



## COVID-19: Community rugby league to enter 'Prepare to Play' period, training to re-commence.

May 26, 2020

On Friday, May 29, New Zealand Rugby League will enter the '**Prepare to Play**' phase for a minimum of three weeks, in light of yesterday's announcement that gathering numbers permitted for grassroots sport will increase to 100 people come lunchtime Friday.

During the '**Prepare to Play**' phase, rugby league contact and non-contact training is permitted **only** for clubs that can abide by the Government health and safety and gathering requirements.

Competition rugby league remains postponed during this three-week '**Prepare to Play**' period as NZRL in liaison with the Zones and Districts aim to re-commence with competition rugby league on Saturday, June 20 (subject to change).

It is important to note the further three-week postponement of competitive rugby league provides time for players to condition their bodies from light training through to full contact, minimising risk of injury after a long hiatus, as player safety remains paramount.

NZRL also stresses the fact that clubs should not rush to return to training if they are not ready and continue to use this '**Prepare to Play**' period to properly ensure their facility can abide by all mandatory health requirements.

These requirements include what 'must' be done such as contact tracing, physical distancing and hygiene and sanitation measures. Clubs will be provided with a checklist and supporting information to assist with the required return to play planning.

The '**Prepare to Play**' period is the second phase of a three-phased approach return to rugby league; Get Ready, Prepare to Play and Return to Play. This approach is based on the Government recommendation of a considered return to community sport.

NZRL in liaison with the Zones and Districts will provide further update over the next three weeks regarding the final 'Return to Play' phase.

We thank you all for your continued understanding during this time and look forward to seeing our rugby league communities safely return to the field again soon.