



NEW ZEALAND RUGBY LEAGUE

MOUTHGUARD POLICY

2018

Mouthguard Policy

Research has shown that the wearing of mouthguards has dramatically reduced the occurrences of injuries to the mouth and teeth of players.

The wearing of a protective mouthguard is compulsory for all Rugby League players during the entire duration of a match and all training sessions.

Mouthguards are to be by an approved manufacture or custom made and must not carry any visible anti-social script or emblem

The **No Mouthguard, No Game, No Contact Training Policy** is to be firmly enforced.

Operational Guidelines

1. Referees and/or Touch Judges will prior to the game, check that all players (including reserves) have a mouthguard.
2. During the course of a match any player found not to have a mouthguard in the mouth and not having a mouthguard in their possession, (due to having it dislodged as a result of a tackle) will be made to leave the field.

On obtaining a replacement mouth guard, he/she may re-enter the field of play after reporting to a Touch Judge.

In the event of a player being unable to obtain a replacement mouth guard, he/she may take no further part in the game, but may be substituted, with that substitute counting as an interchange.

3. During the course of a match, any player found not to have a mouthguard in their mouth, but to have a one in their possession (in their sock or pocket etc) will be penalised and sin binned for ten minutes

4. Referees are to use common sense in enforcing this policy, in regard to players approaching a scrum with a mouthguard in their hand, or such incidents where there is a break in play.

The swapping of mouthguards amongst players is to be met with disapproval as it can lead to other health problems. **See Meningitis Policy.**

Mouthguard Exemption Guidelines:

A player who suffers problems associated with wearing a mouthguard may seek exemption from the policy` under the following criteria.

- The player in question must provide a medical certificate from a dentist or GP, stating why a mouthguard cannot be worn by the player.
- The player must submit the dentist or GP medical certificate with a portrait photo to the NZRL.
- On receipt of the above information the NZRL will issue the player with an exemption card, which must be provided at each game

The NZRL reserves the right to make the final decision on issuing a mouthguard exemption.

These policy areas must be enforced by and within all Zones, District Leagues and Clubs.