

# Rugby Alberta COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

## Introduction

Rugby Canada and all provincial member unions are committed to providing and maintaining a safe, competitive environment for all. Accordingly, Rugby Canada and the provincial unions have agreed to implement a Mandatory Vaccination Policy for all rugby participants across Canada. The Rugby Alberta COVID Vaccination Policy requires that all persons subject to this Policy be vaccinated for COVID-19 or obtain a medical exemption under the terms set out below.

This Policy complies with the general measures and recommendations to help combat the spread of COVID-19 as established by Public Health Canada and Alberta Health Services. However, additional safety policies may be applied based on local requirements.

Rugby Canada and the provincial unions have legal obligations to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of both the rugby community and the public. This Policy is mandatory for all participants, including players, social members, match officials, team staff, coaches, and volunteers involved in Rugby Alberta Sanctioned Activities.

Failure to comply with this Policy could lead to denial of entry, removal from the event or further discipline, up to and including a lifetime ban from rugby in Canada.

## 1. General Comments

- 1.1 Participant includes players, social members, team staff, match officials, coaches, and volunteers involved in Rugby Alberta Sanctioned Activities.
- 1.2 All Participants taking part in the Sanctioned Activity must follow all guidelines indicated in this Policy. Failure to comply will lead to denial of entry or removal from the Sanctioned Activity.
- 1.3 Rugby Alberta reserves the right to pursue additional discipline if appropriate in the circumstances.
- 1.4 Provincial and regional COVID health orders and venue operator health and safety protocols must be followed at all Rugby Alberta Sanctioned Activities. This includes but is not limited to required COVID testing, limitation in the number of Participants in the venue, daily health attestations, mask mandates, social distancing mandates and other such measures required by health authorities.
- 1.5 Sanctioned Activity means any game, on-field practice, outdoor or indoor training, training and education courses or any other activity involving Participants that Rugby Alberta approves.

- 1.6 Rugby Alberta reserves the right to apply additional health and safety policies than those mandated by the government and/or the sports venues at its sole discretion.

## **2. Implementation**

- 2.1 All Participants must be fully vaccinated before registering for the 2022 season, subject to any approved medical exemptions.
- 2.2 Fully vaccinated means the required doses of a Health Canada approved vaccine.
- 2.3 A Participant will be considered fully vaccinated if they are able to present a valid government QR code.
- 2.4 It is the responsibility of a Participant to ensure that they receive the required doses of a COVID vaccine.

## **3. Policy for Participants at Sanctioned Activities**

- 3.1 All Participants wishing to participate in Sanctioned Activities must provide proof of full vaccination.
- 3.2 Participants under 12 years of age do not have to provide proof of full vaccination. However, they must still comply with all other applicable Health Orders and Rugby Alberta's Return to Rugby Policy.
- 3.3 If Rugby Alberta is uncertain whether a Participant is under 12 years of age, Rugby Alberta may request that the Participant provide acceptable proof of their age.
- 3.4 All Participants who are 12 years of age or who turn 12 after this Policy comes into effect must be Fully Vaccinated with an accepted COVID-19 vaccine within eight (8) weeks of this Policy coming into effect or turning 12 years old.
- 3.5 If the age eligibility for COVID vaccination changes while this Policy is in effect, any Participants newly eligible to receive a vaccination will have eight (8) weeks to become fully vaccinated.
- 3.6 Participants who cannot provide proof of vaccination will not be permitted to participate in any Rugby Alberta Sanctioned Activities under any circumstances unless they have received written approval from Rugby Canada and Rugby Alberta.
- 3.7 Proof of vaccination MUST be verified once at the time of registration unless a Participant has received an approved Exemption under Section 4.
- 3.8 Proof must be in the form of valid provincial proof of vaccination documentation.

- 3.9 If a Participant consents, Rugby Alberta and/or a member sub-union will verify the Participant's vaccination status.
- a. Rugby Alberta will not collect or store any immunization records other than to initially verify this information.
  - b. The only information stored by Rugby Alberta and the member union will be the participant's name, eligibility status, and verification date.
  - c. This list will be kept in a confidential file, securely stored with limited access.
- 3.10 For Rugby Alberta and/or a member club to retain this information, Participants must complete a Consent to Record Vaccination Status during the registration process.
- 3.11 There are two means of verifying proof of vaccination.
- a. A Participant may upload their proof of vaccination and government-issued photo identification to their Sportlomo account.
  - b. Designated **Rugby Alberta** staff members will verify the identification and the proof of vaccination.
  - c. Once verified, the Participant's identification and proof of vaccination will be deleted.
  - d. The Participant will receive a notification when this information has been verified and deleted.
- 3.12 Suppose a Participant does not want to upload their identification and proof of vaccination. In that case, the Participants vaccination status must be verified by a Rugby Alberta or sub-union Staff Member.
- a. The Participants must still complete a *Consent to Record Vaccination Status* during the verification processes.
  - d. Rugby Alberta will only collect, use, and disclose information regarding a Participant's vaccination status in accordance with all applicable privacy laws.
- 3.13 Failure to submit proof of vaccination before a Rugby Alberta Sanctioned Rugby Activity or at the time of registration will result in the immediate withdrawal of the Participant and/or team from the Sanctioned Activity.
- 3.14 No refund will be provided.

- 3.15 Rugby Alberta is committed to creating a safe, positive, and inclusive environment where all Participants can participate in sport and are treated with respect and fairness. Rugby Alberta has a zero-tolerance policy for any intimidating and/or inflammatory behaviour and comments from Participants (and their parents/guardians) towards any member of Rugby Alberta or member clubs requesting information or enforcing the terms of this Policy. Any abusive behaviour and harassment will be reported, and the Participant may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 4. Exemptions

- 4.1 Suppose an individual cannot receive a vaccination due to a medical condition. In that case, the Participant may seek approval to attend and/or participate in Sanctioned Activities without proof of vaccination.
- 4.2 Generally, there is no requirement under provincial human rights legislation to accommodate a refusal to be vaccinated arising from a political belief and/or principle. Political belief, such as the objection to receiving the vaccination on a principled basis, is not protected under this legislation.
- 4.3 This process is a shared responsibility. The Participant must co-operatively engage in the process, share information, answer reasonable questions, provide information about relevant restrictions or limitations, and consider potential solutions.
- 4.4 Requests must be submitted in writing to [info@rugbyalberta.ca](mailto:info@rugbyalberta.ca), allowing a minimum of two weeks to consider the request. This request must include documentation supporting the Participant's medical position that they are exempted from receiving a COVID vaccination.
- a. A Participant requesting an exemption from this policy based on a medical condition must provide Rugby Alberta with a letter from a Medical Internist (Specialist), clearly stating why the Participant should be exempted from receiving the vaccine. This letter will be considered information and does not constitute, in and of itself, an exemption.
  - b. A letter from a Family Physician (GP or MD) will not be considered.
- 4.5 Rugby Alberta will confirm receipt of the Exemption Request by email. An original copy of the requested email will be securely stored.
- 4.6 If additional information is required from the Participant, Rugby Alberta will follow up.
- 4.7 By applying for an exemption, a Participant consents to their application and supporting documentation being shared and reviewed by Rugby Alberta and other subject matter experts as required.

4.8 Rugby Alberta does not allow for alternatives to being fully vaccinated, other than noted in section 4. However, Rugby Alberta reserves the right to grant alternative conditions, such as weekly proof of a negative COVID test, masking, and social distancing in the future.

4.9 The decision of Rugby Alberta is final.

## **5. Spectators**

5.1 Rugby Alberta is not extending the requirements of this Policy to spectators at present. However, spectators must follow the guidelines and requirements established by public health authorities regarding vaccination requirements to attend events.

5.2 Spectators must follow the health and safety policies of any venue hosting a Sanctioned Activity.

5.3 Further, Rugby Alberta reserves the right to implement a vaccine mandate as a condition of continued spectator involvement, if necessary, in the future.

## **6. Return to Play Policies**

6.1 Rugby Alberta's Return to Play policies remain in effect and must be followed by all Participants.

6.2 Rugby Canada's Return to Play Medical Committee may have to add, change, or update health and safety these policies as necessary.

## **7. Modification**

7.1 Rugby Alberta reserves the right to amend this Policy from time to time as circumstances change.