



PROFESSIONAL GAME

COVID-19 Return to Training and Competition Operating Procedures Version Nine as of June 30th, 2020

These operating procedures will, subject to the terms set out below, take effect as at the date indicated by the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU). The WRU reserve the right to issue variations, which may be at short notice. Please always check you are referring to the most up to date version of these operating procedures, and always ensure that your actions, and the information you disseminate, reflect up-to-date public health and/or government authority guidance from the relevant territory/ies. These operating procedures are intended for all Professional and International representative sides within Wales

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

- 1.1. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an ongoing Worldwide pandemic caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It will remain a potentially deadly virus until an effective vaccination programme (if it can be created) is implemented. This is unlikely to be available until sometime during 2021. Governments around the World have instigated travel restrictions, social distancing requirements and self-isolation directives to slow the spread of the disease to enable health care systems to cope with the increased demands associated with managing the disease.
- 1.2. In March 2020, the 2019/20 Guinness PRO14, European cups and all International competitions were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the various government restrictions that had been, or were being, put in place to deal with it. All competitions remain suspended.
- 1.3. This document sets out guidelines for players, clubs and others participating in the competitions as to how the competitions will function in the event that relevant governments reduce, revise or remove their respective restrictions, allowing players and clubs to train in groups, and matches to be held in certain circumstances. It will not be possible to eradicate the risk of viral transmission in a contact sport like rugby union, but risk-mitigation strategies should nevertheless be implemented. The provisions in this document are intended to (among other things) mitigate the risks involved in such a return to training and competition.
- 1.4. This document provides guidance and instructions for those participants and non-playing staff as to how they should adapt their conduct when training for, and competing in competition. It should be read and interpreted alongside all other relevant guidance, advice and instructions from public health and/or government authorities.
- 1.5. These operating procedures include obligations (which must be complied with) and guidance (which is recommended). For convenience, obligations within the document are coloured in **red, bolded, and italicised**.
- 1.6. ***All information collected from individuals pursuant to this document must be treated as confidential and must be protected in line with relevant data protection legislation. In particular, all information about the health of an individual, including confirmation that they are healthy, is special category data and must be processed appropriately.***
- 1.7. Clubs will be permitted to make a phased return to training only after public health and/or government authorities and their respective national Unions confirm it appropriate to do so.
- 1.8. ***It is inevitable that the fast-moving response to COVID-19 will change after these operating procedures have initially been adopted. The WRU intend to issue further documentation to supplement and/or amend the obligations and guidance in this document to reflect the immediate position on COVID-19, and Clubs and Persons must comply with such amended obligations and (where relevant) guidance.***

- 1.9. This document contains hyperlinks, which appear in blue and underlined (external documents) or in purple and underlined (appendices in this document). Where external documents are referred to, whether in the hyperlinks or otherwise, care must always be taken to review and – where appropriate – comply with the very latest version of such documents.
- 1.10. ***All individuals (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must at all relevant times (which includes when not at Club facilities or on Club duties) comply with all applicable advice and instruction from public health and/or government authorities regarding COVID-19.***
- 1.11. ***Importantly, these operating procedures will take effect only after:***
- 1.11.1. ***it is clear that group training and (as appropriate) hosting and participating in Matches in the way envisaged by these operating procedures is no longer prohibited by the relevant public health and/or government authorities (including in respect of travel restrictions and/or forced isolation/quarantine measures, where relevant);***
 - 1.11.2. ***for the purposes of hosting and participating in Matches in the way envisaged by these operating procedures, it is clear that the relevant Players and other participants are physically conditioned to return to group training and (as appropriate) participating in Matches (this will be a matter for individual Clubs and Players to determine, but it is anticipated that, to reduce the risk of injury, a [re-conditioning period \(appendix 1\)](#) and individual personalised training programmes will need to be observed before Players return to play in Matches); and***
 - 1.11.3. ***it is clear that relevant medical facilities (including public hospitals/trauma centres) are able to accommodate and support the resumption of professional rugby union (including group training and hosting and participating in Matches) in the relevant territories.***
 - 1.11.4. ***all relevant and appropriate insurance provisions are in place across the spectrum of areas captured by these operating procedures.***
- 1.12. ***Accurate information is essential to support the efforts to manage the relevant risks. Information provided by individuals (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must, be complete and accurate.***

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. ***Education; prior to returning to work, each individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must give written evidence to his/her Club that:***
- 2.1.1. ***he/she has completed the World Rugby COVID-19 online education module, or equivalent (where applicable the WRU, WRPA and Clubs should supplement this module with additional educational material such as webinars); and***

- 2.1.2. *he/she has read and understood the contents of this document and will comply with it at all relevant times.*

This evidence must be retained by the Club for at least three years.

- 2.2. *Hygiene and respiratory protocol; each individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must at all times (including when leaving home, during travel to and from Club facilities, on entry/during occupation/on exit of all Club facilities – for example, training ground, match day and administration facilities - and on returning home) protect against the potential spread of the virus by:*

2.2.1. *washing hands regularly with anti-bacterial soap and water;*

2.2.2. *regularly using alcohol-based hand sanitiser;*

2.2.3. *covering sneezes and coughs with a disposable tissue or, when not available, with a flexed elbow; and*

2.2.4. *where practical, avoiding touching his/her eyes, nose, and mouth.*

- 2.3. *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); the use of PPE in the medical and non-medical setting must be consistent with public health and/or government authorities' instruction and must be appropriate for the setting and context. In addition, each Club must:*

2.3.1. *deliver to all individuals appropriate education regarding donning/doffing and disposal of the appropriate PPE (following public health and/or government instruction); and*

2.3.2. *ensure that all Persons (including Players, Club Officials, Match Day operational staff and third-party contractors) observe all relevant PPE instruction from local territory public health and/or government authorities when travelling abroad.*

- 2.4. *Testing and vaccinations (whether antigen testing, antibody testing, immunisation or otherwise); each individual (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must provide to his/her Club confirmation and written evidence of any relevant COVID-19 testing or immunisation, whether or not that has been validated and/or recommended by the relevant public health and/or government authorities.*

- 2.5. **Close contact and self-isolation;** the definition of a close contact when informing self-isolation guidelines will be determined by the relevant public health and/or government authorities and may differ between territories.

3. THE COVID-19 TEAM

- 3.1. *Each Club and the WRU will appoint a COVID-19 Manager who must have operational knowledge of the Club and Union, and (b) must have direct access to one or more medical practitioners who have clinical knowledge of COVID-19.*

- 3.2. ***The COVID-19 Manager will be responsible for:***
- 3.2.1. ***notifying other Clubs and participating teams that he/she is the COVID-19 Manager;***
 - 3.2.2. ***disseminating all up to date and relevant information on COVID-19 (including the instruction in these operating procedures) to the COVID19 operational leads and other relevant individuals within the Club; and***
 - 3.2.3. ***implementing the instructions contained within this document (and all other relevant guidance, advice and instruction regarding COVID-19) on behalf of the Club.***
- 3.3. Each Club and the WRU shall appoint one or more COVID-19 operational leads, who, along with the COVID-19 Manager, will be responsible for implementing the instructions contained within this document (and all other relevant guidance, advice and instruction regarding COVID-19) in respect of certain discrete elements of Club operations, such as particular training facilities, match day venues and team travel.

4. PHASING THE RETURN TO WORK

- 4.1. ***Each Club must adopt a phased approach when preparing for its employees and other participants to return to work 'normally' (i.e. by attending a communal work area with others, even if some restrictions remain in place - as opposed to working entirely remotely), for example having an initial phase in which only essential Players and other Staff (as determined by the Club) return to work 'normally', with others to follow.***
- 4.2. ***This phased approach will be led by relevant advice and instruction from public health and/or government authorities regarding COVID-19. At all relevant times the Club and all relevant individuals must comply with all government instructions and restrictions on public gatherings, social distancing and travel (PST measures).***
- 4.3. An example phased return to work schedule can be found in [appendix 2](#).

5. BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK

- 5.1. ***Each Club must comply with all relevant public health and/or government instructions, and undertake a risk assessment of their training, match and administration facilities, prior to Players and Staff returning to work.*** The World Health Organisation (WHO) mass gathering risk assessment and measurement tool are useful documents to familiarise with ahead of undertaking this process. For more information, see documents on [this link \(risk assessment\)](#) and [this link \(measurement tool\)](#).
- 5.2. ***As part of the risk assessment each Club must undertake detailed analysis of relevant individuals (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) to identify those who are, may be, or live in the same household as someone who is, considered 'vulnerable' as set out in section 6, below.***

- 5.3. ***Each Club must use this document as a framework to further develop its own detailed operational protocols for all relevant facilities and processes. These documents must be provided to the WRU for record purposes.***
- 5.4. ***Each Club must provide its risk assessments and operational protocols to its relevant indemnity providers and, where applicable, obtain such providers' approval and/or ratification.***
- 5.5. ***All risk assessments should be stored internally for a period of at least three years.***
- 5.6. ***Each Club must ensure that all Club Medics are, prior to returning to the workplace, appropriately indemnified to practice.***
- 5.7. ***Each Club must register of all individuals (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) who are permitted and expected to attend at any relevant facilities on any given day.***
- 5.8. ***Each Club must consider the impact of any individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) returning from overseas and the necessity to undertake enforced quarantine periods set by public health and/or government authorities.***
- 5.9. ***Before returning to work, each Club must establish which individuals (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) have had COVID-19 (whether confirmed or suspected) to guide their safe return to work.***
- 5.10. ***Before returning to work, each individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must give written confirmation to his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated operational lead that:***
 - 5.10.1. ***he/she is, to the best of his/her knowledge, currently free from COVID-19;***
 - 5.10.2. ***he/she has not had any symptoms related to COVID-19 (high temperature or fever, a new continuous cough, a new unexplained shortness of breath, and a loss of smell or taste) in the seven days immediately prior;***
 - 5.10.3. ***he/she has not been in contact with a COVID-19 confirmed or suspected case in the 14 days immediately prior, or (if a Club Medic) he/she has taken all infection prevention measures, including the use of appropriate PPE, when reviewing patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in the 14 days immediately prior; and***
 - 5.10.4. ***where applicable, he/she has undergone relevant COVID-19 testing (whether antigen testing, antibody testing or otherwise) or immunisation (and if so he/she must give his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated operational lead written evidence of any testing or immunisation, whether or not that has been validated and/or recommended by the relevant public health and/or government authorities).***

This information must be obtained and stored in a secure electronic record keeping system that complies with all data protection regulations.

6. VULNERABLE GROUPS AND COVID-19

- 6.1. Those who suffer from underlying illness such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease (including moderate asthma), diabetes and some forms of cancer appear to be more severely affected by COVID-19. So too are older patients (>70 years old), those who are severely obese (BMI 40+) and those from certain ethnic backgrounds.
- 6.2. If any individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) has concerns regarding his/her return to work (inclusive of concerns with household members who may be defined as vulnerable or shielding) he/she should discuss these with the relevant medical practitioners and the relevant Club's COVID-19 Manager.
- 6.3. Further information regarding vulnerable or shielding groups should be obtained from relevant public health and/or government authorities.

7. MENTAL HEALTH

- 7.1. Mental health and psychological wellbeing support should form a standard part of care to all individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise). Clubs should ensure that all staff and players are able to access this support at all times.
- 7.2. The WRU National Psychology Manager will remain available and accessible to all individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) and also to professional and international Club medical teams for referral.
- 7.3. Monthly medical consultation/review meetings will continue to be offered to all professional and international Club medical teams.
- 7.4. The WRU National Psychology Manager will deliver; discussion, triage, assessment, safeguarding measures, and intervention for all urgent and non-urgent mental health referrals requested by any individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise)
- 7.5. Individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) requiring urgent mental health support outside of normal working hours should contact their Club medical teams or local emergency department where access to mental health crisis intervention teams is available.

8. PREPARING TRAINING, MATCH AND ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES

- 8.1. ***Before individuals return to work at any particular Club facility (including Match venues, training venues and administration venues), the Club, its COVID-19 Manager and its COVID-19 operational leads must ensure:***
 - 8.1.1. ***that the Club complies with all of its legal obligations under relevant health and safety legislation in respect of the facility (which should continue whilst the facility is being used);***

- 8.1.2.** *that a detailed cleaning plan is in place for the facility (or, where the Club leases the facility, that lease agreements are amended to facilitate an appropriate cleaning plan);*
- 8.1.3.** *that the facility be 'thoroughly cleaned' in accordance with the latest instruction from the WHO or relevant public health and/or government authority;*
- 8.1.4.** *that the facility has the following (all of which should be maintained at all times whilst the facility is being used):*
- 8.1.4.1.** *where reasonably practical, separate and clearly marked entrances and exits;*
 - 8.1.4.2.** *a clearly-marked assessment check point, for the purpose of reviewing written confirmations and evidence from, and undertaking temperature checks (appendix 3) for, all attending individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) prior to them entering the facility (standard infection prevention and control measures must be undertaken when obtaining temperatures);*
 - 8.1.4.3.** *dedicated and clearly marked hand-sanitisation and/or handwashing/drying points (with suitable products/equipment) at each entrance and exit, and at multiple other locations in the facility;*
 - 8.1.4.4.** *an appropriate stock of suitable products/equipment, for example hand-sanitiser, water, anti-bacterial soap and cleaning products;*
 - 8.1.4.5.** *an adequate stock of appropriate PPE for the working practices of the facility, and a suitable method of safely disposing of that PPE;*
 - 8.1.4.6.** *appropriate controls over who enters and leaves the facility;*
 - 8.1.4.7.** *an appropriate system for recording who enters and leaves the facility to assist the relevant public health and/or government authorities in in contact tracing, for more information on contact tracing, see document(s) on this link;*
 - 8.1.4.8.** *appropriate signage (including posters) warning of the dangers of COVID-19 and the need to observe relevant instruction (for more information on appropriate signage, see the document(s) at this link; and*
 - 8.1.4.9.** *dedicated isolation areas for use by any individuals who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 while at work.*

9. ON RETURNING TO WORK

- 9.1. *On returning to work, and at all relevant times thereafter (until informed otherwise by the Club), each individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise):*
- 9.1.1. *must, prior to leaving home, assess whether he/she, or anyone in his/her household, has COVID-19 or exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature or fever, a new continuous cough, a new unexplained shortness of breath, and a loss of smell or taste) and if so that individual must remain at home, inform a medical practitioner and his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager, and follow instructions from the relevant public health and/or government authorities;*
 - 9.1.2. *must, prior to leaving home, assess whether he/she, or anyone in his/her household, exhibits any new symptoms of illness, such as a sore throat, any 'gastro' symptoms, diarrhoea, vomiting or stomach cramps, and if so that individual must inform a medical practitioner and his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager to determine the most appropriate course of action;*
 - 9.1.3. *must consider, where reasonably practical and consistent with instructions from the relevant public health and/or government authorities, working from home if his/her role within the Club allows;*
 - 9.1.4. *must comply with all instructions of the Club and its COVID-19 Manager in respect of further testing and attendance at particular facilities;*
 - 9.1.5. *must travel to and from work in his/her own vehicle without passengers, unless any passenger(s) are living in the same household;*
 - 9.1.6. should not use public transport, but where that is unavoidable he/she should comply with all instruction from relevant public health and/or government authorities on social distancing and the use of PPE;
 - 9.1.7. *must report to the relevant assessment check point for the purpose of providing written confirmations and evidence in respect of COVID-19, and undertaking temperature checks;*
 - 9.1.8. *must, if he/she exhibits any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (including an elevated temperature), be reviewed by a healthcare professional to determine the most appropriate course of management;*
 - 9.1.9. *must refrain from all personal greetings where close contact is required, such as shaking hands and hugging; and*
 - 9.1.10. *must, where reasonably practical, restrict his/her mobile telephone/tablet use to what is essential and, in any event, frequently clean his/her mobile telephones/tablets.*

10. OPERATING TRAINING, MATCH AND ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES

- 10.1. *Once one or more individuals have returned to work at any particular Club facility, the Club and its COVID-19 Manager and COVID-19 operational leads must (unless and until relevant public health instructions makes clear that this is no longer necessary):*
 - 10.1.1. *ensure that the facility is thoroughly cleaned at least once every 24 hours;*
 - 10.1.2. *ensure that specific areas and equipment that come into frequent direct contact with individuals (for example, doorknobs, door bars, door keypads, chairs, armrests, table tops, light switches, handrails, toilet flush mechanisms, water taps, elevator buttons, medical treatment beds and surfaces, gym equipment, all rugby equipment, scrummaging machines, rugby balls, keyboards, mice, touch screen monitors, tablets and trackpads) are thoroughly cleaned even more frequently, and where reasonably practical after each contact;*
 - 10.1.3. *ensure that all the cleaning referred to above is carried out, where reasonably practical, with single-use disposable disinfecting equipment such as disposable wipes, or alternatively where the cleaning material (for example the cloth or sponge) is either placed in a disinfectant solution that is effective against COVID-19 or is discarded and not reused;*
 - 10.1.4. *ensure that where practical (and where the same does not contradict health and safety requirements, for example in respect of fire doors) all doors are left wedged open to limit the use of door handles, door bars, and door keypads;*
 - 10.1.5. *at the appropriate times permit only essential visitors (as determined by the Club) to enter the facility;*
 - 10.1.6. *operate, where reasonably practical, a phased approach to the use of the available amenities at the facility, and prohibit any use of changing rooms, canteens and communal areas in the initial phases of return to work;*
 - 10.1.7. *when utilising changing rooms, canteens and communal areas in the latter phases of return to work, ensure that all instructions from relevant public health and/or government authorities on social distancing are complied with;*
 - 10.1.8. *where regular laundry services are provided (i.e. for items that have not been used in a clinical setting), ensure that all relevant items are washed in accordance with the relevant manufacturer's instructions, and dried according to routine procedures (for more information on laundry services, see the document(s) [this link](#)); and*
 - 10.1.9. *where laundry services are provided for items that have been used in a clinical setting, ensure that all relevant items are washed according to the instruction from relevant public health and/or government authorities, and dried according to routine procedures (for more information on laundry services, see the document(s) [this link](#));.*

- 10.2. ***Each Club must at all relevant times provide suitable anti-doping facilities, in accordance with any instructions from the WRU and/or UK Anti-Doping Agency, allowing for a staggered approach and social distancing when sample collection is taking place.***
- 10.3. Each Club should, when procuring products/consumables and facilities maintenance (and similar), follow all relevant COVID-19 protocols, and where applicable include such protocols in relevant contracts.
- 10.4. ***Where a Club allows any of its facilities to be used by another Club (for example, where the home Club hosts a 'captain's run' for the away Club the day before a Match), the home or hosting Club must:***
- 10.4.1. ensure that the facility is thoroughly cleaned immediately before and immediately after the other Club's use of the facility; and***
- 10.4.2. where reasonably practical, restrict the other Club to the use of just one site or facility.***
- 10.5. ***All Clubs must facilitate periodic (to be defined as weekly until further notice) WRU auditing by the WRU in relation to all operational processes and procedures specified within this document.***

11. MEETING CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1. Meetings at all facilities should:
- 11.1.1. be limited in frequency and duration;
- 11.1.2. be held in such a way that all instruction from relevant public health and/or government authorities on social distancing is complied with;
- 11.1.3. make use of video conferencing;
- 11.1.4. if actual meetings are necessary, be held outdoors; and
- 11.1.5. if indoor meetings are necessary, be limited in size, in a well-ventilated room with opened windows and doors.

12. GYMNASIUM AND OUTDOOR TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1. In respect of all gymnasium and outdoor training sessions, each Club should;
- 12.1.1. ensure that all relevant individuals arrive at the facility already wearing his/her own training kit;
- 12.1.2. prohibit the sharing of training kit;
- 12.1.3. ensure that all equipment used for gymnasium and training sessions is sanitised appropriately between uses, or if not practicable between sessions;

- 12.1.4. keep the length of gymnasium and field-based training sessions to a minimum, and limit field-based training sessions to once a day;
- 12.1.5. stagger gymnasium and field-based training sessions to allow for the appropriate cleaning to take place between groups;
- 12.1.6. configure gymnasium programmes to limit the movement of Players and Coaches within sessions;
- 12.1.7. ensure the gymnasium is well-ventilated by opening doors and windows;
- 12.1.8. use outdoor training for field-based sessions;
- 12.1.9. use personalised pre-activation, mobility and recovery equipment (defined by the Club);
- 12.1.10. where personalised equipment is not available, sanitise shared equipment before and after each use;
- 12.1.11. prohibit spitting and emptying nostrils during training;
- 12.1.12. insist that each coach either retains his/her own personalised whistles or utilises a hooter, and in any event sanitises this before and after each use;
- 12.1.13. prohibit the use of ice baths, cryotherapy chambers or similar at the Club facility, and instead encourage the use of ice baths at home to facilitate recovery;
- 12.1.14. ensure that once training has concluded all relevant individuals vacate the Club facility in a timely manner without congregating or socialising; and
- 12.1.15. require that all instructions from relevant public health and/or government authorities on social distancing is complied with.

13. NUTRITION

13.1. Each Club should:

- 13.1.1. advise all individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) to consume breakfast prior to leaving home, when breakfast is not supplied at the Club;
- 13.1.2. use personalised fluid containers and protein shakers for Players' hydration, ensuring they are cleaned before and after each use;
- 13.1.3. use personalised nutritional supplementation for Players, and prohibit the use of communal supplementation;
- 13.1.4. ensure all Players continue to follow all WRU or UK Anti-Doping Agency policies regarding anti-doping; and

- 13.1.5. when supplying food to Players and others after training, pre-package this and leave it at a designated point for the Players and others to collect it on exiting the training facility and consume it away from the facility.

14. MEDICAL ROOM CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1. Each Club's medical department should;
 - 14.1.1. be used only for essential medical care, as determined by the Club's Head of Medical Services or equivalent;
 - 14.1.2. provide an appointment-based service;
 - 14.1.3. provide that medical treatment beds are positioned as far apart as is reasonably practical;
 - 14.1.4. ensure that towelling couch covers are not utilised;
 - 14.1.5. replace towels after each treatment and ensure they are laundered appropriately;
 - 14.1.6. avoid the use of pillows unless the covering is changed after each treatment;
 - 14.1.7. clean all equipment and beds before and after each treatment;
 - 14.1.8. utilise the appropriate PPE as instructed by public health and/or government authorities; and
 - 14.1.9. promote ventilation of the medical facilities by opening doors and windows.

15. MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS OR SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES

- 15.1. ***Each Club shall, at each of its facilities, implement a suitable system such that all individuals (whether Players, Club Coaches, Club Support Staff or otherwise) visiting the facility who subsequently exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 must notify the Club's COVID-19 Manager and/or relevant COVID-19 operational leads as soon as possible and appropriate steps are then taken to assist the relevant public health and/or government authorities in contact tracing and COVID-19 testing where available.***
- 15.2. ***Each individual (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) must, if symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature or fever, a new continuous cough, a new unexplained shortness of breath, and a loss of smell or taste) present while at work, immediately inform a medical practitioner and/or the Club's COVID-19 Manager.***
- 15.3. ***Where an individual exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, the Club must direct the individual to a suitable isolation area or to leave the facility, in either case without making contact with other individuals, surfaces or objects.***

- 15.4. *Each Club must ensure that all isolation rooms, when vacated, are thoroughly cleaned in accordance with all instructions from relevant public health and/or government authorities.*

16. TRAVEL TO MATCHES

- 16.1. *Before a Club travels to any particular Match, its COVID-19 Manager or relevant operational lead must:*
- 16.1.1. *Ensure they are in compliance with the Club's relevant travel insurance policies as well as the terms and conditions of relevant travel agreements so that he/she clearly understands them, including, for example, the financial and other implications of Players or other staff falling ill and needing to be repatriated or quarantined;*
 - 16.1.2. *develop a detailed travel plan for each journey;*
 - 16.1.3. *where reasonably practical, minimise the number of individuals travelling to those that are considered essential (as determined by the Club);*
 - 16.1.4. *where reasonably practical, minimise the duration of travel and stay;*
 - 16.1.5. *if flying to and from the Match, where reasonably practical arrange for:*
 - 16.1.5.1. *chartered (rather than scheduled) flights;*
 - 16.1.5.2. *bus transfers direct to the aircraft (avoiding any departures terminal) or fast-track security and a separate holding room for use prior to departure by the travel party; and*
 - 16.1.5.3. *flights to and from the Match on the same day (thus avoiding overnight stays);*
 - 16.1.6. *if travelling by bus, formally arrange for the bus to have been thoroughly cleaned before the first journey, and for it to be thoroughly cleaned after that journey, and before and after each subsequent journey made for the entire duration of travel;*
 - 16.1.7. *if staying overnight in a hotel:*
 - 16.1.7.1. *arrange for hand-sanitisation points (with suitable products/equipment) to be installed at suitable locations in the hotel for the duration of the stay;*
 - 16.1.7.2. *arrange for all rooms to be thoroughly cleaned prior to arrival, during the stay and on departure;*
 - 16.1.7.3. *where reasonably practical, arrange for all travel party members to have individual rooms;*

- 16.1.7.4.** *where reasonably practical, arrange for the entire travel party to have accommodation on the same floor of the hotel;*
 - 16.1.7.5.** *where reasonably practical, arrange for the travel party to meet in private rooms for meals and team meetings; and*
 - 16.1.7.6.** *arrange for food preparation and delivery to observe suitable infection prevention and control measures, for example by staggering meal times, ensuring service staff wear face masks/gloves, practising social distancing and prohibiting the use of communal finger food or buffet-style food services.*
- 16.2.** *Each individual intending to travel to the Match as a representative of the Club (including Players) must give written confirmation to the Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated operational lead that:*
- 16.2.1.** *he/she is, to the best of his/her knowledge, currently free from COVID-19;*
 - 16.2.2.** *he/she has not had any symptoms related to COVID-19 (high temperature or fever, a new continuous cough, a new unexplained shortness of breath, and a loss of smell or taste) in the seven days immediately prior;*
 - 16.2.3.** *he/she has not been in contact with a COVID-19 confirmed or suspected case in the 14 days immediately prior, or (if a Club Medic) he/she has taken all infection prevention measures, including the use of appropriate PPE, when reviewing patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in the 14 days immediately prior; and*
 - 16.2.4.** *where applicable, he/she has undergone relevant COVID-19 testing (whether antigen testing, antibody testing or otherwise) or immunisation (and if so he/she must give his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated operational lead written evidence of any testing or immunisation, whether or not that has been validated and/or recommended by the relevant public health and/or government authorities).*
- All such confirmations and evidence must be retained by the Club.*
- 16.3.** *When travelling to a Match, each Person travelling as a representative of his/her Club must:*
- 16.3.1.** *comply with all appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory protocol;*
 - 16.3.2.** *have with him/her (and use) individual hand sanitisers, single-use sanitising wipes and disposable tissues; and*
 - 16.3.3.** *continually assess whether or not he/she has (or exhibits any of the symptoms of) COVID-19 (and if so that individual should go to an isolation room, immediately notify the Club's medical practitioner and/or COVID-19 Manager, follow the guidance, advice and instructions from relevant public health*

and/or government authorities including how to travel back to the Person's home, particularly if he/she flew to the Match).

17. STADIUM MATCH DAY OPERATIONS

- 17.1. The following instructions operate in addition to those covering the preparation and maintenance of facilities (which should be read to cover Match venues on Match days) set out above.
- 17.2. The practical operations of any stadium hosting Matches will depend to a significant extent on whether spectators are permitted to attend or not. These operating procedures assume that spectators will not be permitted to attend and that the Matches will be played 'behind closed doors'. If Matches take place at which spectators are permitted to attend, the participating Clubs should seek further guidance from the WRU, who in turn will liaise with the Government and insurers. An illustration of the minimum number of attendees required to deliver a televised Match can be found in [appendix 4](#).
- 17.3. ***Before any Match is held at a venue designated by the home Club, the home Club must:***
 - 17.3.1. ***develop a detailed Match day operations manual that addresses all operations when preparing, maintaining, and setting down the venue;***
 - 17.3.2. ***ensure that the venue is thoroughly cleaned immediately prior to Match day;***
 - 17.3.3. ***ensure that there are in place appropriate controls over who enters and leaves the venue and an appropriate system for recording who enters and leaves the venue (the controls and the system ordinarily in place when Matches are not being held might need to be enhanced if the number of likely Match day attendees is significant);***
 - 17.3.4. ***ensure that the Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated COVID-19 operational lead is provided with an itemised accreditation and operations plan, with contact details of all relevant personnel, no later than 48 hours ahead of the Match;***
 - 17.3.5. ***configure the venue so as to limit and control the movement of people within the venue;***
 - 17.3.6. ***ensure that at the venue there is an appropriate stock of appropriate PPE (for use by all medics, including Club Medics from the away Club), and a suitable method of safely disposing of that PPE;***
 - 17.3.7. ***carefully consider which attendees at the Match are characterised as essential and accredit only those attendees;***
 - 17.3.8. ***communicate to all those likely to attend the Match (including relevant Club Managers, Club Coaches, Club Medics, Players, other Club representatives and Staff members, Match officials, medical staff, Commercial Partner***

representatives and Broadcast Partner representatives) relevant details of the procedures that will be in operation on Match day, including:

- 17.3.8.1.** *details of the locations of the hand-sanitisation and/or handwashing/drying points at the venue;*
- 17.3.8.2.** *details of the controls over who may enter and leave the venue;*
- 17.3.8.3.** *details of the dedicated isolation areas for use by any individuals who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19;*
- 17.3.8.4.** *that all attendees should, as a precondition to being granted permission to enter the venue, give written confirmation (no later than 48 hours prior to kick off) to the home Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated COVID-19 operational lead that:*
 - i. he/she is, to the best of his/her knowledge, currently free from COVID-19;*
 - ii. he/she has not had any symptoms related to COVID-19 (high temperature or fever, a new continuous cough, a new unexplained shortness of breath, and a loss of smell or taste) in the seven days immediately prior;*
 - iii. he/she has not been in contact with a COVID-19 confirmed or suspected case in the 14 days immediately prior, or (if a Club Medic) he/she has taken all infection prevention measures, including the use of appropriate PPE, when reviewing patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in the 14 days immediately prior; and*
 - iv. where applicable, he/she has undergone relevant COVID-19 testing (whether antigen testing, antibody testing or otherwise) or immunisation (and if so he/she must give his/her Club's COVID-19 Manager or nominated operational lead written evidence of any testing or immunisation, whether or not that has been validated and/or recommended by the relevant public health and/or government authorities);*

All such confirmations and evidence must be retained by the Club
- 17.3.8.5.** *that attendees must comply with all appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory protocols; and*
- 17.3.8.6.** *that attendees must have with them (and use) individual hand sanitisers, single-use wipes and disposable tissues;*
- 17.3.9.** *implement a suitable system so that any attendee (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) who subsequently exhibits symptoms*

of COVID-19 must notify the home Club's COVID-19 Manager and/or relevant COVID-19 operational leads, and take all appropriate steps to assist the relevant public health and/or government authorities in contact tracing and COVID-19 testing where available.

17.4. On the day of each Match being held at a venue designated by the home Club, the home Club must:

- 17.4.1. ensure that the two teams arrive at the Match venue at separate times;**
- 17.4.2. ensure that each attendee (whether Player, Club Coach, Club Support Staff or otherwise) reports to the assessment check point where a medical practitioner will review written confirmations and evidence from, and undertake [temperature checks](#) for, him/her prior to him/her entering the facility (standard infection prevention and control measures must be undertaken when obtaining temperatures);**
- 17.4.3. ensure that if an attendee exhibits any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (including an elevated temperature), he/she is taken to one of the dedicated isolation areas and reviewed by a healthcare professional to determine the most appropriate course of management (but that will ordinarily require him/her to remain until other attendees have left the venue);**
- 17.4.4. advise Players and Match officials to avoid hand shaking and to refrain from spitting or emptying nostrils during the Match;**
- 17.4.5. where practical practice all instructions from relevant public health and/or government authorities on social distancing on the replacement and management bench, by spacing individuals as much as possible (this must also be practiced by the away Club too);**
- 17.4.6. where practical require Players to change head gear and jerseys at half time (this must be also be practiced by the away Club too);**
- 17.4.7. at half time advise all Players to wash their hands with anti-bacterial soap and water or use alcohol-based hand-sanitiser;**
- 17.4.8. clean all match balls with the appropriate sanitising solution before, at half time and after the Match;**
- 17.4.9. continue to utilise personalised fluid containers for all individuals (this must also be complied with by the away Club too);**
- 17.4.10. not undertake post-match functions, and instead supply teams with pre-packaged food;**
- 17.4.11. give clear instructions on how to leave the facility without making contact with other individuals, surfaces or objects;**

- 17.4.12. *thoroughly clean any isolation areas in accordance with relevant public health and/or government instructions when vacated; and***
- 17.4.13. *provide suitable anti-doping facilities, in accordance with any instructions from the WRU or UK Anti-Doping Agency, allowing for (for example) a staggered approach and social distancing when sample collection is taking place.***
- 17.5. *Immediately after each Match being held at a venue designated by the home Club, the home Club must ensure that the venue is thoroughly cleaned.***

18. MEDIA OBLIGATIONS

- 18.1. When media activities are considered, all Clubs should:
 - 18.1.1. consider using in-house performance analysis and internal communications teams to produce weekly media content;
 - 18.1.2. use video conferencing and microphone stands or similar (to eliminate the need to hold microphones) to fulfil weekly media commitments;
 - 18.1.3. ensure that all pre-match, half time and post-match interviews are undertaken with microphone stands or similar (to eliminate the need to hold microphones);
 - 18.1.4. consider permitting only Broadcast Partner representatives access to the Match venue, with other media representatives viewing the Match via the live broadcast;
 - 18.1.5. undertake all post-match media sessions using video conferencing and microphone stands or similar (to eliminate the need to hold microphones); and
 - 18.1.6. ensure that all equipment is sanitised appropriately before and after coming into contact with any individuals.

19. RETURNING TO WORK AFTER BEING INFECTED WITH COVID-19

- 19.1. All relevant individuals who have been confirmed as having (or who are suspected to have had) COVID-19 and who have recovered should remain in isolation until two negative antigen tests at least 24 hours apart have been undertaken. For more information, see document(s) at [this link](#).
- 19.2. ***Where testing is not practical or available, all relevant individuals must follow the relevant guidance, advice and instruction from relevant public health and/or government authorities regarding their return to work. For more information, see document on [this link](#).***
- 19.3. ***All relevant individuals who have been confirmed as having (or who are suspected to have had) COVID-19 and who have recovered must seek the advice of a medical practitioner prior to returning to strenuous exercise. Particular attention should be given to the respiratory and cardiac systems during assessments.***

- 19.4. Due to limited but growing evidence that individuals may suffer from cardiac pathologies during or following COVID-19, it is recommended that medical practitioners should consider a cardiology assessment for symptomatic players with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 prior to returning to training. For more information on cardiac pathologies, see documents on [this link](#).
- 19.5. ***Where applicable, re-conditioning training periods related to an individual's role must be considered prior to returning to competition.***

APPENDIX 1

Re-conditioning training period

It is expected that following a sustained period without group rugby training (contact and non-contact), there would be significant injury risk if a re-conditioning period is not observed prior to competition.

It is recommended that each Club establishes a sufficient period of time and utilises the relevant performance metrics to re-condition players to minimise injury risk. It is expected that players would have been given personalised programmes to complete prior to engaging in group rugby training and the content of the re-conditioning training period is defined by multi-stakeholder consultation.

APPENDIX 2

Example of a phased approach to returning to work. Timeframes and public gathering restrictions will be determined by public health and/or government authorities.

STAGE	WEEK	DATE W/C	GROUP SIZE	RUGBY STAFF SIZE	ADMIN STAFF SIZE	FACILITIES
1	1	29 TH JUN	10	75% CAPACITY	TBC	Gym Pitch Medical Toilets
	2	6 TH JULY				
	3	13 TH JULY				
2	4	20 TH JULY	20 (Units)	100% CAPACITY	TBC	as above + Changing rooms Showers
	5	27 TH JULY				
3	6	3 RD AUG	50 (Team)	100% CAPACITY	TBC	as above + Meeting space Canteen
	7	10 TH AUG				
	8	17 TH AUG				

* Long term injured players should be scheduled at different times to the group sizes to fulfil social distancing and public gathering requirements

APPENDIX 3

Example protocol for temperature checks

To mitigate variability, it is recommended that the method of obtaining body temperatures should be consistent between and for all individuals. It is imperative that temperatures are recorded and stored observing data protection regulations. It is advised to repeat the temperature recording three times. Device manufacturing instructions should be followed to obtain an accurate temperature.

The use of temporal artery or tympanic temperatures are recommended. Oral, rectal and axillary temperatures are not recommended. Ideally infrared thermometers should be utilised to obtain temporal artery temperatures to eliminate the need to touch individuals.

If using tympanic temperature measurement, single use probe covers should be utilised for each individual. Devices that come into contact with individuals should be cleaned with single-use sanitising wipes.

The appropriate PPE should be donned as recommended by public health and/or government authorities.

Recorded temperatures of ≥ 37.8 require a review by a healthcare professional to establish the most appropriate course of action.

APPENDIX 4

An illustration of the number of attendees required to deliver a televised PRO14 match without spectators

Personnel	Number
Home team players	15
Visiting team players	15
Home team substitutes and bench support	11
Visiting team substitutes and bench support	11
Home team travelling reserves	3
Visiting team travelling reserves	3
Home team roving Doctor	1
Visiting team roving Doctor	1
Home team roving Physiotherapist	1
Visiting team roving Physiotherapist	1
Home team Technical box (water carriers)	2
Visiting team Technical box (water carriers)	2
Home team Coaches box	5
Visiting team Coaches box	5
Match Day Doctor	1
Immediate Care Lead	1
Medical room video viewer	1
Paramedics	6
Other medical specialists	2
Medical room video operator	1
Security guards	4
Referee	1
Assistant Referee	2
Side-line Referees, time keeper, statistics and communications	7
Television Match Official	1
Citing Commissioner	1
Ball team and ball team supervisor	7
Match Manager	1
Match Director	1
Administration	10
Broadcaster pitch-side crew (cameramen, line runners & floor Manager)	20
Commentators	6
Outside broadcasting van	15
Stadium operations	8
Big screen and PA announcer	2
TOTAL	174

APPENDIX 5

Hyperlinks throughout the document

1. World Health Organisation (WHO) mass gathering risk assessment
https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331764/WHO-2019-nCoV-Mass_Gatherings_Sports-2020.1-eng.pdf
2. Measurement tool
3. Cleaning non-clinical settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
4. Contact tracing
<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Public-health-management-persons-contact-novel-coronavirus-cases-2020-03-31.pdf>
5. Appropriate signage
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
6. Laundry services
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
7. Two negative antigen tests
<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/covid-19-guidance-discharge-and-ending-isolation-first%20update.pdf>
8. Return to work
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection#ending-isolation>
9. Cardiac pathologies
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2047487320930596>