



RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR RUGBY EUROPE GAMES & TOURNAMENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

● INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are not intended to replace any public health guidance and/or restrictions issued by governmental authorities, but should be referred to in combination with such guidance from public health authorities. In case of conflicting recommendations, governmental authorities laws, regulations and guidelines supersedes these Rugby Europe measures.

These measures must also be read in combination with the already existing RE rules and regulations, especially Manuals and Handbook referring to each Competition.

These measures applies to all Official RE Matches or Tournaments. Test matches or cross borders activities are not regulated by this document; however participating Unions will need to document the agreed protocols and register it by email addressed to the RE Player Welfare Working Group.

● PARTICIPATING AND HOSTING UNIONS

1. Covid managers

- a. Hosting unions will designate a Covid-19 manager. This role will be in charge of contacting and liaising with the unions participating in the tournament/game. In the case of being a single game the Covid-19 game manager can also be the Covid-19 manager for the team.
- b. Visiting unions will designate a Covid-19 manager who will be in charge of liaising with the Hosting union Covid-19 manager
- c. The Covid-19 manager should have adequate knowledge of the local and regional protocols regarding all aspects of Covid-19. If he/she hasn't got a health care background, he/she will have to designate a healthcare professional with the necessary clinical knowledge of Covid-19.
- d. RE Player Welfare Steering Group to liaise with the Covid Managers and report to RE. The email address of contact is: covid@rugbyeurope.eu

2. Hosting Covid-19 manager duties

- a. The hosting Covid-19 manager will contact the visiting unions and will facilitate and confirm :
 - i. Rugby Europe Covid-19 protocols
 - ii. National Covid-19 regulations and protocols
 - iii. Tournament Covid-19 processes
- b. The host nation Covid-19 manager will be the point of contact for any queries regarding Covid-19 protocols during the length of the tournament and his/her decision will be final. The hosting nation Covid-19 manager will have access to the Rugby Europe Player welfare group to discuss any issues.
- c. Be aware of available testing facilities in case of an emergency
- d. Be aware of appropriate referral systems to the different health systems, public or private.
- e. Have identified/arranged possible isolation rooms or facilities in case of an outbreak. This arrangement should be discussed with the visiting Covid-19 manager.



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3. Visiting Covid-19 managers

- a. They will acknowledge receipt of the information sent by the Host nation Covid-19 manager
- b. Will disseminate the information and protocols amongst the members of the delegation
- c. Will be responsible for the delivery of the standards and protocols
- d. The Covid-19 manager can be the Team Doctor accompanying the delegation.

● TEAMS INVOLVED IN A GAME OR TOURNAMENT

1. Composition and size of the Team delegation: for REIC Matches, the standard delegation size is 27 persons (23 players and 4 staff) according to Article 4.1 of the REIC Manual. All delegations should travel with this number of participants to reduce risks of contamination. However, a larger technical staff is allowed when required by the Unions.
2. 2 weeks before the game/tournament the delegations, through their Covid Manager, should submit a document detailing their pre- game/tournament isolation plan for the two weeks prior to the game/tournament.
This document should include a provisional list with all members of the delegation. The components of the delegation could change but they will need to provide a detail of their whereabouts the two weeks before the game/tournament. Please note that this plan is not a strict isolation plan but a plan that details all measures taken to minimize and reduce as much as possible unnecessary contact of team delegation members with external persons.
3. Testing Protocol : The Visiting team delegation members should be tested **3 days before travelling** and the results should be emailed by the team Covid-19 manager to the Player Welfare Steering Group prior to the team's delegation departure at covid@rugbyeurope.eu who will then liaise with the host union Covid 19 Manager.
No teams' delegation member should leave their country without a negative PCR in the last 72 hours.
The Hosting team delegation members should be tested **3 days before the game**, and the results should be emailed by the team Covid 19 Manager to the Player Welfare Steering Group at covid@rugbyeurope.eu no later than 24 hours prior to KO, who will then liaise with the Visiting Team Covid 19 manager.
Rugby Europe will partly cover the cost of the tests within the limit of 27 persons part of the delegation. The cost of testing for any other delegation member will be borne by the Union (Appendix 1)
4. Medical insurance. All teams' delegation members must be insured as per the Rugby Europe Manual.
5. On arrival to the Hotel, the Covid-19 managers from the host union and the delegation should meet to facilitate any issues and confirm the processes. This meeting could be done through a video conference or physically, also respecting social distancing measures and wearing face masks. The Match Commissioner will attend this meeting and Covid-19 protocol reporting will be part of his/her duties. Covid Managers and Commissioner to review the steps already taken and prepare the Match day measures.
6. Rugby Europe recommends team delegations to test a larger pool of players ahead of the game, especially front rows players, in order to be able to still compete in the event one or several of them would be tested positive.



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● TEAMS DELEGATION TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

1. All delegations should travel with the minimal number of participants as mentioned above.
2. Understand and work with local processes both at home and at the host nation. Travel with adequate levels of PPE (Personal Protected Equipment), sanitation equipment (hand sanitiser and wipes) and follow social distancing.
3. Make sure that the travel arrangements at home comply with the travel standards of Rugby Europe regarding buses etc.
4. Provide a proforma for each member signed and dated specifying that in the previous 7 days they have had no symptoms and not knowingly been in contact with a possible or confirmed case of Covid-19.
5. Hard copy of the results of the PCR testing for all members of the delegation.
6. Notify on arrival and immediately follow the measures indicated by local legislation if one of the members of the delegation should present any symptoms compatible with Covid-19.
7. Evidence of adequate medical insurance.

● TRAVEL FROM AND TO THE AIRPORT, TO TRAINING SESSIONS AND TO THE GAME

1. Each team will have an allocated bus (it might vary on different days) that will be cleaned appropriately before and after use. The driver will follow local or RE recommendations to FFP equipment, hand sanitation and social distancing. The team/delegation will be responsible for the moving of all their luggage and equipment.
2. The team/delegation should travel together in one vehicle.
3. If necessary, the host union will provide an adequate vehicle for the team/delegation members carrying equipment early on the day of the game. The standards will be the same as the bus.

● ACCOMODATION

1. The hotels should comply with local Covid-19 regulations, the Host Union Covid Manager must liaise with the Hotel and with the visiting team Covid Manager to inform about the measures taken and the guidelines to follow.
2. The visiting team/delegation will have to comply with local regulations regarding quarantine and isolation.
3. The hotel should try to provide rooms in the same floor and away from members of the general public.
4. Meals will be delivered in a separate room to the general public.
5. The visiting team/delegations should maintain social interactions with members of the public or other Hotel guests to a minimum.



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FOOD

1. Food will always be at the hotel. No Post Match Function. No Manager's dinner the day before.
2. The hotel will provide a separate room for meals, this room could be used at other times for meetings.
3. Teams delegations should not join members of the public for post-game drinks at the hotel. Celebrations should be held within the meal rooms.

TRAINING SESSIONS, GROUNDS & CAPTAIN'S RUNS

1. Team members should travel together using the bus facilitated by the host union. The team/delegation should follow local/RE guidance regarding PPE, hand sanitization and social distancing when outside the bus.
2. Information regarding the training ground should have been emailed to the visiting team delegation at least 2 weeks in advance. This information should include all the Covid-19 management processes.
3. The training venues will be closed to members of the public.
4. All equipment available at the training ground will have been deep cleaned.
5. The training ground will have a number of PPE equipment, hand sanitisers etc.
6. It is recommended that Members of the delegation attend the training sessions already prepared and take the shower at their hotel rooms.
7. Any equipment brought by the team delegation will be moved by the team delegation.
8. The facilities should have a one-way access system.
9. Team delegation members should wash their hands-on arrival and use hand sanitiser regularly during the training session.
10. Once the session is finished the equipment and facilities will be cleaned again.
11. Ideally the gym facilities should be used in a staggered manner to avoid breaching social distancing.

MATCH DAY

1. Team will travel in one bus each according to previous information.
2. Advanced parties can travel to the stadium following previous information.
3. The stadium will have full deep cleaning of the areas involved with players and officials.
4. All equipment will have been cleaned appropriately.
5. The stadium will have when possible a one-way flow system.
6. Players will be allowed to shower at the stadium.
7. Hand sanitisers will be available in all rooms.
8. Food can be delivered to changing rooms after the game.
9. Players will not be allowed to mix with members of the public.
10. Return to the hotel will be in the same bus.
11. Match day medical cover to be discussed in the pitch side section.



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● MATCH OFFICIALS

1. Rugby Europe staff

- a. They will need to be tested three days before travelling and send the results to the host union Covid-19 officer.
- b. They should travel using the recognised universal precaution measures and wear face masks.
- c. They should fill a self-certifying pro forma (needs to be designed but can be the same as the players and members of staff) confirming they haven't had any Covid-19 like symptoms, and that they have been in isolation for two weeks.
- d. Travel arrangements will be as per the teams' delegations.
- e. Accommodation arrangements will be as per Teams delegations.
- f. Cost of the tests will be borne by Rugby Europe.

2. International Match officials

- a. There should be a buddy system with a replacement identified in case one of them tested positive.
- b. They (including the possible replacement) will need to be tested 3 days before travelling and send the results to RE prior to departure at covid@rugbyeurope.eu who will then liaise with the Host Union Covid Manager.
- c. They should travel using the recognised universal precaution measures.
- d. They should fill a self-certifying pro forma confirming they haven't had any Covid-19 like symptoms, and that they have been in isolation for two weeks.
- e. Travel arrangements will be as per the teams' delegations.
- f. Accommodation arrangements will be as per Teams delegations.
- g. Match officials will not be allowed to mix with members of the public.
- h. Cost of the Tests will be borne by Rugby Europe.

3. Host country officials

- a. These include Team liaison officer, Match day Doctor, Assistant Commissioner, and Assistant Referees, Ball boys.
- b. They should wear mandatory face masks and respect strict social distancing. In addition, for the Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Referees and ball boys, they must be tested 3 days before as for the RE Officials. Results must be sent out by the Host Union Covid Manager to covid@rugbyeurope.eu
- c. The local Assistant Commissioner, and the Assistant Referees, must be of the highest level possible in the country, as they could replace the RE Officials would they be tested positive.
- d. They should travel on their own vehicle and not mixing households.
- e. The cost of the masks and tests will be borne by the Host Union.



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4. Host Country volunteers

- a. No need for testing
- b. They will not be in contact with the players and therefore they could have a sign declaration of symptoms. They should have a coordinator who will work with the Covid-19 manager in case of symptoms.

5. Members of the public

- a. No need for testing
- b. The public attendance will be regulated by the local guidelines, nevertheless no contact between the members of the public and the players should be allowed.
- c. Clear guidelines as to the flow and location of the different members of the public should be in place.
- d. One-way systems should be preferable.

6. Journalists

- a. No need for testing
- b. Mixed zone interviews. Clear distancing, 2 meters and the use of protective masks when interviewing. Outdoor mixed zones are recommended.
- c. Players to wear masks.

● COVID-19 EMERGENCY/CRISIS MANAGEMENT GROUP

- a. This group will be in charge of managing any situation regarding an outbreak of Covid-19 patients or complicated cases of Covid-19.
- b. In case of a crisis the game/tournament Covid-19 manager will be the first point of contact together with the Match commissioner or the Tournament Director. The manager and the Match Commissioner or the Tournament Director will then decide if the emergency/crisis group needs to be involved.
- c. The Covid-19 emergency/crisis will include :
 - The Covid-19 game/tournament manager
 - The Rugby Europe Match Commissioner
 - Government representative, maybe medical
 - Rugby Europe Chief Executive officer
 - The Rugby Europe Competitions manager
 - Rugby Europe Player welfare steering group representative
- d. The Covid-19 manager for the host union should be aware of the plans for isolation rooms.
- e. This group if not on its totality should have a debriefing meeting every evening or as needed to discuss any issues happened during the day and prepare for the next day.



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● PITCHSIDE PLAYER WELFARE

- a. Players should be reminded that they should restrain from spitting on the pitch.
- b. If they need to cough to cover the mouth with the inner part of the elbow.
- c. Medical and physiotherapist practitioners should be wearing a water repellent top (this should be cleaned with appropriate wipes after any contact and changed if contaminated) gloves, FFP2 masks and have a risk assessment for eye protection. They should attend to their players first but our recommendation is that if there are any risks of contagion they should call in the ambulance personnel
- d. Ambulance personnel should be familiar with the management of high risk patients both in the emergency set up as well as Covid-19. They should be wearing level 3 protection including FFP3 masks, gloves, water repellent aprons and eye protection.
- e. Pre-game medical meeting must take place with the presence of the Match Commissioner, as mentioned in the REIC Manual. However, the protocol will be strengthened with the use of a Pro forma that will include the following check points:
 - Initial player management
 - Role of the ambulance personnel
 - Lay out of the medical rooms
 - Referring hospitals
 - Absolute need for a SAMPLE (Signs and symptoms, Allergies, Medication, Past medical history, Last meal, Events), history for each player including the latest Covid-19 testing result.
- f. Medical rooms should ideally have two different areas
 - Aerosol generating areas/ high risk of contagion
 - i. This area should be clean
 - ii. All practitioners should be using level 3 protection, FFP3 masks, water repellent gown, gloves and eye protection
 - iii. This area will be dealing with pathologies including airway management, bleeding into the nose or mouth with possibility of coughing.
 - iv. This area should be deep clean after every incident not just after the game
 - v. If such area is not available in some venues, the ambulance must be used as the aerosol generating area
 - Non aerosol generating area/medium risk of contagion
 - i. This area should be clean
 - ii. All practitioners should be using a FFP2 mask, plastic apron, gloves and have a risk assessment for eye protection
 - iii. This area should be cleaned after every incident but not as dep as the aerosol generating area.
 - Appropriate ways of putting on and taking off the PPE should be standardised not to spread the infection.
- g. Suturing should be performed in the non-aerosol generating area. Players should be wearing a surgical mask whilst being stitched.
- h. Cardiac arrest management will follow local guidelines. Our recommendation is not include the use of pocket masks and not support ventilation until appropriate airway support in the form of an LMA or ET tube had been placed. Ambulance personnel should take control of this situation as soon as possible. Cover the face of the casualty. Do not practice artificial breathing until somebody come with right airway support.



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● GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE TESTS WITHIN A DELEGATION

Rugby Europe will apply the following protocol when positive cases are reported by the testing before a game:

- If one to three members of the delegation are reported positive, they will be considered as isolated cases. Individuals will be separated from the group and placed in Quarantine following their local rules. The delegation will travel and will be closely monitored. The Match can take place following the agreement given by Covid-19 Management Group.
- From four positive delegation members, this will be considered as a cluster and immediately reported to the Covid-19 Management Group. After thorough assessment from the Management Group, the Match should be postponed to a later date. However, in exceptional cases (false positive, asymptomatic cases...) the Covid-19 Management Group may decide otherwise.

● GAME PROTOCOL

The Protocol as per the REIC Manuel must be enforced, but with the following alterations:

- a. No handshake. It can be replaced by an elbow check
- b. No escort kids that usually march with the players onto the playing field
- c. Only Players, Match Officials, Flags bearers and key organising committee personnel are allowed during the player's entrance and protocol.

● UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

a. Masks

It is recommended to wear a surgical or basic mask at all times. There will be times when this is not possible, playing, refereeing, but except in those situations personnel could be challenged to use them. The basic single use masks should be available at hotels, training venues and the game. Members of staff in the technical area, assistants, water carriers, ball boys should wear the mask at all times.

Extend to FFP2 and FFP3 Masks.

RE will provide masks to its Officials and Staff.

b. Hand washing

Washing your hands with sanitiser or soap is a very effective to keep cleaning any possible contact. Each person involved in the game should have enough provision to last him/her a day. Designated areas to wash your hands should be available at the training and game venues.

c. Hand rubber gloves

The use of gloves is only recommended in situations of skin contact. Therefore we do not recommend the use of gloves unless you are expected to make skin contact with another member of the wider team.

d. Social distancing

Social distancing should be maintained at all times.



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APPENDIX 1 : RUGBY EUROPE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR TEAMS

Within the framework of the Return to Play Protocol, partial funding of the costs for testing has been approved. Rugby Europe will pay to the participating Unions against presentation of adequate invoices and in the limit of 27 persons per delegation the following amounts:

DIVISION	RE COVER per person
Men & Women XV Championship game	20 euros
Men & Women XV Trophy game	30 euros
Men XV Conference 1 & below game	40 euros
XV U18/U20 game	40 euros

For clarity sake, this financial support only applies to Rugby Europe official competitions for the 2020-21 XV season for the moment.



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APPENDIX 2 : CONTINGENCY PLAN – MATRIX OF POSSIBLE SCENARI

Type of Scenario		Immediate Action to be taken	Consequence for the Game
1. Travel Issues			
1.1	No reasonable routing is found by the visiting Union, either by air, rail or road, to arrive to the Host city of the Match.	Inform RE and Host Union.	If no alternate solution is found, Game is postponed
1.2	Late Cancellation (less 7 days before game day) from Airline preventing the team to travel within a reasonable timeframe and cost for the visiting union	Inform RE and Host Union*	Game is postponed**
1.3	Change of requirements to enter the country of the Host Union preventing the visiting union to attend the Game	Inform RE and Host Union*	Game is postponed**
1.4	Change of requirements to leave the country for the visiting team, preventing the visiting union to attend the Game	Inform RE and Host Union*	Game is postponed**
2. Team delegation Issues			
2.1	A team is not able, for any reason including a number of positive cases to Covid 19, to play a team respecting the minimum requirements of the WR Law of the Game 3 and REIC Manual 4.2 on the number of players and number of front row players in the delegation.	Inform RE and opponent Union	Game is forfeited and REIC Manual sporting regulation will be applied. No financial sanction will be enforced. *
2.2	The RE Covid 19 Management group decides to allow a match to take place despite one or several positive Covid cases and the opponent team refuses to play	Inform RE and opponent Union	Game is forfeited and REIC Manual regulation will be applied. No financial sanction will be applied

* Union must provide written evidence of the change or reasons



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Type of Scenario	Immediate Action to be taken	Consequence for the Game
3. Match Organisation Issues		
3.1 National or local authorities decide to diminish the spectator's gauge allowed or to play behind closed doors	Inform RE and visiting Union	Game is maintained
3.2 The Host Union records a high number of positive cases within its management team in the 15 days leading to the Game	Inform RE and visiting Union	RE Covid 19 Management Group will consult stakeholders and decide
3.3 National or local authorities decide to ban all sports activities in the Host country	Inform RE and visiting Union	RE with all parties will attempt to relocate the game on a neutral ground. If impossible, Game will be postponed**
3.4 National or local authorities decide to ban all sports activities in the region/area that was supposed to host the Game	Inform RE and visiting Union	RE with all parties will attempt to relocate the game in the country or on a neutral ground. If impossible, Game will be postponed**
3.5 One or Several RE Match Officials (including Commissioner) are tested positive and unable to attend the Game	RE to inform both Unions	Game is maintained, missing positions will be replaced by Host country internal resources following the back-up plan prepared by RE

*** Regarding postponed matches, they will be rescheduled at the next available date within the International window for Championship level matches (M & W), at the next available date for others divisions*