



IRFU Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs:

Contact-Stage Guidelines

Published: June 25th 2020

Updated: July 17th 2020

1. Introduction

COVID-19 remains a dangerous pandemic and is an ongoing threat to our community.

Clubs are expected to continue to demonstrate the safe behaviours that will limit the spread of the virus.

[Click Here For General Information On Coronavirus](#)

The purpose of this document is to provide high-level guidelines for on-field activities as part of IRFU Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs.

All clubs are reminded that a strict **NO PLAN = NO PLAY** policy remains in place.

Clubs must complete the COVID-19 Safety Planning Stage AND confirm a COVID-19 Club Health & Safety Plan with their province to resume any rugby activity.

The IRFU's graduated return to contact will be guided by the latest update in the easing of government restrictions and remains subject to change.

Other Resources:

Clubs who have not completed their COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan should refer to the IRFU Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs before proceeding with any guidelines in this document.

[Click Here For IRFU Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs](#)

References:

The scope of the IRFU's Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs (including this document) focuses on on-field activities and the general clubhouse environment. They are superseded by government guidelines at all times.

For ancillary facilities such as bars and gyms, clubs should refer solely to government guidelines.

[Government of Ireland Guidelines For Reopening Pubs](#)
[Northern Ireland Executive Guidance For Restaurants, Pubs and Bars](#)

[Ireland Active Framework For Safe Operation V3](#)
[UK Active Framework For Reopening Of Gym \(NI\)](#)



KEEP YOUR CLUB MATES SAFE



KNOW » **SHOW** » **GO**

KNOW YOUR ROLE
& RESPONSIBILITIES
IN PREVENTING
THE SPREAD OF
COVID-19

SHOW YOUR TEAM
MATES RESPECT WITH
SAFE BEHAVIOUR
AND BY CALLING OUT
UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR

GO HOME STRAIGHT
AFTER TRAINING TO
KEEP SAFE & ALLOW
YOUR TEAM MATES
TO TRAIN SAFELY



#ReturnToRugby

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.irishrugby.ie/returntorugby

www.hse.ie/covid19

www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus



#ReturnToRugby

2. Safeguarding

Clubs are reminded that the safeguarding of younger and at-risk members remains an absolute priority at all times. Measures and protocols to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 cannot compromise any form of safeguarding at any time.

- Coaches must be vetted and sign Declaration of Intent
- Other adults supervising (but not on a continuous basis) must sign Declaration of Intent. This ordinance includes both COVID-19 Club Compliance Officers and parents acting in the role of supervisor.
- For players with a disability and/or if travel to other venues/activities is part of the camp/schedule the adult/player ratio is to be lowered to 1:5

[Click Here To Access Declaration Of Intent](#)

3. Injury Prevention

Returning to activity after prolonged training restrictions brings with it the risk of injury. Clubs are expected to reintroduce players to training in a phased and gradual manner.

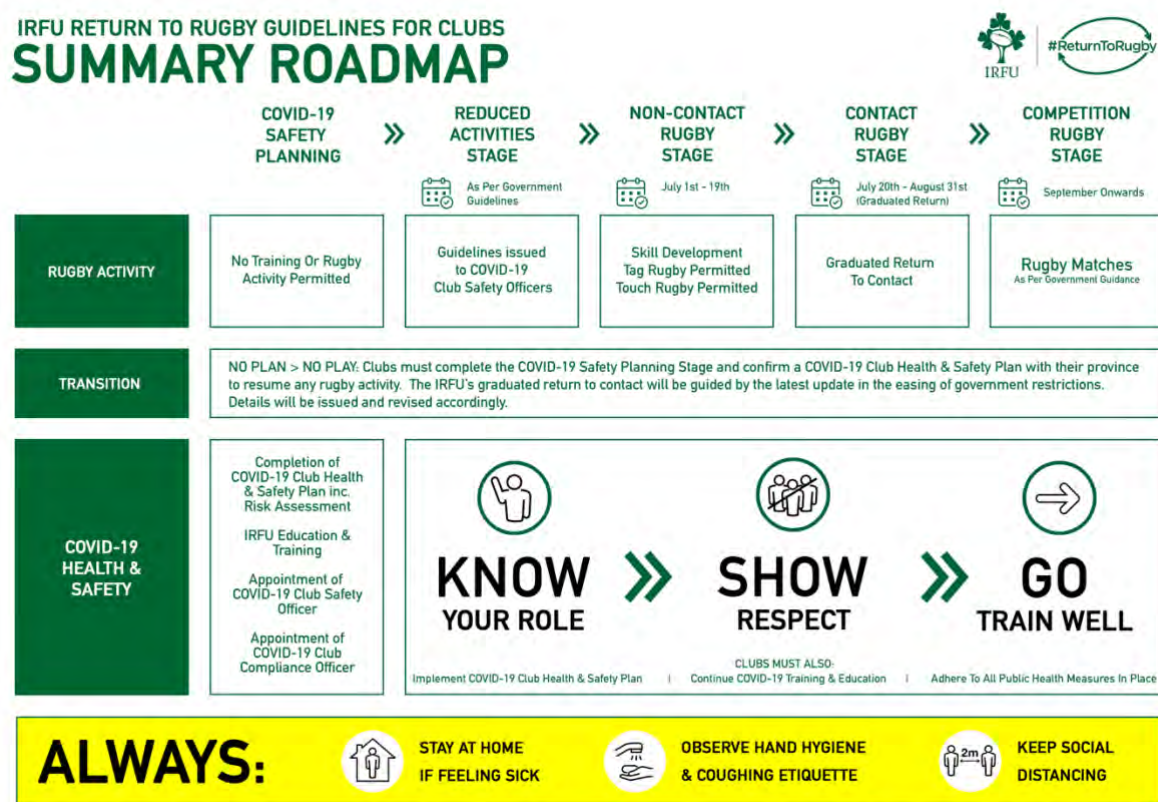
Coaches need to be conscious of providing a graduated plan for training under the following considerations:

D.A.T.E.

- **Density:** Number of players in the available space
- **Activity:** Type of activity - contact, non-contact
- **Timing:** Duration/length of a session
- **Environment:** Outdoor activity only

The IRFU in conjunction with the four provinces will be providing clubs with a series of resources on injury prevention and a safe on-field return to rugby throughout the months of July and August 2020.

4. IRFU Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs Summary Roadmap



Clubs that completed the COVID-19 Safety Planning Stage in the month of June were permitted to enter the **Reduced Activity stage** of the summary roadmap.

The **Non-Contact Stage** runs from July 1st to July 19th. It allows for skill development and include a provision for tag rugby and touch rugby.

Content:	Numbers Ratio Players to Coach:
Non-contact skills-based activities Non-contact game forms (Touch & Tag) 7 v 7 on ½ pitch	Under U12: 16 players to 2 coaches Above U12-U18: Minimum 2 coaches per squad Above U18: Minimum 2 coaches per squad
Session Duration: 60 mins max	

Strict social distancing of 2 metres, the continued completion of Pre-Rugby Personal Assessment Declarations and all *know > show > go* behaviours including hand hygiene and cough etiquette must be adhered to at all times throughout this stage.

Clubs that have completed the COVID-19 Safety Planning Stage before or after July 20th may enter the Contact Stage of the summary roadmap.

5. Contact Stage Guidelines

The continued completion of Pre-Rugby Personal Assessment Declarations and all *know > show > go* behaviours must be adhered to at all times throughout this stage.

Skill and fitness elements from earlier stages should be retained and expanded.

Training sessions should include a phased programme of multidirectional movement.

Numbers of Coaches and Players per group:

- **Under U12:** 16 players to 2 coaches
- **Above U12-U18:** Minimum 2 coaches per squad
- **Above U18:** Minimum 2 coaches per squad

The following process builds out a graduated return to contact to mitigate injury risk after prolonged training restrictions.

INDIVIDUAL CONTACT SKILLS: July 20th > August 2nd

- **Controlled contact development:**
 - Using pads and shields progressing from walking, jogging to running
 - Working in small numbers on 1v1 contact scenarios with controlled gradual progression leading to 1v1 tackle
- Skills based activities (handling, decision making, positioning/support play)
- No live scrummaging or mauling
- Unopposed set piece and team run
- Face to face contact is minimised

TEAM CONTACT SKILLS: August 3rd > August 16th

- Skills and games through contact where numbers are greater than 1v1
- Unit Skills - Scrum: 1v1, 2v2, 3v machine, 3v3, 5v machine, 5v5 8vmachine, 8v8, etc.
- Unit Skills - Lineout: Unopposed. Progressing from 3 to 7 players before contesting (mauling time must be limited).
- Modified Hit Outs With Contact Elements (10-15 minutes)
- Face to face contact limited

MATCH CONTACT SKILLS: August 17th > August 30th

- Full contact with gradual progression to reflect the reality of an 80-minute game (time limited per session)
- Contested unit skills
- Face to face contact to remain limited
- Friendly fixtures permitted August 28th – August 30th between clubs within the same province
- Competitive provincial fixtures can commence from September 5th



IRFU RETURN TO RUGBY GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS - SUMMARY ROADMAP

CONTACT STAGE GUIDELINES

The Contact Stage of the IRFU's Return To Rugby Roadmap commences from July 20th. This summary document outlines a safe and responsible way for clubs to make a graduated return to contact rugby. Guidelines have been issued in full directly to clubs.



INDIVIDUAL CONTACT SKILLS



JULY 20th > AUGUST 2nd

Controlled contact development:
 Using pads and shields progressing from walking, jogging to running
 Working in small numbers on 1v1 contact scenarios with controlled gradual progression leading to 1v1 tackle
 Skills based activities (handling, decision making, positioning/support play)
 No live scrummaging or mauling
 Unopposed set piece and team run
 Face to face contact is minimised

TEAM CONTACT SKILLS



AUGUST 3rd > AUGUST 16th

Skills and games through contact where numbers are greater than 1v1
 Unit Skills - Scrum: 1v1, 2v2, 3v machine, 3v3, 5v machine, 5v5 8vmachine, 8v8, etc.
 Unit Skills - Lineout: Unopposed. Progressing from 3 to 7 players before contesting (mauling time must be limited).
 Modified Hit Outs With Contact Elements (10-15 minutes)
 Face to face contact limited

MATCH CONTACT SKILLS



AUGUST 17th > AUGUST 30th

Full contact with gradual progression to reflect the reality of an 80-minute game (time limited per session)
 Contested unit skills
 Face to face contact to remain limited
 Friendly fixtures permitted August 28th – August 30th between clubs within the same province
 Competitive provincial fixtures can commence from September 5th

NO PLAN > NO PLAY: Clubs must complete the COVID-19 Safety Planning Stage and confirm a COVID-19 Club Health & Safety Plan with their province to resume any rugby activity. The IRFU's Return To Rugby Guidelines For Clubs are superseded at all times by the latest government guidelines. Clubs are also reminded that the safeguarding of younger and at-risk members remains an absolute priority at all times.



KNOW
YOUR ROLE



SHOW
RESPECT



GO
TRAIN WELL

ALWAYS:



STAY AT HOME
IF FEELING SICK



OBSERVE HAND HYGIENE
& COUGHING ETIQUETTE



KEEP SOCIAL
DISTANCING

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