

HEALTHCARE PROVIDER RELEASE CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

Student Name: _____

Sport: _____ School: _____ Birthdate: _____

Date of Injury: _____ Description: _____

IMPORTANT NOTE TO HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Per AS 14.30.142, as amended, a student who has been removed from participation in a practice or game for suspicion of concussion may not return to play until the student has been evaluated and cleared for participation by an Athletic Trainer OR by a qualified person who verifies that he or she is currently trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

"Qualified person" means either:

- 1) A health care provider licensed in Alaska, or exempt from licensure under Alaska law(AS 08.64.370(1), (2), or (4),
OR
- 2) a person acting at the direction and under the supervision of a physician licensed in Alaska, or exempt from licensure.

As interpreted by ASAA, Athletic Trainer means a Certified Athletic Trainer.

As interpreted by ASAA, "Trained" means that the provider:

- 1) Has completed the online CDC Concussion Course for Clinicians (www.preventingconcussions.org) in the last two years,
AND
- 2) Has **a)** completed 2 hours of CE or CME in Sports Concussion Management in the last 2 years, or **b)** has completed a one-year Sports Medicine Fellowship, a Certificate of Added Qualifications in Sports Medicine, or a Residency in Neurology or Neurosurgery.

IF YOU DO NOT MEET THESE CRITERIA, PLEASE REFER THE STUDENT ATHLETE TO A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER WHO DOES

If an athlete is removed from participation in an activity because of a suspected concussion:

BUT is found **not to have a concussion**, the athlete's return to play should be determined by the athlete's medical provider in accordance with the provider's assessment of the athlete's condition and readiness to participate;

AND is **determined to have sustained a concussion**, the athlete's readiness to return to participation should be assessed in accordance with the Alaska School Activities Association's graduated Return to Play (RTP) protocol. All student athletes with a concussion must successfully complete an appropriate RTP Protocol that lasts a minimum of six days before resuming full athletic activity. The Return to Play protocol recommended by ASAA's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee is described below.

Students should begin with a period of complete rest in which they avoid cognitive and physical exertion. As symptoms diminish, and the athlete feels able, he/she can begin trials of cognitive work, e.g. reading, texting, computer, TV, school. The introduction of cognitive work should be in short increments which increase progressively in length and intensity so long as concussion symptoms do not recur or worsen. When several hours of cognitive work are well tolerated at home, then attendance at a half day of school is appropriate. When a full day of school is tolerated, then homework may be added. Academic accommodations may be necessary for student athletes as they return to school following a concussion. If cognitive work at any time provokes or exacerbates symptoms, then the work should be discontinued, additional cognitive work should be minimized until symptoms regress, and the student can attempt to advance cognitive work again on the following day.

Only when the concussion symptoms have been entirely absent for 24 hours, does Day 1 of the progressive return to physical activity begin. The **Return To Play Protocol** is to take place over a **minimum of six days, with at least 24 hours between each step**. The rate of progression through the steps in the program should be individualized. Factors which may slow the rate are young age, history of previous concussions, number/severity/duration of concussion symptoms, medical risk factors, and the concussion risk of the sports to which the athlete will return. Physical or cognitive activity that provokes recurrence of concussive symptoms will delay recovery and increase the risk of future concussion. Therefore, if symptoms recur at any step, then physical activity should stop until 24 hours after resolution of the symptoms, and then resume at the previous step.

