

# **NATIONAL RUGBY POLICY**

## **AGE TO PLAY SENIOR RUGBY**

### **FEMALE RUGBY PLAYER**



#### POLICY #8B AGE TO PLAY SENIOR WOMEN'S RUGBY

#### BACKGROUND

In some provinces, small towns and rural areas, there is only one team available for players to join. Invariably this means that young women have to play senior rugby as soon as they move from a school to club environment.

Given the inherent safety risks of teenagers playing against adults, the following policy applies. This policy is designed to be specific to the New Zealand rugby environment, and does not adhere World Rugby guidelines.

#### POLICY

- All senior rugby is classed as Under 19 and above for this policy; and
- Subject to Provincial Union right to withhold approval if a safety issue exists, a player must be at least 16 years of age as at the first match of the competition they are being selected for in order to participate in a senior women's rugby match; and
- If a player is a front row player and is under 19 years of age as at the first match of the competition they are being selected for, then that player must obtain prior written approval (using the approval form provided by NZR) from the Provincial Union before they can participate in a senior women's rugby match; and
- If a player is a non-front row player and is under 18 years of age as at the first match of the competition they are being selected for, then that player must obtain prior written approval (using the approval form provided by NZR) from the Provincial Union before they can participate in a senior women's rugby match; and
- Players who are 15 years old or younger cannot play senior women's rugby; and
- A parent/guardian must sign an approval form (provided by NZR) before a player can participate in a senior women's rugby match.

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#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

New Zealand Rugby:

- Will provide an approval form

Provincial Unions:

- Will view all players aged under 18 and under 19 if playing in a front row position who wish to play senior women's rugby. Approval to play will not be given if the Provincial Union considers a significant risk to the player's safety exists
- Will monitor and administer approval forms

Clubs:

- Advise Provincial Unions of players aged under 18 years and under 19 if playing in a front row position who wish to play senior women's rugby

Sanctions

- No sanction

The Consent Form approved by NZR is available to download as a Word document from <http://communityrugby.co.nz/women-s-rugby/get-involved/policies>