

# AR Return to Rugby Guideline:

**INTRODUCTION:** These guidelines are predicated on guidance from multiple local, state, national and international organizations. The core principal we are following is that we need to minimize or eliminate the opportunity for the SARS-COV-2 virus to be transmitted to players, coaches and staff and the broader community. As a club, AR needs to ensure a safe, sustainable return to rugby.

General rules of engagement from Rugby USA can be found [here](#). As a local club, AR is required to produce a set of guidelines that we will follow and that must be approved by Rugby Virginia. In combination with the staff and coaches, we have decided to adapt a conservative approach that will maximize safety for our players, coaches and their families while there is ongoing community transmission of the SARS-COV-2 virus.

There are various stages of re-opening that vary by location/regional health mandate. We all hope that we will progress through these stages with ever more relaxed guidelines; however, if local spread of the virus is again seen to be increasing, we may need to return to more restrictive guidelines or halt play altogether.

We ask that all parents review the Rugby Virginia guidelines to phased return to play included at the end of this document. Although Virginia is in phase 3, at this time we will re-open starting with Rugby Virginia phase 2 guidelines.

Below is a list of the most common symptoms of COVID-19 infections. Symptoms appear 2-14 days after infection however people may be contagious up to 2 days before symptoms appear.

COVID 19 infection symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion or runny nose
- Tiredness (fatigue)
- Shortness of breath (difficulty breathing)
- Muscle aches/pains
- New loss of taste/smell
- Nausea/vomiting
- Diarrhea

As a club we will rely on the integrity of our players and their families to follow the return to play guidelines. These guidelines rely on two major concepts:

1. Social distancing
2. Excluding affected individuals from practice/play

A large minority of COVID-19 infections are asymptomatic, the combination of a questionnaire and temperature checks will screen about 60% of symptomatic individuals (World Rugby: Safe Return to Rugby). Viral transmission cannot occur if we distance. In the absence of social distancing, it is believed that viral transmission can be decreased by wearing a facial covering. Rugby is a group sport, social distancing and mask wearing are impossible to achieve with 100% certainty when we return to practice. If you are not comfortable with returning to practice or play at this time please do not do so.

**RETURN TO PRACTICE/PLAY GUIDELINES:**

All administrators and coaches will be required to have supplemental COVID-19 training found [here](#).

All players families will be asked to fill out a COVID-19 waiver as part of the registration process.

At this time, AR will begin practice with grades 1-2 and up. The youngest ruggers are more difficult to coach and we foresee challenges in maintaining proper distancing while at practice in the pre-k/k group

**Prior to practice/play:**

1. All participants must register in advance for EACH practice and fill out a COVID-19 questionnaire within 24 hours of the practice. If you do not fill this out you will not be allow to practice
2. DO NOT COME TO PRACTICE IF -
  - a. you, anyone in your household or your child feels ill
  - b. your child, you or anyone in your household are diagnosed with COVID-19, or are a person suspected to have COVID-19
  - c. your child, you or anyone in your household have been in contact with someone known to have COVID-19
3. Parents are asked NOT to bring children to practice early, as AR will be staggering times amongst various age groups to limit the size of groups
4. Parents will need to promptly pick up children at the end of scheduled practice time.
5. Temperature checks are encouraged at home. If your child's temperature is >99.6F, please stay home
6. AR will screen children's temperatures at the beginning of practice. If a child's temperature is >99.6F they will be asked to leave
7. We require that parents stay in their vehicles for drop off and if they must exit their vehicles to retrieve children at the end of practice, masks will be mandatory
8. Ruggers are required to wear masks to and from the field
9. DO NOT carpool, if possible.
10. Participants must sanitize their hands at the beginning of practice and after practice
11. We will not provide port-a-john access

**DURING PRACTICE:**

1. Coaches and staff will wear masks during practice
2. Practices will be at staggered times and divided by age group to limit the number of children on the field at any one time
3. No sharing water bottles or equipment
4. Hands will be sanitized at each break. Coach to administer.
5. Entrance and exits from the fields will be clearly marked. Entrance and egress will be different.
6. During practice, we will direct children to maintain 10 feet of distance as they will not be wearing masks - AR's guidelines for distancing are in line with the Commonwealth's guidelines and more conservative than Rugby Virginia's guidance of 6 feet of distance.
7. We will sanitize balls and equipment between practices and at break time with an approved cleaning agent
8. The fields will be divided in half for practice, we will have groups of 5-10 ruggers, depending on attendance. The groups will stay the same for fall rugby.
9. Coaches and players will be in one group for the duration of practice to minimize the number of potential contacts

10. Practices will be 45 minutes in length to allow for two short breaks and turnaround time of 15 minutes between the staggered groups
11. No spitting, handshakes, high fives, embracing, cheering or any other interactions that break social distancing directives

**AFTER PRACTICE.** Children who will not, or cannot, heed all of these rules will be redirected once, and then asked to leave practice

1. The children will be directed to exit the field promptly via the marked exit route and return directly to their parent's car
2. Please wash your child's practice uniform after each practice
3. We ask that all AR parents set a good example for the players by not congregating during or after practice.

**RETURN TO PLAY AFTER COVID-19 INFECTION:**

1. If you or your child are diagnosed with COVID-19 or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you will need to quarantine for 14 days. While quarantined, please DO NOT COME TO PRACTICE
2. If you or your child are diagnosed with COVID or are a close contact of someone with COVID, we will generally follow the guidelines in the appendix below (Appendix B&C) to determine the timing of return to play/practice. However, the club and coaching staff will determine the exact timing of return to play to ensure the safe return of that player

**Phase 1****FITNESS**

- Team practice times set to maximize social distancing
- Practice sessions to last 1 hour
- 10 players or less in quad (1/4) of a playing field
- No contact
- Participants must remain a minimum of 15 feet apart (5 yds)
- Player is to remain in their technical/work area
- No communal/shared equipment used

**Phase 2****BALL  
HANDLING**

- Team practice times set to maximize social distancing
- Practice sessions to last 1 hour
- 10 players or less in quad (1/4) of a playing field
- No contact
- Participants must remain a minimum of 6 feet apart
- 1 ball per 5 players
- Players can move throughout the training area while remaining 6 feet apart

**Phase 3****Touch  
Rugby**

- Small group training
- Physical contact to be minimized
- Players to move more freely
- Introduce possession games without full contact
- Introduce small-sided games without full contact
- Without full contact = no tackling

**Phase 4****Begin  
Tackle**

- Full team training
- Possession games with minimized contact
- Small-sided games with minimized contact
- Introduction of scrimmages / practice games

Return to Play

## Appendix A

### Symptoms of COVID-19 infection

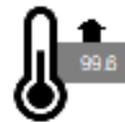
Individuals with COVID-19 can exhibit symptoms ranging from mild to life-threatening. Most symptoms associated with infections include:



SHORTNESS  
OF BREATH



COUGH



FEVER  
= / > 99.6 DEGREES F

Less common symptoms that may still evidence of COVID-19 include:

SORE  
THROAT

CONGESTION

NAUSEA &  
VOMITING

DIARRHEA

HEADACHE

MUSCLE /  
JOINT PAIN

SUDDEN LOSS  
OF TASTE &  
SMELL

CHILLS

## Appendix B

### Return to play following confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection

These recommendations are intended to guide decision-making regarding players or staff with a suspected or documented COVID-19 infection in order to reduce the risk of disease transmission:

#### **Symptomatic player / staff with suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infections:**

Cannot attend club events until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since resolution of fever (defined as  $\geq 99.6$  degrees f) without the use of fever-reducing medications and respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), and
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- or:**
- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and
  - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), and
  - Negative results of an fda authorized molecular assay for detection of sars-cov-2 rna from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (two negative specimens)

#### **Player / staff with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms:**

Cannot attend club events until:

- 10 days after date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming no symptoms since that time. if symptoms develop, then management should be guided as above for symptomatic individuals.
- or:**
- Negative results of an fda authorized sars-cov-2 rna test at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (two negative specimens)

Return to Play

## Appendix C

Return to play following exposure to a suspected or diagnosed COVID-19 infection

These recommendations are intended to guide decision-making regarding players or staff with a suspected or documented COVID-19 infection in order to reduce the risk of disease transmission:

Any asymptomatic player or staff member who has been exposed to an individual with a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19 should be restricted from participation for at least 14 days and monitor for any symptom consistent with infection.

If asymptomatic after 14 days since last exposure, they can return to participation. In general, you need to be in close contact with an individual to contract the disease. In this case, exposure means any one of the following:

- Caring for a sick person with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.
  - Living in the same household as an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.
  - Being within 6 feet of an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection for around 10 minutes or more
- or:**
- Coming in direct contact with secretions from an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection (being coughed or sneezed on, sharing water bottle or utensils, for example)

# Thank You

Rugby Virginia thanks **Blaze Byrd** (Richmond Strikers) for creating return to play guidelines which we **heavily** leveraged to produce this resource (~99% generated by Blaze!)

