

BLACK FERNS 7's and BLACK FERNS PARENTAL INCLUSION POLICY

PURPOSE

NZR and the NZRPA are committed to providing a safe and inclusive rugby environment for all female players to participate in rugby, including those players who are pregnant or have young children.

NZR and the NZRPA recognise that it needs to develop opportunities and pathways for females at all levels and part of this requires an understanding of the challenges required to be a female player at the professional level.

The purpose of this Policy is to work towards providing a supportive environment for Black Ferns 7's and Black Ferns players (Player(s)) who wish to participate in the NZR Black Ferns 7's and Black Ferns programmes (Programmes) after having children as well as establishing policies to support the Player during pregnancy.

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

1. It is acknowledged that for health and wellbeing of the pregnant Player and unborn child, the Player must comply with the notification provisions in the Black Fern 7's and Black Ferns MOU.
2. At the expiry of the Notification Date (defined in the MOUs as the end of the first Trimester), the Player will have the opportunity to meet with NZR to discuss whether there is an alternative job the Player can be transferred into for the remainder of her playing contract. If there is no appropriate role the Player can move into, then the provisions in the relevant MOU will apply until the end of her playing contract.
3. For the period of her pregnancy, the Player will be entitled to continue to access any rugby support services (eg nutrition, strength and conditioning, medical) to enable her to continue with a programme that will provide the best possible opportunity to return to play.

RETURN TO PLAY - PARENTAL MANAGEMENT AND TRAVEL

1. NZR and NZRPA are committed to providing support for a Player's continued participation in the Programme provided that at all times the health and wellbeing of the Player and their child is paramount. Players should expect to provide some form of evidence from a medical professional to illustrate their physical preparedness to return to the training environment.
2. Each Player has different needs and each Player will need to be supported, and their playing and training commitments appropriately managed, on the basis of their individual circumstances, in consultation with the Player, their family and their medical professionals.
3. As there will be individual circumstances for each Player, factors to be taken into consideration in determining a Player's return to play will include:
 - a. Determining a plan as to whether the Player is returning to a training hub only, returning to domestic assembly or returning to full training including travel to international Tournaments (subject to change throughout the return to play plan); and
 - b. Whether the Player is based in Tauranga or elsewhere (in the case of Black Ferns 7's players).

4. The support under this Policy will extend to any Player who has a responsibility for the care of an Infant. For the purpose of this Policy an Infant means a child who is less than 12 months old at the point in time the case is being considered (Players return).
5. Any Player who has a responsibility for the care of an Infant who is required to travel for training camps and for events on the Black Ferns 7's and Black Ferns calendar, may travel with that Infant, provided that a support person (e.g. partner, parent, nanny etc.) travels with the Player and Infant to assist in the care and supervision of the Infant.
6. The Player Payment Pool will cover actual and reasonable costs for a Player's support person and Infant to travel and be accommodated with them, where the child is less than 12 months old up to \$15,000 per Player. The Player will be responsible for all flights, accommodation and associated care costs at all other times including when she is training and preparing in her home environment.
7. Subject to availability and any individual request from the Player, NZR will use its best endeavours to:
 - a. arrange for the support person and the Infant to travel on the same flight as the Player; and
 - b. arrange for the support person to be accommodated in the same hotel as the Player.
8. The Player may elect to be accommodated in the same hotel room as their support person and the Infant or to sleep in the standard team accommodation, after consultation with Team Management. The Player is required to travel with the Team at all times, unless approved by Team Management.
9. The Player's support person and Infant may attend team activities or commitments, including meals, training and meetings provided this is agreed in advance with Team Management.
10. While travelling, the Player will ensure that she is able to attend all team commitments and activities in the lead up to a game and otherwise perform her obligations in accordance with her player contract and the MOU.
11. NZR will apply this policy flexibly to take account of individual circumstances, although Team Management will reserve the right to ensure that the impact of any flexibility on the team environment and performance is both positive and acceptable.