



OFSAA Removal-From-Sport & Return-To-Sport Protocols

Ontario Federation of Athletic Associations (OFSAA) is committed to the long-term health and safety of its participants. The purpose of this policy is to provide information for concussion removal-from-sport, and return-to-sport requirements.

The term 'OFSAA event' means an OFSAA championship, festival, regional track and field championship, or regional Just Play event.

Tournaments or meets sanctioned by OFSAA are not OFSAA events and are not subject to these protocols. Organizers of those events must follow their school board's policy on concussions.

Designated Person(s)

In accordance with the requirements set out in *Rowan's Law* and its associated regulation, the convenor of each OFSAA event shall designate a person(s) to have specific responsibilities under the removal-from-sport and return-to-sport protocols. The responsibilities for the designated person(s) may be shared between one or more individuals. If there is more than one designated person, each must understand their responsibilities under the Removal-from-Sport protocol and Return-to-Sport protocol.

Responsibilities

Under OFSAA's **Removal-from-Sport** protocol, the designated person(s) is/are responsible for ensuring:

- A student-athlete is immediately removed from further training, practice or competition if the student-athlete has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion was sustained from a sport activity associated with OFSAA.
- If in the opinion of the designated person(s), there is an emergency and/or any red flag signs and/or red flag symptoms appear – including those resulting from a suspected concussion, call 911;
- Removal of the student-athlete from further training, practice or competition; and if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the parent or guardian is informed of the removal;
- The student-athlete, or the parent or guardian if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, is advised that the student-athlete is required to **undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner** before the student-athlete will be permitted to return to training, practice or competition according to OFSAA's Return-to-Sport protocol;
- A student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent or guardian receives OFSAA's Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocols as soon as possible after the student-athlete's removal;
- Once removed, the student-athlete is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition, except in accordance with OFSAA's Return-to-Sport protocol;

Under OFSAA's **Return-to-Sport** protocol, the designated person(s) is/are responsible for ensuring that:

- A student-athlete who has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion does not return to training, practice or competition until permitted to do so in accordance with OFSAA's Return-to-Sport protocol;
- When a student-athlete has **not** been diagnosed with a concussion, the student-athlete is only permitted to return to training, practice or competition if the student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent or guardian provides **written** confirmation to the designated person(s) and teacher-supervisor from a physician or nurse practitioner about the outcome of the student-athlete's medical assessment, specifically that the student-athlete:
 - has undergone a medical assessment by the physician or nurse practitioner and has **not** been diagnosed as having a concussion and has been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition by a physician or nurse practitioner;
- When a student-athlete **is** diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the student-athlete is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition for the duration of the OFSAA event. The student-athlete must follow their school board's return-to-school plan for concussions which supports a gradual return to learning and physical activity.
- When a student-athlete is diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent/guardian has been informed of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the student-athlete is registered and school that the student-athlete attends.

If a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or is suspected of sustaining a concussion prior to an OFSAA event, the student-athlete must follow their school board's Return-to-School plan on concussions and have medical clearance before being permitted to compete at an OFSAA event.

Removal-from-Sport Protocol

The following outlines a process for immediate removal of a student-athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion.

1. Remove the Student-Athlete

Designated person(s) to immediately remove the student-athlete from further training, practice or competition if the student-athlete has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion regardless of whether the concussion or suspected concussion was sustained from an activity associated with OFSAA.

2. Call 9-1-1 if Emergency

Designated person(s) to call 9-1-1 if in their opinion, doing so is necessary (e.g., if there is an emergency and any red flag signs and/or red flag symptoms appear).

3. Inform

- If the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the designated person(s) is to inform the student-athlete's parent or guardian about the student-athlete's removal from further training, practice or competition. The student's teacher-supervisor must inform their school's administration of the student's removal.; and

- The designated person(s) is to advise the student-athlete, or the parent or guardian if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, and the student-athlete's teacher-supervisor that the student-athlete is required to undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner before the student-athlete will be permitted to return to training, practice or competition.

A medical assessment determines whether the student-athlete has a concussion. A student-athlete will **not** be permitted to return to training, practice or competition until they receive **written** medical clearance by a **physician or nurse practitioner** to do so. A verbal medical clearance **will not be accepted**.

4. **Give Protocols**

Designated person(s) to provide the student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent or guardian and the student-athlete's teacher supervisor with OFSAA's Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocols as soon as possible after the athlete has been removed from further training, practice or competition.

5. **Record the Incident**

On the OFSAA injury and concussion reporting form, make and keep a record of incidences where a student-athlete is removed from further training, practice or competition because they are suspected of having sustained a concussion regardless of whether the student-athlete is later diagnosed with a concussion. Submit this form to the OFSAA staff liaison at the conclusion of the event.

OFSAA must limit the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information to that which is reasonably necessary for the purposes of carrying out its protocols, and to limit access to such personal information to only those individuals who require it for the purpose of fulfilling their duties or obligations under the Act. Personal information collected under this protocol shall be retained, disclosed and disposed of in a secure manner and in accordance with the OFSAA's personal information retention policy.

6.

Returning to Training, Practice or Competition

Once removed, the student-athlete is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition for the duration of the OFSAA event, except in accordance with OFSAA's Return-to-Sport protocol.

Return-to-Sport Protocol

If a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or is suspected of sustaining a concussion prior to an OFSAA event, the student-athlete must follow their school board's Return-to-School plan for concussions and have medical clearance before being permitted to compete at an OFSAA event.

The following protocol will be required throughout, and for the entire duration of, an OFSAA event. It outlines a return-to-sport process for an athlete who has been removed from training, practice or competition while at an OFSAA event due to a suspected or diagnosed concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion was sustained or is suspected of having been sustained during a sport activity associated with OFSAA.

1. Receive Confirmation

Ensure that a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion does not return to training, practice or competition until the student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent or guardian provides **written** confirmation to the designated person(s) and teacher-supervisor that the student-athlete has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and has **not** been diagnosed as having a concussion, and has been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition by the physician or nurse practitioner.

2. If Diagnosed with Having a Concussion at an OFSAA Event

If, at an OFSAA event, a student-athlete has been diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the student will no longer be permitted to train, practice or compete in the event. The student-athlete must follow their school board's return-to-school plan for concussions which supports a gradual return to learning and physical activity.

3. If Diagnosed with Having a Concussion prior to an OFSAA Event

If, prior to an OFSAA event, the student-athlete has been diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the student will not be permitted to train, practice or compete at the OFSAA event unless:

- a. the student-athlete has properly completed the graduated return-to-school steps that are set out in their school board's protocol;
- b. the school has provided confirmation that the student-athlete has completed the school board's return-to-school steps and has received medical clearance from a physician or nurse practitioner.

4. Disclosing Diagnosis

The designated person(s) must inform the student-athlete or, if the student-athlete is under 18 years of age, the student-athlete's parent or guardian of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the student-athlete is registered and the administration of the school the student-athlete attends.

OFSAA must limit the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information to that which is reasonably necessary for the purposes of carrying out its protocols, and to limit access to such personal information to only those individuals who require it for the purpose of fulfilling their duties or obligations under the Act. Personal information collected under this protocol shall be retained, disclosed and disposed of in a secure manner and in accordance with the OFSAA's personal information retention policy.