



**SUISSE**  
**RUGBY**  
— FSR —

# SWISS RUGBY UNION

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**SAFETY CONCEPT AND GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR  
COMMUNITY RUGBY IN SWITZERLAND**

**IN THE 2<sup>nd</sup> WAVE OF THE  
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

Version 3.0, 01/03/2021

Swiss Rugby Union



## **Introduction**

Since March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Switzerland, like most of the World, has been battling the Coronavirus Pandemic. Although primary health care and the saving of human lives must stay at the top of the list of priorities, sport nevertheless plays an important role in getting society back into a functioning economic and social life.

While it is logical that individual outdoor sports, as well as those where participants don't come closer than several meters, may be resumed more easily in full, compared to indoor sports, team sports, and contact sports, it is nevertheless important and necessary that a sport such as rugby (a team contact sport) can gradually and safely be played and practiced by its members and supporters.

Together with Swiss Olympic and the Federal Office of Sport (BASPO) the Swiss Rugby Union has therefore developed training and competition concepts for every phase of the pandemic, naturally accompanied by a concept of protection for its members and their families and communities. The concept is designed to allow our sport to continue, all while respecting the rules issued by the Federal Office of Public Health (BAG) as well as the Federal Council, and at the same time guaranteeing Player Welfare and safety while maximizing injury prevention strategies. A sport can not pursue its activities without a federally approved concept.

Naturally, this concept will be continually adapted depending on the rules and regulations issued by the Swiss Federal Council. World Rugby, the International Federation of our sport, has also issued sport-specific directives for a return to play, which the Swiss Rugby Union has incorporated into its technical concepts.

### **I. Current Rules and Recommended Activities** **(Valid from March 1st, 2021)**

#### **I.1 National Rules and Regulations for ADULTS over 20 Years of Age** **(Born before 2001):**

##### **Premise:**

The Federal Council has put the following restrictions in place from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021:

Activities: Competitions are forbidden, only training activities are allowed.

All outdoor sports facilities shall re-open.

Number of People: Activities can take place outdoors, with a maximum of 15 people (including players and coaches).

Social Distancing: a minimum of 1,5 meters of distance must be observed at all times between one individual and the other.

Physical Contact: No physical contact is allowed during training activities.

##### **Recommended Activities:**



Small-Group training sessions, (Maximum 15 people)

No contact, keep a distance of Min 1.5 meters between individuals. Keep a distance of 10 meters when running behind another athlete.

Try to keep the training groups always to the same 15 people (no mixing), to avoid cross contagion.

**Specific Activities:**

Global physical preparation:

Strength

Plyometric

Aerobic conditioning

Stretching

Neuro-muscular

Technical work

Individual skills

Tactical work, etc.

Individual Kicking

Passing, Kicking, Lineout Throws (no lifting)

Passing lines always observing the 1.5 meters rule

**1.2 National Rules and Regulations for YOUTH up to 20 Years of Age (Born in 2001 or later):**

**Premise:**

The Federal Council has put the following rules in place from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021:

Activities: All training and competitions are allowed, with contact, without restrictions of distancing or number of people.

All outdoor sports facilities shall re-open.

**1.3 Player Welfare: Return to Play Timeline for Kids & Adults**

To promote player welfare and minimize the risk of injuries, the following timeline must be observed for returning to rugby competitions, starting from the first Day of Training with Contact (as soon as this is allowed by the Swiss Government):

Phase 1 (Weeks 1 & 2) : Conditioning, Training with Light Contact, Skills Training

Phase 2 (Week 3 & 4) : Full Contact Training, Unit Work, Technical Work

Phase 3 (Week 5 & 6) : Full Contact, Full Team Training, Match Preparation

After 6 weeks: Start Competitions



## **2 Risk Evaluation, Triage, and Hygiene**

Throughout all Phases, the following rules always remain in place:

- A. Hygiene: Players must wash or sanitize hands before and after each training or competition session, avoid touching their faces, and cough or sneeze into their elbow. Each player must bring their own water bottle, labelled with their name. Players and staff should wear masks at all times, except when in training or competition on the rugby pitch. In addition, they must strictly follow the Swiss, Cantonal, and municipal hygiene rules and respect health, prevention, and all other recommendations.
- B. Self-Assessment: before going to their training or competition session, each player and coach/staff must complete a daily health self-assessment. Most importantly, players and staff must answer the following questions:
  - i. Do I have one of the following symptoms: symptoms of acute respiratory disease (including Cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) OR Fever over 38 degrees OR sudden loss of smell or taste. If YES: do not go to training/competition, follow the advice of local health authorities.
  - ii. Have I or anyone in my household been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have I been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 10 days?

If the answer to any of the questions above is YES, then the player must not go to training or to the game and must inform their coach. Each club has the responsibility to ensure this information is provided by their players and that the rest of the group is informed if a player has symptoms or been tested positive.

- C. Tracking Presences: at each training/competition session, the club must keep track of the first name, last name, e-mail address, and phone number of each person present at the training session or match.
- D. Player Safety: as is always the case in the sport of rugby, player safety must remain at the Center of each activity, be it in training or in competition. This rule takes on an extra-special importance in the current time, as injury prevention not only serves to keep players healthy, but also to avoid overburdening our emergency health care system.

## **3 Positive COVID-19 Case in a club**

In case a player in a club tests positive for COVID-19:

He/She (or the parents) must contact the cantonal health authorities and inform them.



He/She (or the parents) should inform the Club right away.

The Club must immediately take the following measures:

- A. The entire training group and competition team of the positive player (any person he has been in contact with) must go into quarantine from all rugby activities for 10 days (no training, no games).
- B. The Club must inform the FSR in case of official games or tournaments.
- C. The players and staff must inform their employers and/or school that they have been in contact with a positive case.
- D. During the 10 days isolation: perform the Coronavirus Check every day: <https://check.foph-coronavirus.ch/screening>
- E. If anyone experiences symptoms: Contact cantonal health authorities and get tested.
- F. If after 10 days no symptoms have been experienced, then the entire group can re-start training.

General Guidelines of the BAG regarding quarantine and isolation must be followed:

<https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/selbst-isolierung-und-selbst-quarantaene.html>)

### **3.1 In Case of Suspicion of COVID-19**

A member of a club is considered a “Suspected” case if:

The person has symptoms of COVID-19, or

the person has been in contact with someone with symptoms of COVID-19, or

the person has been in contact with someone tested positive for COVID-19.

If a team has a case of suspected COVID-19, they must do everything they can to get a test result as quickly as possible in order to confirm or deny the suspicion. If it is not possible to get a test result in time before the next training session, and the player suspected to have COVID-19 has been in physical contact with other people on the team in the last 10 days, then the player and club must follow the procedures found above, in Section 3.

Once the test result has been obtained:

If the player is indeed positive, the entire training group and competition team of the positive player (any person he has been in contact with) must continue their quarantine from all rugby activities for 10 days (no training, no games).

If the test result is negative, then the team can go back to training and playing respecting the COVID-19 Guidelines as outlined in this document.

## **4 Transportation to and from Training and Competitions**

Most Rugby Players in Switzerland train and play in or near the city where they live. They are encouraged to go to training by bicycle. Those who live further, are encouraged, in the current situation, to use private transportation, to avoid overcrowding public transport. Those who must use public transport, should try to avoid peak hours to avoid overcrowding. If needed, training hours and duration will be adapted.

## **5 Infrastructure**



Rugby in Switzerland is practiced on grass fields. Usually they are soccer football pitches, which belong to the local municipality. The rugby club usually pays for 4-10 hours of usage per week. The municipality or their Sports Bureau is normally in charge of the management, maintenance, and cleaning of the structures. All rugby clubs are obligated to cooperate closely with their local Sports Authorities and municipalities regarding the re-opening and use of the sports facilities, as well as regarding observing all hygiene rules put in place by the local sports authority for the specific infrastructure they are using.

It is presumed that in the some phases, the dressing rooms, showers, catering facilities or kiosk/buvettes normally provided by the sports facilities will remain closed. Players are required to come to training already in their training outfits, to bring and change of clothes, and to shower after training back at their homes. In addition, they are expected to bring any nutrition and beverages with them and keep them separated and always well-marked with their name.

No organized or spontaneous social gatherings are to be held, besides the training sessions. If possible: dispensing points for hydro-alcoholic gel and disposable paper with waste bins are to be put in place.

## **6 Contact persons and responsibilities**

Each player, coach, parent, and club administrator is responsible for taking responsibility in playing his or her part in implementing this concept, and in standing together in solidarity to ensure the health and safety of all those involved.

Each club is further responsible for nominating one person in charge of each training session (generally coach or team manager), who will have the duty of completing the list of presences, supervising the sessions and the compliance to the special constraints dictated by the current situation.

## **7 Communication of the Concept**

The Swiss Rugby Union (Schweizerischer Rugby Verband / Fédération Suisse de Rugby) is responsible for communicating this concept to its clubs and regional associations, as well as to the public. This will be done through the creation of graphics, posters, and documents, which will be made available to all clubs and regional associations and will be made available on its website and spread through social media channels.

Each club is then responsible for communicating to all of its members, and for ensuring the good understanding and implementation of the concepts throughout its own activities.