
<b>Referees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-monitor Daily Symptom Checklist in accordance with agreed upon Protocol Level of competing teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Testing is not required unless requested by match host</li> <li>● Upon arrival to pitch, remain separate from designated team areas</li> <li>● Referees to conduct pre-match talks outdoors</li> <li>● Bring own water bottle</li> </ul>
<b>Medical Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-monitor Daily Symptom Checklist in accordance with agreed upon Protocol Level of competing teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Report irregularities immediately</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Testing is not required unless request by match host</li> <li>● Wear PPE at all times in accordance with local guidelines</li> </ul>
<b>Fans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fan attendance is deemed by local ordinance on mass gatherings for sporting events</li> <li>● If attendance acceptable, all fans should Self monitor Daily Symptom Checklist 48 hours and 24 hours leading to day of match <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If irregular, do not attend match and seek medical attention</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Watch match from opposite side of field of teams' areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If unmanageable, teams and spectators must be separated by barrier e.g. rope, fence</li> <li>○ Fans should remain in traveling pod and 6 feet socially distanced from other fans traveling separately</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Ideas for Team Engagement during Varied Competition Allowances

<i>Competition Permitted</i>	<i>Ideas for season planning</i>
Full remote learning: no students on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular Zoom sessions for rugby activities: team fitness, watching film, team building meeting</li> <li>• Regular Zoom sessions for fun: Team movie night, gaming tournament, study sessions/tutoring</li> <li>• Social media campaigns: teammate story takeover, meet a player, celebrate player birthdays</li> <li>• Focus on mobility and flexibility exercises</li> <li>• Continue recruiting efforts</li> </ul>
Students on campus but no team meetings/trainings permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> <li>• Continue to post flyers inviting new players to regular Zoom meetings with QR codes to give direct links to team information</li> </ul>
Non-contact training only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on mobility and flexibility exercises</li> <li>• Focus on building non-contact skills</li> <li>• Rugby focused fitness</li> <li>• Touch/flag rugby tournaments</li> </ul>
Contact practice & intrasquad scrimmages allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to regular training</li> <li>• For scrimmages, make teams the same week to week and build some intrasquad rivalry</li> </ul>
Can play only away matches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize with other teams to play at neutral sites or their campuses</li> <li>• Consider CDC travel recommendations</li> </ul>
Permitted to play and travel with institution approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with regular season planning</li> <li>• Consider CDC travel recommendations</li> </ul>