

## 2017 SUPER RUGBY REPLACEMENT PLAYER PROTOCOLS

### Introductory Note

In the past, Super Rugby Teams (Teams) were able to select players from their Wider Training Group or other replacement players in a match day squad (or travelling squad or as match day injury cover) for competition matches “on merit” ahead of other fit and available players from within their Final Super Rugby Squad of 32 players with associated match payments and commuting provisions.

With the name change brought about by the new Collective Agreement from Wider Training Group to Draft NZ Rugby Contracts and the subsequent commuting provisions for Draft Contract players now removed, the “on merit” framework will no longer apply. Each player in your squads of 38, either Initial 32 or Draft 6, will be available for selection at any time.

Commuting provisions will however, continue to apply for Replacement Players (Interim Contract Players).

Any questions in relation to the Super Rugby Replacement Player Protocols should be directed to Ben Castle at [Ben.Castle@nzrugby.co.nz](mailto:Ben.Castle@nzrugby.co.nz), 021 616 220 or Simon Simmers at [Simon.Simmers@nzrugby.co.nz](mailto:Simon.Simmers@nzrugby.co.nz) , 027 2897925

## REPLACEMENT PLAYER PROTOCOLS

All replacement players must be requested to and approved by NZ Rugby in accordance with these Replacement Player Protocols **before** the replacement player assembles with the Super Rugby Team as a fulltime replacement player.

Replacement players must be approved by NZ Rugby in order for proper management of Super Rugby Squads, and for the players concerned to receive replacement player assembly payments.

All replacement player requests resulting from injuries during the Super Rugby competition will be considered following the weekend round of matches. Requests will be considered following confirmation of the status of any injured players and their expected return to fitness dates, as assessed by the relevant Super Rugby Team Doctor and NZ Rugby's Medical Director. The only exception shall be where it is necessary to deal with a replacement player request more urgently ahead of Monday due to time and travel requirements for a required replacement player to join a Team.

A replacement player may be requested for injured, ill or otherwise unavailable squad player/s (including rested All Blacks or other National Team commitments) in accordance with the Replacement Player Protocols set out below.

### Replacement Player Process

There is a two stage process for the approval of a replacement player, in accordance with the Replacement Player Protocols:

1. Firstly, whether a replacement player is required; and
2. If so, who the replacement player should be.

NZ Rugby maintains a general discretion to determine the above issues for any replacement player request. If any issues arise that are not adequately dealt with by the Replacement Player Protocols, NZ Rugby will determine any such issues as it sees fit with regard to the circumstances and the overall best interests of NZ Rugby.

### 1. Whether a replacement player is required?

A replacement player may be requested:

- (i) If a player selected in a Final Super Rugby Team is injured or becomes ill and is consequently assessed by NZ Rugby's Medical Director (in consultation with the relevant Super Rugby Team Doctor) as not fit to play for the rest of the Super Rugby season. In such a case, a replacement player will be agreed to unless the injured player is ruled out when the team concerned has

3 or less Super Rugby matches left to play in the competition. In that case the NZ Rugby will consider and exercise its discretion on the need for a replacement player on a case by case basis as for a request under paragraph (ii) below.

- (ii) Where two or more players in the same playing position (being prop, hooker, lock, loose forward, halfback, first five-eighth, midfield, wing and fullback) are injured or become ill (or are otherwise unavailable for selection), and are consequently assessed by the relevant Super Rugby Team Doctor (in consultation with NZ Rugby's Medical Director) as not fit to play for at least one match during the Super Rugby season (including pre-season matches), then the Team will be entitled to a replacement player in the same playing position until such time as one or more of the players becomes fit to play again. Note that this excludes player(s) injured for the rest of the season who have been or will be replaced at the time under paragraph (i) above.

For a replacement player request under this paragraph (ii), NZ Rugby maintains a general discretion, following consultation with the coach of the Team concerned, to determine whether a replacement player is required in the circumstances. The main relevant factors in this consideration are:

- (a) The remaining available cover for the position among the fit players in the Team's Final Super Rugby Squad, including the nature of the position cover is sought for;
- (b) The likelihood that the replacement player would be required for the playing squad of 23 for a Super Rugby competition match; and
- (c) The period that the injured players are expected to be unavailable for.

In the case of a prop being injured and not available to train and/or play, in order to allow scrum training, a replacement prop may be requested for training sessions that include scrum training (only).

- (iii) If several players in a Team's Final Super Rugby Squad are injured or become ill and are consequently assessed by the relevant Super Rugby Team Doctor (in consultation with NZ Rugby's Medical Director) as not fit to play for at least one match during the Super Rugby season (including pre-season matches), to the extent that the team is not able to field a playing 23 for a match with 13 forwards and 10 backs.

In assessing whether a replacement player is required in accordance with these Replacement Player Protocols, any player who is suspended from playing for a period will be considered as one unavailable player as if they were injured or ill under the above Replacement Player Protocols; however if a player is suspended for

the rest of the Super Rugby competition, that player cannot be directly replaced for the rest of the season.

Note that under the SANZAAR Super Rugby competition regulations, once a player is named and actually appears in a playing 23 for one team in a Super Rugby competition match, he cannot then play for any other team during the remainder of the competition.

## **2. Replacement Player Selection**

In circumstances where NZ Rugby is satisfied there is a need for a replacement players as outlined above in point 1 the next step is working out who the replacement player will be.

Generally, Super Rugby Team will be expected to look inside their local Provincial Union regions for suitable players. If no-one suitable can be found inside a Super Rugby Team's local region they may look to outside this.

NZ Rugby maintains a general discretion to determine the above issues for any replacement player request.

### **Replacement Player Request – Player U20**

In addition to the above protocols, where a request is made for a replacement player outside a replacement, and that player is under 20 years of age, the following will apply:

- The Team must, prior to any communication with the player concerned, submit the request to NZ Rugby.
- NZ Rugby High Performance team will assess the player's capability for Super Rugby, in consultation with the player's Home Team and/or Provincial Union.
- NZ Rugby will respond to the Team on whether the player is approved as a replacement player.