



MATCH OFFICIAL TEAM

COVID-19 Law Variations 2020/21 FACT SHEET

The principal changes are to:

1. Suspend Law 19 (other than the amended Law 19.1 below) in its entirety.
2. Suspend Law 16 in its entirety.

Law 16: The Maul is suspended in its entirety

Players must not bind onto a team-mate who is in possession of the ball. *Sanction: Penalty kick.*

When one or more players come into contact with an opposing ball carrier and do not bring that player to ground, those players may attempt to gain possession of the ball if done immediately, but thereafter must not prevent the ball carrier from playing the ball. *Sanction: Penalty kick to the team in possession of the ball.*

No other player may join these players in contact. *Sanction: Penalty kick against arriving players.*

The ball carrier must play the ball immediately. *Sanction: Penalty kick to the team not in possession.*

Law 18 Lineout

18.11 – Forming a Lineout. The throwing team must, when forming the lineout, have a minimum of five players and maximum of seven players. *Sanction: Free-kick to the non-throwing team.*

18.14 - Amend to - The non-throwing team must match the number of players in the lineout with the throwing team. *Sanction: Free-kick to the throwing team.*

The player winning the ball in the lineout must either pass the ball immediately, release it to a teammate or leave the lineout as soon as they land on the ground. *Sanction: Free-kick.*

NB: Law 18.3 & 4 (quick throw) have not been varied.

Law 19 Scrum

19.1 - Principle. Amend to Where the game would restart play with a scrum, is replaced with a Free-kick in all circumstances.

Law 5 Time

5.7 a: Delete 'scrum'.

5.7 b: Amend to - The referee awards a Penalty or Free-kick, other than a Free-kick for which a scrum would have been awarded previously. (This will end the half or full-time.)

5.9 - Irrespective of the weather conditions, the referee has the discretion to allow water breaks at any stage of the match.

Law 20 Penalty and Free-Kick

20.3 - Amend to - A team awarded a Penalty or Free-kick may not choose a scrum.

20.4 – Amend to - A team awarded a Penalty or Free-kick at a lineout may instead choose another lineout at the same mark.

20.11 - Amend to - Taking a Penalty or Free-Kick. The ball must be kicked a visible distance. If the kicker is holding it, it must clearly leave the hands. If it is on the ground, it must clearly leave the mark. At a free-kick, other than on either five-metre lines, once the kick has been taken legally, the kicker may not run with the ball. *Sanction: Free-kick.*

NB: For the avoidance of doubt, there is no change to the law relating to taking a penalty kick, which can be played immediately, and the kicker may run with the ball.