

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT
SPORT, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS DIVISION

Consultation Paper

Potential Regulations for *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*

This consultation paper is for discussion purposes. The regulatory proposals described relate to *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, and to policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*. We welcome feedback and request comments by May 7, 2018.

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BACKGROUND:

ROWAN'S LAW (CONCUSSION SAFETY), 2018

On March 7, 2018, Ontario enacted new legislation, *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, as well as amendments to the *Education Act*. This new legislation and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* will protect amateur athletes by improving concussion safety on the field and at school and will make Ontario a national leader in concussion prevention, detection and management.

The purpose of this consultation paper is to seek input from individuals and organizations in the Ontario sport, education, health and municipal sectors (as well as any other interested stakeholders) about the proposed regulations to support the new legislation and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*. This feedback will be used to inform the development of regulations, policies and guidelines that will determine specific aspects of implementation and the responsibilities of amateur competitive sport organizations and school boards.

Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 proclaims an annual concussion awareness day (*Rowan's Law Day*), and will establish mandatory requirements for amateur competitive sport organizations to ensure:

- Annual review of concussion awareness resources by athletes, coaches, and parents/guardians of athletes;
- Establishment of removal-from-sport and return-to-sport protocols, so that athletes are immediately removed from sport if they are suspected of having sustained a concussion; and
- Establishment of concussion codes of conduct that will set out rules of behavior to minimize concussions while playing sport.

Amendments to the *Education Act* give the Minister of Education authority to require school boards to comply with policies and guidelines about concussions involving students. The Ministry of Education already has a policy that expects all school boards to have concussion policies in place: Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM 158). The passage of amendments to the *Education Act* means that PPM 158 will be updated to ensure consistency with the requirements in *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and relevant regulations. The revised PPM 158 will then be re-issued by the Minister of Education as a mandatory requirement for school boards.

The requirements set out in *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* were developed based on a report of an expert Committee that was asked to provide its recommendations to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport about measures to increase awareness and improve prevention, detection and management of concussions in amateur sport. The *Rowan's Law* Advisory Committee was created in the name of Rowan Stringer, a 17-year-old high school student who died as a result of concussions she suffered playing rugby. The Committee report *Creating Rowan's Law: Report of the Rowan's Law Advisory Committee* was tabled in the Legislature in September, 2017. The report is referenced throughout this paper and continues to provide guidance to the government as it moves forward with measures intended to enhance concussion prevention, detection and management in Ontario.

INTRODUCTION

The government is confident that having concussion legislation in place will make a significant difference in the lives of Ontario athletes by improving awareness and harmonizing and enhancing the prevention, detection and management of concussions in competitive organized amateur sport and school boards. The new legislation and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* will have the potential to influence a broader transformational culture change across the province. **It is not intended to create barriers to sport participation, nor to discourage organizations from delivering sport activities.** While concussion safety is encouraged for all athletes, the new legislation is focussed on reducing the frequency and severity of concussions for our competitive amateur athletes.

The goal of *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* is to increase awareness and minimize the risk of concussions, and to change conversations on the field, at school, in communities and in our homes so that we can create a world class amateur sport system in which athletes and Ontarians can participate safely.

Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 is broad framework legislation. Regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* will have to be in place before mandatory requirements set out in the legislation could take effect. The regulations, policies and guidelines will provide specific details and add clarity about the range of the requirements set out in the legislation. This consultation paper is intended to seek feedback to inform the development of these regulations, policies and guidelines.

HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT:

You can provide input in several ways:

1. Provide comments directly online through the following link:

<http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/quickSearch.do?searchType=current>

2. At the bottom of the regulatory registry page for this consultation, click the link titled “Comment on this proposal via email”.
3. Email your comments by completing this attached document and submitting it to **sport@ontario.ca** with “*Rowan’s Law* Consultation Paper” as the subject line.
4. Mail your comments by completing this document, printing it and submitting it to:

ATTN: *Rowan’s Law* Consultations

Sport Recreation and Community Programs Division

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

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We look forward to receiving your input by May 7, 2018.

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your privacy is important to us.

If you submit feedback as an individual, unless you expressly state otherwise, **your feedback will not be considered public information**. However, it may be used and disclosed by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to assist in the development of regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education. Your personal details such as name and contact information will not be disclosed by the ministry without your consent, unless required by law.

If you submit feedback on behalf of an **organization**, unless agreed to by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, **your feedback will be considered public information** and may be:

- Used to assist the government in the development of regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, and concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education; and/or
- Shared with other interested parties during and after the public consultations.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your input. If you have any questions about this consultation, please send us an email at **sport@ontario.ca**.

YOUR INFORMATION

I am responding as an individual

OR

I am responding on behalf of an organization

Please note organization/affiliation: _____ (mandatory text field)

We are interested in your input, whether on behalf of an organization or a sector, or as an individual. To assist you in working through this paper, we have grouped questions that may be most relevant to you, in your specific role or as an interested party. Please indicate the **primary** perspective from which you are commenting. (check one)

Athlete (Q 1-7, 10,12,14-16,18)

Parent/guardian of an athlete (Q 1-7, 10,12,14-16,18)

Coach (all questions)

Official (all questions)

Elementary/Secondary education sector (Q 8-29)

Post-Secondary education sector (Colleges or Universities) (all questions)

For profit sport organization (Q1-3, 5, 7-29)

Not-for-profit sport organization (Q1-3, 5, 7-29)

Municipality (Q 1-3,5,7-29)

Health care sector involved in providing health care supports for concussions (Q 1, 5,10,21, 26)

Other (all questions) – please note below

FUTURE REGULATORY DEVELOPMENT

Your response to the following questions will help to inform the development of regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, or concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*. Once draft regulations, policies and guidelines are developed, they will be posted on the Ontario Regulatory Registry, consistent with government practice.

Should you wish to be informed of these types of future developments, please provide your email or mailing address below and we will advise you of any future postings.

QUESTIONS

SPORTS

As currently outlined in the legislation, *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* focuses on reducing the frequency and severity of concussions in organized, amateur competitive sport. The next two questions will gather additional information to help the government determine which sports will be affected by this legislation.

The government is considering the type of sports that should be included in *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*. Based on the recommendations from the *Rowan's Law* Advisory Committee, "higher risk" sports include those in which the speed of action, person-to-person contact and/or person-to-equipment contact put athletes at higher risk of sustaining a concussion. "Lower risk" sports include those with low speed of action, minimal person-to-person contact and/or minimal person-to-equipment contact.

Note: The next two questions do not pertain to provincially-funded school boards, as requirements for provincially-funded school boards will be set out in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 1: Which of the following approaches do you think the government should consider?

(check one)

- Requiring only “higher risk” competitive sports comply with the legislation
- Having the legislation apply to all competitive sports
- Other, please explain _____ (mandatory text field)

Explanation and Additional Comments:

Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 is intended to protect athletes engaged in amateur **competitive** sport activities, by improving concussion safety on the field. “Amateur competitive sport activities” will include more than actual competitions. They will also include training and practices in preparation for competition.

In order to clarify the scope of amateur competitive sport, it may be useful to define the term “competitive sport” in regulation. One possible definition is:

.....
“Competitive sport” is the act or process of attempting to win at a sport by attaining the most points, a prize, or a higher level of success, between two or more individuals or teams. It also includes training, practices or sport conditioning, specialty sport training camps, scrimmages or sparring, in preparation for competition regardless of whether or not the organization formally organizes, manages or registers athletes for competition. It is not intended to include introductory recreation or sport programs where the purpose is to primarily learn and develop fundamental movement skills and where competition is not the primary purpose of the activity.”
.....

QUESTION 2: Do you agree that the above definition should be used in regulation to define the scope of “competitive sport”?

Yes

No

Explanation and Additional Comments:

SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

The requirements under *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* will place the onus on “sport organizations” to ensure that athletes and others comply with specific requirements of the legislation.

A sport organization is defined in *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* as:

.....
“A person/entity that carries out, for profit or otherwise, a prescribed activity in connection with amateur competitive sport and that satisfies such other criteria as may be prescribed.”
.....

It is critical to provide further clarity about which organizations will be required to comply with the requirements of the legislation. We know that it is necessary for those engaged in amateur competitive sport to know whether or not the requirements of the legislation apply to them.

Note: The next two questions do not pertain to provincially-funded school boards, as requirements for provincially-funded school boards will be set out in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 3: Do you agree that the following organizations should be required to comply with the components of *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* when they offer competitive amateur sports?

- Colleges/Universities (publically assisted)
- Private Colleges/Universities
- For-profit sport entities (e.g., sport-specific academies, specialty sports camps, recreation providers)
- Municipalities
- Not-for-profit sport entities (e.g., provincial or multisport organizations, local clubs or associations, specialty sports camps, recreation providers)
- Sport entities that oversee competitions (e.g., competitive sport organizing bodies)

Yes

No

Additional Comments:

Colleges and Universities offer students the opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular sport activities, including: Varsity sport teams (i.e., intercollegiate and interuniversity sports), non-Varsity sport teams that compete against other Colleges and Universities (i.e., intercollegiate, interuniversity and extramural sports) and Intramural sports. The government is considering whether the scope of requirements for Colleges and Universities should be limited.

QUESTION 4: Which competitive sports in post-secondary institutions (publically assisted and private Colleges and Universities) should be included in the requirements of the legislation?

(check all that apply)

- Varsity sports
- Non-Varsity sports
- Intramural sports
- Other, please specify _____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

ATHLETES

Some states within the United States restrict their concussion legislation to competitive amateur athletes at the age of majority (in Ontario, the age of majority is 18 years old), while other jurisdictions set other age limits. Research suggests that younger athletes are more vulnerable to concussions than adults under 65 years of age. This is based on increased frequency of concussions, the sometimes slower rate of recovery, and the vulnerability of the developing brain in younger athletes. More specifically, brain development research indicates that **cognitive development** continues into early adulthood and that young adult brains continue to develop until the age of 25.

As currently outlined in the legislation, *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* is not specific about the age of athletes to which it will apply, but the intent is to protect athletes who are most vulnerable to concussions.

Note: The next two questions do not pertain to provincially-funded school boards, as requirements for provincially-funded school boards will be set out in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 5: If *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety) 2018* specifies maximum age limits for athletes enrolled in sport organizations, to what age groups should it apply? (check one)

- Athletes of any age enrolled in competitive amateur sport
- All athletes under 25 years of age enrolled in competitive amateur sport
- All athletes under age of majority (under 18 years) enrolled in competitive amateur sport
- Other, please specify _____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 6: The age cut-offs proposed in Question 5 may not be applicable to the average age of competitive athletes in Colleges and Universities. As a result, the government is considering specifying alternate age limits to those proposed in Question 5 for athletes enrolled in competitive sports in Colleges and Universities. In this case, to what age groups should the legislation apply? (check one)

- All athletes enrolled in competitive sports in Colleges and Universities
- All athletes under 25 years of age enrolled in competitive sports in Colleges and Universities
- Other, please explain _____ (mandatory text field)

Explanation and Additional Comments:

Ontario provides a fertile ground for developing home-grown talent and fostering athletic success. Many of Ontario's athletes compete in amateur national and international events.

QUESTION 7: Should the legislation apply to Ontario, national and international athletes, from across Canada and globally, who compete in amateur national/international competitions within Ontario? (check one)

- The legislation **should apply** to all athletes (i.e., Ontario, national and international athletes) competing in amateur national/international competitions within Ontario
- The legislation **should not apply** to any athletes (i.e., Ontario, national and international athletes) competing in amateur national/international competitions in Ontario
- The legislation **should only apply** to Ontario athletes competing in amateur national/international competitions in Ontario

Additional Comments:

COACHES AND OFFICIALS

Coaches play an important role in the lives of athletes. They teach, train and help prepare athletes for competition – ultimately helping them develop to their full potential. The new legislation and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* will require coaches to play a key role in concussion prevention, detection and management.

For the purpose of regulations under *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, or concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*, a “coach” could be defined as:

.....
“A person involved in the direction, operation, instruction and/or training of a sports team or of an individual athlete. This will include **assistant coaches** and **other specialized trainers** that support the role of the coach and support the development of the athlete.”
.....

QUESTION 8: Do you agree with the above definition for “coach”?

Yes

No

Explanation and Additional Comments:

Another important role in sports organizations and competitions is that of an official. Officials have a unique role in sport in that they oversee athletes competing in sports, but are not always present during team practices and athlete training times. The government is considering including “officials” in the requirements of the legislation, through regulations as well as concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*. Similar to coaches, officials can also play a key role in concussion prevention, detection and management.

For the purpose of regulations under *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, or concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*, an “official” could be defined as:

.....
“A person responsible for presiding over: the fields of play, fair play according to the rules of the sport, and the outcome of sporting events, athletic games, and sports competitions. Individuals who participate in monitoring roles, such as timekeepers and goal judges, will not be included”.
.....

QUESTION 9: Do you agree with the above definition for “official”?

Yes

No

Explanation and Additional Comments:

MANDATORY CONCUSSION EDUCATION

It is anticipated that increasing awareness and knowledge about concussions will contribute to fewer incidences of concussions in amateur athletes. *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act* will make it mandatory for various groups to review concussion awareness resources annually. These groups include athletes, parents/guardians of athletes under 18 years of age, teachers, school administrators, coaches, and any other relevant positions, such as officials.

The *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* refers to "concussion awareness resources," which will be information or materials approved by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and made available to the public. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 10: What content do you think should be included in the Minister-approved and supplied concussion awareness resources? (check all that apply)

- Information about the nature of concussions, including the ways in which they commonly occur
- Information about the common signs and symptoms of a concussion
- Information about the steps to be taken to prevent concussions in sport
- Information about the steps to be taken if an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, including the importance of seeking appropriate medical assessment
- Concussion removal-from-sport protocol
- Concussion return-to-sport protocol
- Other, please explain below

Explanation and Additional Comments:

In addition to athletes, parents/guardians of athletes under 18 years of age, teachers, school administrators, coaches and officials, the government is considering if additional groups of individuals should be required to review the concussion awareness resources annually.

QUESTION 11: Which of the following groups of individuals do you believe should also be required to annually review concussion awareness resources? (check all that apply)

- Team or club managers
- Sport specific specialists
- Instructors
- Athletic trainers
- Convenors/organizers for events/competitions
- None of the above, please explain _____ (mandatory text field)
- Other, please explain _____ (mandatory text field)

Explanation and Additional Comments:

Under *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will not be allowed to register athletes unless they (and their parent/guardian, if athlete is under 18 years of age) provide confirmation that they have reviewed concussion awareness resources within the last 12 months. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

The government is considering specifying other circumstances and/or timeframes, relating to this review, such as considerations for one-time registrants (i.e., individuals who register once and have their registration carried forward), multi-year registrants (i.e., individuals who register once for a period of more than one-year) and other individuals or circumstances.

QUESTION 12: In what other circumstances/timeframes should the review of concussion resources be required? (check all that apply)

- At the beginning of the sport season
- At the beginning of the calendar year
- At the beginning of an individual's involvement with the sport organization
- When concussion resources have been revised because of advances in the science of concussions
- I do not believe that there are any other additional circumstances in which individuals should be required to review concussion resources

Explanation and Additional Comments:

QUESTION 13: Should sport organizations and school boards be required to keep track that individuals have reviewed concussion awareness resources?

- Yes
- No

Additional Comments:

CONCUSSION CODE OF CONDUCT

The *Rowan's Law* Advisory Committee recommended that all sport organizations adopt a Concussion Code of Conduct that all participants will commit to uphold. The recommendations called for these Codes of Conduct to include a commitment to fair play, a zero-tolerance approach to behaviours which may put athletes at risk for concussions (such as prohibited head hits and high tackles) and mandatory expulsion from play for such behaviours. The Committee felt that participants engaging in prohibited activities should be expelled for the remainder of the competition.

Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will be required to establish a Concussion Code of a Conduct. Through regulation, the government will set minimum requirements for sport organizations' Concussion Codes of Conduct. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 14: Which of the following should be included as minimum requirements for a Concussion Code of Conduct that would be part of a pledge or commitment? (check all that apply)

- Fair play
- Concussion recognition (i.e., self-disclosure of possible concussion by an athlete)
- Concussion reporting (i.e., disclosing when an athlete suspects that another athlete is injured or experiencing possible concussion)
- Pre-game, post-game or practice check-ins to provide opportunity to discuss any athlete concerns
- Zero-tolerance policy for prohibited play that is considered high risk for causing concussions, as defined by individual sports' rules of the play
- Mandatory expulsion from competition for violating sport organization's zero-tolerance policy (duration to be determined by sport organization with jurisdictional responsibility for the sport)
- Escalating penalties for athletes/other individuals who repeatedly violate the sport organization's Concussion Code of Conduct, including zero-tolerance policy (penalties to be determined by sport organization with jurisdictional responsibility for the sport)
- Other, please specify _____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 15: *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education will require athletes, parents/guardians of athletes under 18 years of age, coaches and educators to review Concussion Codes of Conduct. The government may also require other persons to review Concussion Codes of Conduct.

Which of the following groups or individuals should also be required to review Concussion Codes of Conduct? (check all that apply)

- Team or club managers
- Officials
- Sport specific specialists
- Instructors
- Athletic trainers
- Other groups or persons (please specify): _____ (mandatory text field)
- No additional groups or individuals should be required to review Concussion Codes of Conduct

Additional Comments:

Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will not be allowed to register athletes unless they (and their parent/guardian, if the athlete is under 18 years of age) provide confirmation that they have reviewed the sport organization's Concussion Code of Conduct within the last 12 months. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

The government is considering specifying other circumstances and/or timeframes relating to this review, such as considerations for one-time registrants (i.e., individuals who register with a sport organization once and have their registration carried forward), multi-year registrants (i.e., individuals who register once for a period of more than one-year) and other individuals or circumstances.

QUESTION 16: Under which of the following additional circumstances and/or timeframes should government require that Concussion Codes of Conduct be reviewed? (check all that apply)

- When a revision is made to the sport organization's/school board's Concussion Code of Conduct
- When an athlete has violated the Concussion Code of Conduct
- At the beginning of each sport season (even if the Concussion Code of Conduct was reviewed within the last 12 months)
- Once per calendar year
- Other circumstance(s), please specify _____ (mandatory text field)
- Other timeframe(s), please specify _____ (mandatory text field)
- There are no additional circumstances and/or timeframes under which regulations should require the review of Concussion Codes of Conduct

Additional Comments:

Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, individuals will not be permitted to serve in the role of "coach" unless they provide confirmation to their sport organization that they have reviewed the Concussion Code of Conduct. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

QUESTION 17: What timeframe and/or circumstances should be considered for the coach's review of the Concussion Code of Conduct? (check all that apply)

Within the last 12 months (same timeframe as for athletes and their parent/guardian, if the athlete is under 18 years of age)

When a revision is made to the sport organization's/school board's Concussion Code of Conduct

In instances when a coach has violated the Concussion Code of Conduct

At beginning of each sport season (even if the Concussion Code of Conduct was reviewed within the last 12 months)

Other circumstance(s), please specify

_____ (mandatory text field)

Other timeframe(s), please specify _____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 18: How should sport organizations and school boards be required to make their Concussion Code of Conduct available? (check all that apply)

- Electronically, through a website
- Hard copy
- In-person/group presentations
- Other, please specify _____ (mandatory text field)

Explanation and Additional Comments

QUESTION 19: Should sport organizations and school boards be required to keep track that individuals have reviewed the Concussion Code of Conduct?

- Yes
- No

Additional Comments:

The government is considering a requirement for sport organizations and school boards to review, and update if necessary, the content of their Concussion Code of Conduct on an annual basis.

QUESTION 20: Is this an appropriate timeframe?

Yes

No - please specify an alternative timeframe/circumstance in which sport organizations and school boards should review their Concussion Code of Conduct:

_____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

REMOVAL-FROM-SPORT PROTOCOL

The *Rowan's Law* Advisory Committee recommended immediate removal-from-sport for any athlete suspected of having sustained a concussion.

Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will be required to establish a removal-from-sport protocol for their athletes. The protocol will establish a specific process to ensure the removal of an athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion. The protocol will also designate a person or person(s) with specific responsibilities within the removal-from-sport protocol (the "designate(s)"). Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

For the purpose of regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, or concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*, the government is considering specifying minimum components that will be required for removal-from-sport protocols. The minimum components being proposed align with national standards in the Canadian/Federal Guideline on Concussion in Sport recently adopted by many National Sport Organizations. These proposed minimum components also align with the latest published research on concussions (International Consensus Statement) and are as follows:

- **Concussion Recognition** – Outline the responsibilities of all parties and the processes to support recognition and reporting of athletes who demonstrate visual signs of, or who report, concussion-related symptoms.
- **Removal-from-sport**
 - Designate a person or person(s) and their responsibilities in removal-from-sport.
 - Outline the process the designate(s) must follow for immediate removal of an athlete from further training, practice or competition (i.e., field of play) if the athlete is suspected of having sustained a concussion; OR immediate initiation of emergency medical services (e.g., calling 911) when a serious concussion is suspected.

– Outline the process the designate(s) must follow to ensure that the athlete is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition unless the athlete follows the sport organization’s/school board’s return-to-sport protocol.

• **Medical Assessment** – In instances where an athlete is removed from sport due to suspected concussion, a designate should advise that the athlete and parent/guardian (if the athlete is under 18 years of age) should seek medical assessment.

• **Informing Parent/Guardian/Emergency Contact** – Outline the process the designate(s) must follow to immediately inform the athlete’s parent/guardian (if the athlete is under 18 years of age) or emergency contact: that the athlete has been removed from sport due to a suspected concussion; and that they will not be permitted to return to sport until they follow the sport organization’s return-to-sport protocol, which will be provided to them.

QUESTION 21: Are there any other components that you believe should be added to the list of minimum requirements for removal-from-sport protocols?

Yes

If yes, what component(s) would you add? _____ (mandatory text field)

No

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 22: Are there any circumstances in which any of the four minimum components in the removal-from-sport protocol should not apply?

Yes

If yes, please specify these circumstances:

_____ (mandatory text field)

No, the minimum components should apply in all circumstances

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 23: Should the government consider requiring sport organizations and school boards to keep track of any incidents of removal-from-sport due to suspected concussion?

Yes

No

If no, why? _____ (mandatory text field)

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 24: In addition to the designate(s)' role in removal-from-sport, are there any other individuals who should be required to have a role in dealing with an athlete who has sustained a concussion during training, practice or competition?

Yes

If yes, please specify: _____ (mandatory text field)

No

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 25: In addition to the designate(s), which of the following individuals should be required to confirm to the sport organization or school board that they have reviewed the sport organization's or school board's removal-from-sport protocol? (check all that apply)

Coach

Official

Other, please explain _____ (mandatory text field)

None – No other individuals should be required to confirm to the sport organization or school board that they have reviewed the removal-from-sport protocol

Explanation and Additional Comments:

RETURN-TO-SPORT PROTOCOL

The *Rowan's Law* Advisory Committee recommended that sport organizations and school boards implement a return-to-sport process that includes progressive steps, guided by current evidence, prior to any return-to-sport.

Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will be required to establish a return-to-sport protocol for athletes who have sustained a concussion or are suspected of having sustained a concussion. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education.

For the purpose of regulations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, or concussion policies and guidelines under the *Education Act*, the government is considering specifying minimum components for return-to-sport protocols that will align with national standards in the Canadian/Federal Guideline on Concussion in Sport recently adopted by many National Sport Organizations.

Each sport organization and school board will be required to develop and implement a return-to-sport protocol that could include these minimum components:

- **Initial Medical Assessment** – Requirement for athletes to provide confirmation of a diagnosis of concussion (or confirmation that they have not been diagnosed with a concussion) from an authorized regulated health professional practicing within their existing scope of practice (e.g., physicians and nurse practitioners).
- **Communication** – Requirement to communicate to athletes (and parent/guardians of athletes under 18 years of age) the importance of sharing any diagnosis of their concussion with any other sport organizations/schools the athlete is registered with, as well as with key individuals such as coaches and educators.

• **Stepwise Sport-Specific Progressions Supporting Return-to-Sport** –

- Detailed sport-specific activities and goals for each stage of a graduated return-to-sport strategy for athletes who have been diagnosed with a concussion.
- Athletes’ stepwise return-to-sport progressions should be supported by athletes, coaches, parents/guardians and authorized regulated health professionals practicing within their existing scope of practice, in order to enable athletes’ gradual return to sport activities.
- Acknowledgement and communication to elementary/secondary school athletes (and parent/guardians of athletes under 18 years of age) that they should also be adhering to return-to-school protocols at their school and that they should return to full sport activities only after they have returned to full-time school activities.

- **Medical Assessment** – Requirement that athletes demonstrate to the sport organization or school that they have obtained medical clearance from an authorized regulated health professional practicing within their existing scope of practice prior to full return-to-sport.

QUESTION 26: Are there any other components that you believe should be added to the list of minimum requirements for return-to-sport protocols?

Yes

If yes, what elements would you add? _____ (mandatory text field)

No

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 27: Are there circumstances in which you think any of the minimum components in the return-to-sport protocol would not apply?

Yes

If yes, please specify these circumstances:

_____ (mandatory text field)

No, the minimum components should apply in all circumstances/situations

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 28: Under the *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*, sport organizations will be required to designate a person(s) ("designate(s)") with the responsibility of ensuring that athletes with suspected/diagnosed concussions do not return-to-sport until permitted to do so, in accordance with the return-to-sport protocol. Similar requirements may be set for provincially-funded school boards in concussion policies and guidelines established by the Minister of Education. Aside from these designates, are there any other individuals who should be required to have a responsibility for ensuring the return-to-sport protocol is followed?

Yes

If yes, please specify: _____ (mandatory text field)

No

Additional Comments:

QUESTION 29: Which of the following individuals should be required to confirm to the sport organization or school that they have reviewed the return-to-sport protocol? (check all that apply)

- Coach
- Official
- Sport organization/school's designate for the purposes of implementing the return-to-sport protocol
- Other, please explain
- None – Individuals should not be required to confirm to the sport organization or school that they have reviewed the return-to-sport protocol

Explanation and Additional Comments:

The survey is complete. Thank you for your input!