



NZRPA

NEW ZEALAND RUGBY PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

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**BY THE PLAYERS
FOR THE GAME.**

A Guide to **YOUR**
Players' Association



0800 PLAYER



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**BY THE PLAYERS
FOR THE GAME.**



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**Contact us for any advice,
support or assistance**

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Who is the NZRPA?

“The representative body of New Zealand professional rugby players”

- The New Zealand Rugby Players’ Association (NZRPA) was founded by New Zealand’s professional rugby players as their independent representative body in 1999.
- The NZRPA’s membership is made up of current professional rugby players playing in New Zealand and overseas, and retired or past professional rugby players.
- The NZRPA is governed by a board, which involves current and past male and female professional players and independent board members, all elected by the player membership.
- The NZRPA has a full management team working hard on the behalf of professional players on issues of importance that affect players and the game.
- Through the NZRPA, the players work with the game’s administration to address player welfare matters and the ongoing development of the game.
- The NZRPA helps players support each other in their personal and professional development. It helps them to take advantage of commercial opportunities, and to understand and deal with life as professional sportspeople. At any stage of a player’s career, if they feel they need some help or support, the NZRPA is there to provide access to that help or support.

- The NZRPA ensures New Zealand’s professional rugby players have an organised and credible voice at the decision-making table and a representative body to speak on their behalf as and when required.
- The NZRPA negotiates the Collective Employment Agreement [CEA] between the professional players and New Zealand Rugby, five Super Rugby Clubs and fourteen Provincial Unions. This agreement covers the terms and conditions under which all professional players, men and women, are employed or engaged to play rugby in New Zealand, and outlines how the professional players and the game’s administrators will work together to ensure rugby remains successful in New Zealand.
- The NZRPA is a founding member of the New Zealand Athletes Federation alongside the player associations from cricket, netball, hockey and football, and a number of individual elite New Zealand athletes from other codes.
- The NZRPA is a founding member of International Rugby Players, the global representative body of professional rugby players, addressing international issues of importance to players and the game.

What is the NZRPA about?

“Enabling our rugby players to thrive, on and off the field...and enabling the game to unite and inspire New Zealanders”

The NZRPA supports and represents YOU the PLAYER by:

Player Representation and Support

- Player input and voice on issues of importance
- Collective bargaining and player contracts
- Agent accreditation and advice
- Season and competition structures
- Laws, rules and regulations
- Problem and dispute resolution
- Conduct advice and support
- Sports integrity including anti-doping and anti-corruption

Player Personal Development and Growth

- Career planning, education and work experience
- Financial and asset protection and awareness
- Character development and mental health and wellbeing support
- Professional rugby work expectations and obligations
- Young player education programme
- Overseas and retired player support

Player Communication and Engagement

- **0800 PLAYER** support free phone line
- Team roadshows and **NZRPA** visits
- **NZRPA** player board members and team representatives
- Social media platforms and publications
- Player handbooks and protocols
- Player surveys and feedback
- Overseas player visits and communication
- Rugby club for retired players



When should you contact the NZRPA?

“For independent advice and support on any rugby, employment or personal issues that are concerning you or if you have any ideas for your players association please contact **0800 PLAYER**”

Here are some reasons why you or your parents, guardians or your support people might call your Player Association:

- To seek help around making important decisions
- To access support, guidance and assistance in relation to your personal development, specifically including your:
 - career, education and work experience
 - finance and asset protection
 - character development and mental wellness
 - obligations and rights as a professional rugby player
- Any questions or issues relating to the collective agreement or your playing contract, including payment, incentive fees, player savings scheme, leave, insurances, misconduct, termination or negotiation issues.
- Any issues in your employment environment that you feel you need some help with.
- If you are concerned about your medical treatment or feel you need another medical opinion.
- If you are thinking of playing another sport or undertaking an activity that has a significant risk of injury.
- If you are asked to undertake a promotional activity under your employment contract and you are not comfortable with what has been asked of you or with the notice period.

- If you are going to enter into a personal endorsement or sponsorship arrangement with a third party and are not sure of the process you have to follow.
- If you are looking to make a public statement, via social media or any other form of media, and you think it may cause issues for anyone reading it.
- If you are concerned about anything to do with the WADA Code, Drug Free Sport New Zealand, performance-enhancing or recreational drugs and feel you need some independent advice and support.
- If you are involved in an incident that you believe could be an issue for you, your employer or any other party, including any issue that could be misconduct or involve a criminal matter.
- Decisions around your rugby pathway, especially in your early years.
- For any issues or questions relating to agents, including information around the NZRPA Accredited Agents Scheme and assistance around overseas contracts and club environments.
- If you are struggling with any personal issues or feel you may need to access confidential counselling (for any issues including mental health, homesickness, relationship issues, financial problems, gambling, addictions, recreational drugs and alcohol, sexual abuse or bullying.)
- If you have any ideas about competitions, your environment or anything to improve the rugby landscape.
- If you have any interesting stories that you think other players may be interested in reading and/or learning from.
- If you are a professional rugby player currently playing in New Zealand, and you are no longer able to play professional rugby due to sickness, injury, accident or death or are suffering hardship due to unforeseen or unfortunate circumstances, you or your family are able to make an application to the Benevolent and Welfare Fund for financial assistance. Each application is assessed by an advisory body on a case-by-case basis. They will then make a recommendation to the NZRPA board. View the Administrative Rules for the NZRPA Benevolent and Welfare Fund at www.nzrpa.co.nz/info-centre.

New Zealand-based player membership

Once you have signed a contract with a Provincial Union, Super Rugby Club or New Zealand Rugby to play in New Zealand, the terms and conditions of the Collective Employment Agreement will apply to you, and you will become a member of the New Zealand Rugby Players' Association once you sign an NZRPA membership form. You are then able to access all services that the NZRPA offers. This access can be initiated through your Provincial Union, Super Rugby, Black Ferns or Sevens Personal Development Managers or directly through the NZRPA. You can access NZRPA services at any stage of your career, even when you head offshore to play or after you have finished playing the game.

Overseas-based player membership

With many New Zealand players continuing their careers overseas, the NZRPA has a dedicated Personal Development Manager who can help with a variety of services for overseas-based players. The range of services includes providing insurance and finance information, networking, career exploration and study options, mental wellness information and support and connection for other areas relating to your off-field game plan [Personal Development].

Retired player membership through the NZRPA Rugby Club

The NZRPA has established a network for retired New Zealand professional rugby players called the NZRPA Rugby Club. The club holds several events around the country to create opportunities for former players to unite, spend some time together and re-establish the camaraderie that our great game offers. The NZRPA Rugby Club is also able to provide support and advice for past players. A designated Rugby Club Relationship Manager is available to assist Rugby Club members with their ongoing personal and professional development, including in relation to career planning, education/study, finance and insurance, medical support and mental health and wellbeing advice and services.



Personal Development Programme (PDP)

The Personal Development Programme is the players' own development programme, where you get to explore, learn and upskill in a variety of areas with the help and support of a Personal Development Manager (PDM). The programme is a joint venture between the NZRPA and NZR (including the Super Rugby clubs and Provinces) managed by the NZRPA and designed to enhance your personal and professional development. It can be tailor-made to suit your goals and learning interests. The programme and PDMs are there to support, guide and assist players in their career and education, finance and asset protection, understanding of the professional rugby environment and personal/ character development. The programme also provides players with education to assist them with handling the demands they face, and it challenges the players to get the best out of themselves. All players are expected to actively engage in the Personal Development Programme and, for many players, it is a contributing factor to enhancing their performance both on and off the field. Player research proves that players who utilise the Personal Development Programme well are more successful when they move into the next stage of their career after rugby.

What is the NZRPA Agents Charter?

The NZRPA Agents Charter is a document that sets out certain standards of industry knowledge, integrity, competence and professionalism that those agents accredited by the NZRPA (called Accredited Agents) agree to work by. The purpose of the charter is to ensure advice and support is given in a way that the NZRPA believes protects the interests of players and is fair and reasonable to those wishing to provide such services to players.

To view the agents charter and a brochure on agents visit [www.nzrpa.co.nz/infocentre/ Agents Charter](http://www.nzrpa.co.nz/infocentre/Agents Charter).

Accredited Agents

An individual who wishes to represent players may apply to the NZRPA to become an Accredited Agent. The individual must be able to demonstrate to the NZRPA and New Zealand Rugby that they have the knowledge, integrity, competence and professionalism to justify being classified as an accredited agent, and they must agree in writing to maintain these standards at all times. NZRPA firmly advocate that players use the services of an accredited agent. For a list of accredited agents visit www.nzrpa.co.nz/our-people and scroll down to Agents.

The NZRPA is a member of:

International Rugby Players

International Rugby Players (IRP) is the global representative body on issues of importance to professional rugby players. It represents, supports and unifies professional rugby players at the global level and deals with World Rugby on our behalf on matters like international season structure, laws of the game, anti-doping and the WADA code, international player movement and tournament terms of participation (i.e. RWC, Sevens), agents registration, international eligibility and release and World Rugby regulations. National Rugby Player Associations from across the globe are members of International Rugby Players.

New Zealand Athletes' Federation

The New Zealand Athletes' Federation has been established to provide a peak athlete representative body with a unified voice across all sports organisations in New Zealand. It works closely with affiliated Players' Associations to empower athletes during and after their career.

World Players Association

The World Players Association is the leading voice of organised players in the governance of world sport. It brings together 85,000 players across professional sport through more than 100 player associations in over 60 countries.

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