

# TRY RUGBY COLORADO – 2026 SEASON OPERATING PROCEDURES

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**1. INTRODUCTION** Rugby Colorado’s youth program exists to develop young athletes in a safe, structured, and inclusive environment. This handbook outlines the policies and procedures for developmental rugby competitions across K-8th graders for the Summer 2026 season. Our program is aligned with USA Rugby and World Rugby regulations, emphasizing a developmentally appropriate and fun approach to learning the game.

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## 2. OBJECTIVES & SCOPE

- a. Provide consistent, developmentally appropriate competition structure for athletes in K-8th grade.
  - b. Ensure all programming aligns USA Rugby & World Rugby with an emphasis on player safety, eligibility, and coaching standards.
  - c. Promote long-term athlete development to support sustained participation and establish a clear pathway into high school rugby.
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## 3. CODE OF CONDUCT AND COACH QUALIFICATIONS

- a. All Coaches are required, with no exception, to sign the *Rugby Colorado Code of Conduct for Coaches and Clubs in Youth Rugby in the State of Colorado* prior to the beginning of the season. (See Appendix 4 – Code of Conduct.)
- b. Rugby Colorado follows USA Youth and High School accreditation: <https://usa.rugby/coaching>. All staff and administrators must register with USA Rugby in order to be in the technical zones on match day.
- c. USA Rugby memberships must be renewed prior to the start of the season, which includes SafeSport. Administrative staff must be registered by 1 September.
- d. Rugby Colorado will schedule and host coaching and referee certification courses during the off-season. Rugby Colorado encourages continuing education for all coaches: at minimum, one training course every two years.
- e. **Coaching Certification Requirements**  
Teams must have at least one compliant coach on the field at all times to participate in Rugby Colorado sanctioned competitions.

(1) **USA Rugby Registration**

All coaches must be registered in Rugby Xplorer as part of their club and maintain current membership status.

(2) **Non-Contact Coaches (8U)**

- Complete World Rugby RugbyReady training
- Maintain current SafeSport certification through the U.S. Center for SafeSport
- Complete a background check every two (2) years (initiated through USA Rugby registration)
- Complete Rugby Safety Basics (including concussion awareness)

(3) **Contact Coaches (10U–14U)**

- Complete all Non-Contact Coach requirements, plus:
  - Hold a Level 1 Coaching Certification (required for all contact rugby)
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#### 4. AGE-GRADE ELIGIBILITY & ROSTERING

- a. All players must be registered with Rugby Colorado before participation in any organized play, including contact at practice or scrimmages.
  - b. Rugby Colorado's age bands (Appendix 1 – Rugby Colorado [Age-Grade Eligibility Chart](#)).
  - c. Eligibility is determined based on age as of 1 September for both the fall and summer seasons.
  - d. Clubs will input weekly into the RC Call for Teams submission form **NLT 5 p.m. MST on the Wednesday prior to all Saturday Jamborees.**
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#### 5. SCHEDULE

- a. TRY Rugby Summer 7's schedule (Appendix 2– TRY Summer 2026 Schedule).
  - b. Jamboree match days will begin at 9 a.m. starting with 8U and ending with 14U.
  - c. Match day end times will vary based on the number of teams competing in each age division. All team play will stop when field permits expire at 5 p.m.
  - d. TRY Director reserves the right to authorize additional friendly matches on game days provided they do not interfere or delay the remainder of the age-grade play.
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#### 6. SUMMER COMPETITION FORMAT

- a. All divisions will play developmental sides and those matches will not be scored.
- b. Only 14U Tier 1 girls and boys matches will be scored.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Tier</b>	<b>Players</b>	<b>Field Size (LxW m)</b>	<b>Try Zones (m)</b>	<b>Ball Size</b>
8U Co-Ed	2	5v5	40 x 25	5	3
10U Co-Ed	2	7v7	50 x 40	5	3
12U Girls	2	7v7	60 x 40	5–7	4
12U Co-Ed	2	7v7	60 x 40	5–7	4
14U Girls	1/2	7v7	70 x 50	5–7	4
14U Boys	1/2	7v7	70 x 50	5–7	4

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## 6. WAIVERS

- a. Players are expected to play in their divisional age group unless otherwise approved through the waiver process
  - b. **Rugby Colorado’s waiver forms and submission process** (See Appendix 3–Waiver).
    - (1) Complete the [PDF waiver form](#). This document includes signature fields for parents and coaches as well as a player assessment.
    - (2) Open the link to the [RC Google Player Submission Form](#). Submissions must include the PDF attached to the Google Form. Both the Rugby Colorado (RC) Youth and High School Directors will be notified upon submission.
    - (3) Clubs will be formally notified, in writing, regarding the decision on the waiver for each pathway.
  - c. Any 14U player being considered to waive up to high school rugby must:
    - (1) Be 14 years old by 1 September.
    - (2) Complete a performance assessment (See Appendix 3– Waiver).
  - d. If a player waives to 16U Tier 1, they **will not** be permitted to return to TRY for the remainder of that season or future seasons.
  - e. If a player waives to 16U Tier 2, they **will be** permitted to return to TRY for the remainder of that season and future seasons.
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**7. MATCH RULES** All play follows USA Rugby's 7s youth game management guidelines and World Rugby's Law Variations. Match durations will be two 7-minute halves with rolling subs.

### **8U Co-Ed | Flag Rugby**

- Format: 5v5, Flag only, Size 3 ball, 2x7-minute halves, rolling substitutions.
- Coaches will have discretion to modify game-day format up to 7v7 as long as it's developmentally appropriate and maximizes player repetitions.
- No rucks, mauls, scrums, or lineouts.
- Prohibited: Flag guarding, fending/stiff-arm, ripping.
- Tackle (Flag Pull): Tackler stands at mark and raises flag; tackled player must pass within 5 seconds.
- Offside: 5m back; 3 steps from flag pull.
- Restart: By free pass from mark after stoppages.

### **10U Co-Ed | Introduction to Contact**

- Format: 7v7, Tackle, Size 3 ball, 2x7-minute halves, rolling substitutions.
- Scrums: 3v3, uncontested.
- Lineouts: Uncontested.
- No rucking, no kicking.
- Fending: Below the sternum.
- Prohibited: Ripping, poaching, kicking.
- Offside: Point of tackle.
- Restarts: Tap-and-go with a 5m offside line.

### **12U Co-Ed & Girls | Contact Rugby**

- Format: 7v7, Tackle, Size 4 ball, 2x7-minute halves, rolling substitutions.
- Scrums: 3v3, contested up to 1 meter.
- Lineouts: Contested, no lifting.
- Rucking: One player per team in the ruck.
- Fending: Below the sternum.
- Kicking: Allowed.
- Penalties: Tap-and-go.
- Restarts: Drop-kick from center with a 10m offside line.

### **14U Girls & Boys | Contact Rugby**

- Format: 7v7, Tackle, Size 4 ball, 2x7-minute halves, rolling substitutions.
- Scrums: 3v3, contested.
- Lineouts: Contested, lifting allowed.
- Rucking & Mauling: Allowed.
- Fending: Below the sternum.
- Kicking: Allowed.
- Penalties: Tap, scrum, or lineout options allowed.
- Restarts: Drop-kick from center with a 10m offside line.

- Waivers into High School: see section 6 above.

## **8. STANDINGS (14U Tier 1 only)**

- Win = 4 pts
  - Tie = 2 pts each
  - Loss by 7 or fewer = 1 pt.
  - Loss by more than 7 pts = 0 pts
  - Scoring 4 or more tries regardless of win or loss = 1 pt.
  - Matches not played due to weather or special circumstances = 2 pts. each
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## **9. PLAYER SAFETY**

### **Match Play Time Limits**

- Maximum 90 minutes of total match play per player per day.
- Includes all matches, halves, extra time, and jamboree play.
- Applies to players 14U and younger, regardless of format (7s, 10s, 15s).

### **Player Uniform & Equipment Requirements**

- Uniform: Club jersey, rugby shorts without pockets, and club socks.
- Boots: Rugby appropriate; no toe-studs, baseball or softball cleats, soccer toe-cleats or track and field spikes.
- Mouthguard: Mandatory for 10U, 12U, and 14U; 8U is highly encouraged.
- Hydration: Each player must have a personal water source.
- Fuel: Players should arrive prepared and bring snacks for jamboree days.

### **Tackling**

- Tackles must be made below the sternum using the arms, with no contact to the head or neck.
- Lifting or dumping a player is not permitted.
- Tackling a player in the air is not permitted.
- Shirt-only tackling is not permitted.

### **Lightening Protocol**

- Play is immediately suspended if lightning is seen or thunder is heard.
- The distance threshold is 10 miles.
- The 30-minute rule will be applied to return-to-play.
- Rugby Colorado utilizes WeatherBug to execute this protocol.
- The TRY Director has final authority on all weather decisions.

### **Heat Management**

- Matches are paused or stopped if the heat index exceeds safe thresholds per World Rugby and CDC guidelines.
- Use a heat index chart for team management; water breaks every 15 minutes in hot conditions.

- Extra socks are strongly recommended during summer play to reduce moisture and prevent blisters.

### **Concussion Management**

- Any player with a suspected head injury is removed immediately and cannot return the same day.
- Player must be cleared by a qualified healthcare professional before returning to play in future matches.
- Follow USA Rugby Concussion Guidance and World Rugby's "Recognise and Remove" protocol.

### **Blood & Injury Rules**

- A player with visible blood must leave the field until it is cleaned and covered.
- Any open wounds must be dressed before returning to play.
- Coaches should carry a basic first aid kit to all matches.

### **Required Sideline Medical Coverage**

- Rugby Colorado will provide Athletic Trainer(s) from Premier Sports Medicine or other means for all sanctioned matches.
- Medical personnel should have clear access to the field at all times.
- Emergency evacuation plans for match day locations are provided by the contractor to Rugby Colorado and the TRY Director.

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## **10. HOW TO REPORT AN ISSUE OR COMPLAINT**

Rugby Colorado is committed to a safe, fair, and positive environment. To ensure your concern is handled correctly and quickly, find the pathway below that matches your issue and follow the specific steps.

### **a. General Grievances (Operations, Coaching, or Team Issues)**

This pathway is for all operational, administrative, or team-level issues. You **MUST** follow the escalation steps below.. Examples Include:

- Disputes over playing time, team selection, or coaching methods.
- Club administrative or operational problems.
- Field logistics or scheduling issues.

Escalation Procedures:

STEP 1: Speak with your Team Head Coach to seek a resolution.

STEP 2: If unresolved, escalate to your Club President / Club Administrator.

STEP 3: If unresolved, file a formal grievance with the appropriate Director. Include the steps that have been taken to this point:

TRY Director (K-8th): [trydirector@rugbycolorado.com](mailto:trydirector@rugbycolorado.com)

HS Director (9-12th): [hsdirector@rugbycolorado.com](mailto:hsdirector@rugbycolorado.com)

STEP 4: If unresolved, you may appeal the Program Director's decision to the Executive Director.

STEP 5: A final appeal of the Executive Director's decision may be made to the Rugby Colorado Board of Directors. The Rugby Colorado Board of Directors may push issues to the Rugby Colorado Disciplinary Committee as necessary.

#### b. **Disciplinary Issues (Foul Play & Misconduct)**

This pathway is for all on-field foul play and off-field misconduct that violates World Rugby Regulations 17 and 18. Examples include:

- On-Field Foul Play (e.g. a Red Card issued by the Match Official, or a Team Citing for an incident of Foul Play that was not detected by the Match Official).
  - Off-Field Misconduct (e.g. acts of violence or intimidation within the venue in which the Match is being played such as the tunnel, changing rooms and/or warm-up areas).
- (1) Yellow and Red Card issues are automatically filed by referees and given to the Rugby Colorado Disciplinary Committee. All other disciplinary reports (e.g. citing or misconduct) must go directly to [Disciplinary RugbyColorado](#).
- (2) Team Citings must be submitted by an authorized club/team official by email no later than 48 hours after the conclusion of the match in which the Foul Play is alleged to have occurred.
- (3) Reference Links:
- Discipline & Foul Play:  
[www.world.rugby/organisation/governance/regulations/reg-17](http://www.world.rugby/organisation/governance/regulations/reg-17)
- Misconduct and Code of Conduct:  
[www.world.rugby/organisation/governance/regulations/reg-18](http://www.world.rugby/organisation/governance/regulations/reg-18)

#### c. **Safe Sport Issues (Abuse, Harassment, Bullying)**

This pathway is for all issues related to sexual misconduct, abuse, harassment, stalking, bullying, hazing, or retaliation. All such reports are managed externally and confidentially.

**Report IMMEDIATELY and DIRECTLY** to the U.S. Center for SafeSport:

- Online: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>
- Phone: 833-5US-SAFE (587-7233)

**DO NOT** report these issues to a coach, club, or Rugby Colorado staff for investigation. They are legally mandated to forward the report directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

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## 10. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: [Rugby Colorado Age-Grade Eligibility Chart](#)
  - Appendix 2: [TRY Summer 2026 Schedule](#)
  - Appendix 3: [Waiver Form](#)
  - Appendix 4: [Code of Conduct](#)
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This document is updated for the Summer 2026 season and replaces all previous editions.