RETURN TO PLAY
Policy and Procedures
Effective May 26, 2020
INTRODUCTION

It is a great pleasure to write to you with guidelines associated with the clubs position of providing a safe return to play which is now upon us. Some weeks ago, we provided an outline of our plan in how to manage this process. Within this document we identified progressive phases of training restrictions as well as some health and safety guidelines based on understanding from various sources available at the time. We also said we would follow this up with further detail to define the processes and requirements for players to participate safely as we work towards a full program of activity again.

DETERMINING THE DATE FOR RETURN TO PLAY

We are excited about confirming an official date for returning to play on Monday 1st June. This has been chosen in consideration of many variables however the overriding authority being local and state public health orders and guidelines which we feel have allowed us to set this date.

SOURCES FOR DECISION MAKING

We have been in regular dialogue with the Colorado Soccer Association and its member clubs to understand the wealth of information available and pay close attention to those recommendations and indeed local, federal and state mandates that impact the youth soccer industry. Although we continue to monitor various publications, the following sources have been instrumental in allowing us to make a decision on a date for a safe return to play and also the restrictions and processes involved.

- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
- Subsequent Local Public Health Agencies (e.g. Tri-County, Denver Metro etc.)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Colorado Soccer Association
- US Olympic and Paralympic Committee
- Aspen Institute: Project Plan
- Children’s Hospital Colorado

WHO MAKES THIS DECISION?

We will continue to abide by state and local mandates as an ultimate
decision maker. As a club using public facilities across the state we must take into account the individual counties stance on when they decide to open or remain closed. This as you can imagine has a great impact on our ability to provide soccer to all Rapids Youth Club members. With regards to a specific return to play for youth soccer, this will be something we make for members in our individual regions based on the above factor and other sources of information.

The reason for this is simply that amongst the sectors and industries affected by COVID-19, the priority for mandated restrictions has been applying to areas such as healthcare and businesses. Youth soccer clearly is a matter of public health however specific directives from US Soccer or CSA would be determined by the same parameters that directly affect us e.g. Use of indoor and outdoor facilities, social distancing, travel from distance to training etc.

It is for this reason that the youth club will decide (based on mandates and authoritative bodies recommendations) when to return to play. While there are very well respected authorities on sport we remain committed to adhering to mandated restrictions whilst making recommendations on restrictions and prevention methods.

**WHY JUNE 1ST?**

Based on current information coming from the sources discussed we feel like we are in a position to work within the parameters and restrictions mandated and recommended to safely provide soccer to our members. Colorado has been under the phase termed 'Safer at Home' by Government since April 27 and has had a progression of restrictions reviewed in subsequent weeks such as:

- May 1 - Retail and personal services can open (if implementing best practices).
- May 4 - Non-critical offices can reopen (if implementing best practices and lower density).
- May 25 - Restaurants open 50% capacity, new guidance on youth sport camps.

The announcement from Governor Polis’ office on May 25 was another positive influencer in our decision making process, in particular the guidance on youth camps.

“Capacity and registration of campers that accommodates required physical distancing (6 feet) and maximum group size (25 and fewer outdoors, 10 or fewer indoors per room with four walls and a door).”

We feel that following appropriate restrictions and preventions provided by high level industry experts coupled with the fact soccer is an outdoor sport where transmission remains far less likely than in unventilated indoor spaces[3], we are in a position to begin a sensible return to play.
STRUCTURING OUR DUTY OF CARE

The following restrictions have been developed to safeguard staff and participants in Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Club activity as part of our duty of care. We have structured our processes into 3 sections:

- Screening: This is done both pre-return to play and during the period of return to play. It is designed to identify where possible any risk that exists associated with COVID-19
- Response Plan: A set of directives for staff and players should any risk be identified at any point of the screening process
- Restrictions and Prevention: These are adaptations to the training environment that take account of the mandates and sources of information on the virus that we believe are both compliant and assist in the prevention of the spread and transmission of COVID-19

This structure will operate through the existence of the ‘COVID-19’ timeframe. Whilst it is unknown how long this will be, we will continue to work with any federal, state or locally mandated orders and the aforementioned sources of information to make adjustments either as they ease or become more restrictive.

SCREENING

Our screening process will require an initial “Declaration of Health and Return to Play Waiver” form to be completed only once, before the 1st day of your return to training. To maintain the privacy of our members, administrators will coordinate those returning forms with no questions asked of those who have not made the submission.

THE DECLARATION OF HEALTH WILL CONSIST OF:

- An outline of what we require in terms of ‘healthy to train’ including an understanding of the players status with regards to
  - No current or recent symptoms (within the last 14 days) of COVID-19
  - No potential or known exposure to someone with COVID-19 or COVID-19 like symptoms within the last 14 days
  - No travel outside of state area, especially to areas with higher rates of disease transmission within the last 14 days
- An understanding that players, coaches or staff who screen positive must stay at home and should contact their healthcare provider for medical advice if they develop symptoms and for guidance on returning to work/sport.
  - Any person that has tested positive for COVID-19 must submit a Doctor’s note to Head Athletic Trainer Julie Graves stating you are cleared to participate
  - Contact Julie Graves: Julie.Graves@rapidsyouthsoccer.org / if no reply in 12 hours SMS message 303-828-7162
- An acknowledgement of understanding of these requirements and that you/your child in relation to the above are considered ‘health to train’

Regular and continued diligence from all parties to ensure the health and wellbeing of all players and staff is critical and we well do this by completing a weekly ‘Health Self-Assessment’.

THE WEEKLY HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT WILL CONSIST OF:

- Temperature check (Note: If your temperature is above 100.4 then it is considered a fever)
- Do you or someone you have been exposed to in the last 14 days have or had any of these symptoms within the last 14 days:
  - Fever
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - This list is not all possible symptoms. Call your medical provider for any symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

If at any point your child has TWO or more symptoms, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact Head Athletic Trainer, Julie Graves, to make her aware of these findings and make note of them in the HIPAA compliant software, ‘Healthy Roster Database’. This software provides patient engagement, care coordination, secure communication and outreach tools for healthcare professionals, including athletic trainers, physical therapists, and safety managers. HIPAA compliant and secure, Healthy Roster provides best-in-class engagement tools for healthcare providers everywhere, whether they’re on the field or in their office. She will in turn notify your corresponding Director of Coaching on your/your child’s inability to train.
Should any issue or concern be raised by a player or parent, our Head Athletic Trainer will be required to access any given player’s Weekly Health Self-Assessment history to ensure every athlete has recorded their physical status and is up to date with the guidelines and standards that the club has put in place for the health and safety of all children. This means you are required to keep a paper or online trail of ALL Weekly Health Self-Assessments of your child(ren) until otherwise notified. At the moment it is unclear how long this part of the process will resume.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Prior to the beginning of each new week of training the player is required to complete the self-assessment checklist and contact ONLY Head Athletic Trainer, Julie Graves, if there are concerns. No action is required where no concerns are raised. (Contact Julie Graves: Julie.Graves@rapidsyouthsoccer.org / if no reply in 12 hours SMS message 303-828-7162.)
- Additional to the Declaration of Health, upon arrival at training, coaches will verbally check the health of players and ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they will be asked to return home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider.
- A doctor’s note may be required declaring you are fit to participate if there are concerns.
RESPONSE PLAN

Upon completing the weekly health self-assessment, the coach or player should take the following action:

- **No issues for concern > return to training as normal**
- **Potential issues**
  - Contact Head Athletic Trainer Julies Graves who will then reach out with further arrangements and contact your age group DoC if applicable. (Julie Graves: Julie.Graves@rapidsyouthsoccer.org / if no reply in 12 hours SMS message 303-828-7162.)
  - Contact your healthcare provider for medical advice if you develop symptoms and for guidance on returning to training. We will follow up with you via our appointed contact person to understand your situation.
  - Potentially self-isolation for a minimum of 14 days prior to return to training
- **Should a situation of COVID-19 arise within a player or staff member we will follow the undernoted protocols:**
  - Maintain the strictest of confidentiality in the identity of the person
  - We will reach out to provide guidance to the group(s) and any other people who may have been in close contact with the person in the previous 14 days
    - Close Contact: CDC defines exposure as being within 6 feet (2 meters) of someone with a confirmed infection for a prolonged period of time
  - Assess the requirement to advise self-isolation for up to 14 days and the contact of health professionals for all individuals we identify as having been in close contact
    - Similar to any guidance provided we will follow CDC and CDPHE recommendations
RESTRICTIONS AND PREVENTIONS
These are adaptations to the training environment that will be made to further enhance the safety and reduce any likelihood of transmission or community spread of a virus.

• Training ratios will be limited to 1:25 or less players/coaches per quarter of an 11v11 field.
• The first/last 5 - 10 minutes are to ensure a safe enter/exit procedure for players and families further limiting group sizes and traffic in and out.
• Frequency of training will vary depending upon age and stage of player and communicated to via your appropriate age group Director of Coaching.
• Coaches and players must avoid “high fives”, handshakes and any other form of physical contact.
• Personal hygiene is requested at all times.
• Everyone is reminded to avoid touching their face with their hands.
• No spitting on the fields.
• Parents are kindly requested to stay outside the vicinity of the training session.
• Where appropriate we will have drop-off and pick-up procedures at each site to limit interactions and reduce the risk of exposure (not at Gates Soccer Complex and other large outdoor facilities where multiple entry and exit points exist).
• Spectating preferably from cars or a safe distance from players, staff and other parents maintaining at least 6ft social distancing.
• Avoid gatherings of other parents in parking lots, drop off zones or at entrance/exit areas of the facility.
• Where possible, Players and Coaches to maintain social distancing minimum of 6 feet between each other throughout training.
• Practices to be designed with social distancing in mind.
• Areas that are accessible such as bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
• Players and coaches must use hand sanitizer before, during breaks, and after practice.
• Sanitization stations will be available however it is encouraged that you bring your own.
• Players should bring their own clearly marked water bottles and are not allowed to share.
• Players should wash uniforms, balls and any additional equipment they own after each session.
• Players will not be required to pick up or handle equipment, other than clean pinnies, at any point.
• Staff will wash any necessary equipment after each session:
  • Coordinate to use fresh pinnies at each session and wash after each day of training.
• Players and Coaches are highly encouraged to wear masks at all times when not actively training.
• This is not a mandate, however CDC guidelines encourage everyone to wear masks. We recognize the restrictive nature of masks in physical exercise and so we are not enforcing the need to constantly wear masks during intense activity. It is a personal choice of the player or players’ guardian and staff.
• Players should depart from training directly after being dismissed by the coach without loitering for conversation or other matters.

We recognize that this will be an adjustment to how you, the coaches and staff engage with soccer and as mentioned before we will continue to monitor local and state mandates and sources of expertise. We greatly appreciate your patience and support in this matter and sincerely look forward to being back on the field without these restrictions. We will always seek to put the welfare of our members and staff first and as such we ask for your assistance and cooperation in ensuring that these recommendations are adhered to at all times.
HEAD ATHLETIC TRAINER JULIE GRAVES

Julie Graves is the Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Club’s full-time Head Athletic Trainer. Julie has been with the organization since 2016 in a partnership between ourselves and UCHealth. We benefit from her experience in sports science and medicine for all our players through injury prevention, treatment and rehabilitation as well as education for our coaches in this field. In this moment Julie will also act as a point of contact for coaches and players as an administrator of the Healthy Rosters Database and a director of guidance when it comes to return to play. She is an integral part of the club and will have responsibility to connect with Directors of Coaching and coaches to ensure a steady flow of communication is managed.

julie.graves@rapidsyouthsoccer.org  303-828-7162

RESOURCES

Declaration of Health and Return to Play Waiver
Click here
Weekly Health Self-Assessment Checklist
Click here for PDF Print Version
Click here for Google Docs Version