

**SCOTTISH FA**

**COVID PROTECTION LEVEL  
UPDATE**

**ADULTS (AGED 18+)  
RETURN TO TRAINING**

**MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2020**



# CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION
- TRAVEL GUIDELINES
- Role Of The Club
  - Plan & Prepare
  - Facility Access
  - Test & Protect Protocols
  - Health & Hygiene
  - Role Of The COVID Co-ordinator
- Role Of The Coach
  - Plan & Prepare
  - During The Session
  - After The Session
- Role Of The Player
  - Plan & Prepare
  - During The Session
  - After The Session
- Facility Set Up
  - Plan & Prepare
  - Pitch Set Up
  - Timetable

# INTRODUCTION

- This guidance applies to all Scottish FA National Affiliated Associations leagues and clubs and is in accordance with the Scottish Government COVID Protection Levels as announced on Thursday 29th October 2020.
- More detailed information on these revised restriction levels can be found within the Scottish Government's 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scotland's Strategic Framework' which can be downloaded in PDF format here: [www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-scotlands-strategic-framework/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-scotlands-strategic-framework/)
- Please note that for the Adult game, specific restrictions apply – there is separate guidance available for Under 18s.
- All clubs MUST follow all Scottish Government COVID guidance related to sports and leisure facilities found here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-sport-and-leisure-facilities/>
- In addition to the above, all clubs MUST follow sportscotland's latest sports facility guidance release available here (<https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/getting-your-facilities-fit-for-sport/>). As with previous phases, we continue to work closely with the national agency for sport to ensure consistency and clarity across our respective guidance and key messaging.
- These specific protocols are in accordance with current Scottish Government COVID guidelines and MUST be implemented in conjunction with Scottish FA COVID Levels Guidance found at the Scottish FA's Return to Football Hub: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/covid-protection-levels-guidance/> ).
- This document compliments all of the above guidance. It should not be read in isolation.

# INTRODUCTION

- During organised training Adults can participate in groups of up to:
  - 10 players and 2 coaches (within a 1/4 size pitch area) or indoor 5v5 court size.
  - 14 players and 3 coaches (within a 1/3 size pitch area) or indoor 7v7 court size.
  - 18 players and 4 coaches (within a 1/2 size pitch area).
- Where contact training is permitted, players do not need to adhere to physical distancing whilst on the pitch, but all coaches must maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times.
- During this phase and to assist with planning and communication, out with the football-related activity itself, all adult participants must observe 2 metre physical distancing in and around the facility/venue. This assists with anchoring related Scottish Government advice and messaging in this regard.
- Full first aid can be administered by coaches but must adhere to new guidelines. First aid protocols can be found on the Scottish FA Return To Football Hub, here: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/>.
- Clubs with more than 1 team must appoint a COVID Co-ordinator to ensure all 'best practice' guidance is followed by all members – players, coaches and club volunteers alike – promoting a safe & confident return to training. See COVID Co-ordinator role description here: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/media/6480/covid-co-ordinator-role-description.pdf>.
- Each club team must appoint a team COVID Officer who must complete a short online sportscotland COVID Officer e-learning module. Covid Officer e-learning module can be found here: [https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r\\_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/](https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/)
- It is a club's responsibility that they follow all appropriate guidelines to enable the return to training in a safe manner.
- Clubs must visit and understand all relevant facilities guidance available on the Scottish FA 'Return to Football Hub, here: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/>.
- All members are reminded of who your Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer and how to contact them.



# TRAVEL GUIDELINES

- For the most up-to-date travel advice for your local authority area, please see the Scottish Government COVID Protection Levels page on the Scottish FA Return to Football Hub:  
<https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/covid-protection-levels-guidance/>
- Players should travel to training by foot, bike or car wherever possible. These remain the preferred method of travel and the lowest transmission risk.
- Current Scottish Government advice recommends that if travelling by car YOU MUST ONLY TRAVEL WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN OR YOUR EXTENDED HOUSEHOLD. Please follow these guidelines:  
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/transport-transition-plan/advice-on-how-to-travel-safely/#section-63888>.
- Ensure you remain up to date with any travel advice or restrictions posted on the Scottish Government's website:  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/getting-around/>.
- It is a club's responsibility to follow all appropriate guidelines to enable the return to training in a safe manner. Clubs must visit and understand all relevant guidance available on the Scottish FA 'Return to Football Hub'.

# Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland

**F**

Face coverings



**A**

Avoid crowded places



**C**

Clean your hands regularly



**T**

Two metre distance



**S**

Self isolate and book a  
test if you have symptoms



[nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](https://nhsinform.scot/coronavirus)  
#WeAreScotland

# ROLE OF THE CLUB



# PLAN & PREPARE

- Ensure your club and ALL players and officials are registered with your Affiliated National Association and have completed all the appropriate appointment & selection procedures, training requirements, and first aid qualifications before returning to training.
- Clubs with more than 1 team must appoint a COVID Co-ordinator to ensure all 'best practice' guidance is followed by all members - players, coaches and club volunteers alike – promoting a safe & confident return to training. COVID Co-ordinator role description can be found here: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/media/6480/covid-co-ordinator-role-description.pdf>.
- Each club team must appoint a COVID Officer to ensure all 'best practice' guidance is followed by all team members - players, coaches and club volunteers alike – promoting a safe & confident return to training.
- Ensure each team COVID Officer attends a short online sportscotland COVID Officer e-learning module: [https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r\\_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/](https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/) ).
- Coaches are responsible for the safety of the players and should be fully aware of their own club's policies and those of any venue(s) used.
- Ensure appropriate PPE equipment is made available to each team first aider.
- Ensure there are enough first aid qualified officials and adequate first aid provision at all training sessions.
- Online payments for sessions should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place to avoid handling cash wherever possible.
- Communicate with all members to ensure they understand the new procedures and feel safe and ready to return to training.
- Complete risk assessments for return to training.
- Liaise with your insurers to check that you're covered for all activity offered.



# FACILITY ACCESS

- If you own or manage your facility please adhere to all relevant Scottish Government guidelines.
- If you own or manage your facility, read through and follow sportscotland's "Getting Your Facility Fit for Sport" guidance.
- Sports facility operators and clubs may now open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website; Opening Public Toilets Guidelines. Risk assessment and control measures should be proactively monitored by clubs/operators and appropriate cleaning procedures, equipment, disinfectant and all other materials should be provided as per Health Protection Scotland guidance.
- Clubs and participants should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will open immediately.
- Owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities, putting plans in place to re-engage staff and setting up operations that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.
- Be aware that changing room access may not be available when returning, plan appropriately to manage this e.g. require all players to arrive fully changed.
- This is a difficult time for everyone so please emphasise the importance of patience.
- If you are hiring a facility ensure you are aware of and follow all procedures that the owner/operator has put in place to ensure user safety.
- If you are using a public space, please follow all guidelines and be respectful to other users.
- Scottish Government advice on staying safe and protecting others:  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/>.

# TEST AND PROTECT PROTOCOLS

- If you have COVID symptoms, contact the NHS to arrange to be tested at 0800 028 2816 or [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot).
- If someone who has attended your club activity or activity on your site, develops symptoms of COVID, they should be directed to follow the Scottish Government's 'test and protect' guidelines, which can be read on the nhsinform.scot website.
- Ensure an accurate register, including contact details, is kept for EVERY session. This register should be held by the appropriate COVID Co-ordinator, session lead coach or facility operator for 21 days.
- Ensure all participants are aware of who their relevant COVID Co-ordinator or facility operator contact is, should they have to pass on their details to a member of the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team.
- It is not the responsibility of the football club or facility operator to inform members if someone at the club has tested positive for COVID. This will be done by the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team. An individual's right to privacy must be observed.
- The football club or facility operator will be expected to be able to pass on contact details of all attendees should they be asked by a member of the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team.
- Data protection guidance should be followed at all times and personal details not held for any longer than is necessary.

# HEALTH & HYGIENE

IMPORTANT: Remind all members of the following protocols:

- Scottish Government advice remains that anyone with symptoms of COVID should self-isolate for 10 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.
- Outside your organised training session 2 metre physical distancing must be adhered to by EVERYONE at ALL times.
- Full first aid can be administered by coaches but must adhere to new guidelines. First aid protocols can be found on the Scottish FA Return To Football Hub.
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue in an appropriate bin at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face and ensure you clean your hands when you finish participating.
- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should confirm to EN14476 standards.
- All coaching should take place outdoors.

# ROLE OF COVID CO-ORDINATOR

This person should:

- Follow the COVID co-ordinator role profile as outlined on the Scottish FA 'Return to Football 'Hub'.
- Be familiar with Scottish Government and Scottish FA guidelines in relation to COVID, and be guided by them at all times.
- We could encourage the COVID coordinator to be a fully registered official of the club.
- Work closely with the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer/Safeguarding Officer.
- Encourage everyone involved with the club to take collective responsibility and ensure all guidelines are adhered to.
- The COVID Co-ordinator will retain all session registers for their allocated groups and act as first point of contact for NHS Scotland Test & Protect staff in the event of any reported positive tests. However, all team COVID Officers must retain a copy of the register for every session they lead as back-up in the event of any admin issue.
- Ensure each club team appoints a COVID Officer.
- Liaise with and support each team COVID Officer to ensure they are aware of and adhere to club & Scottish FA Return to Training Guidelines.
- The COVID Co-ordinator must ensure the following:
  - Every team COVID Officer attends a short online sportscotland COVID Officer e-learning module. ([https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r\\_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/](https://rise.articulate.com/share/gnk3qPoxD30r_1rmijUPJipuOksCwGs9#/) ).
  - Once completed, each team COVID Officer must provide a valid certificate of completion to the club COVID Co-ordinator.
  - COVID Co-ordinator must maintain an up to date record of all team COVID Officers who are sportscotland COVID training certified.
  - No match play will be allowed without a COVID Officer with who has a certified sportscotland COVID certificate.



# ROLE OF THE COACH



# PLAN & PREPARE

- Make sure that the activity is appropriate for the age and stage of player.
- Ensure you have all appropriate PPE equipment necessary to administer first aid. First aid protocols can be found on the Scottish FA Return to Football Hub.
- Coaches/COVID Officers must maintain accurate registers of attendees, times and dates. These should be shared with the appropriate COVID Co-ordinator to allow contact tracing if required.
- Where possible, come to the football club on foot or by bicycle, individually by car and try to avoid using public transport.
- Coaches and volunteers from high risk groups should self-assess whether they should attend training sessions. Consult your doctor for advice if you are unsure.
- Arrive in time to ensure that the training is ready so when players arrive they can start immediately.
- Ensure all players train in a clearly marked out area and set up a designated 'Hygiene Station' and 'Players Area' for your players.
- Clearly communicate the rules to players in advance of training session.
- Come to the football club in your coaching kit. Any dressing rooms may be closed. Make sure that you have been to the toilet before you come to training.
- Bring your own water bottle clearly marked to ensure no sharing.
- Suitable example activity sessions which follows guidance on physical distancing will be made available on the Scottish FA Return to Football Hub.

# DURING TRAINING

- Remember: During organised training players aged 18+ can only participate in groups of up to:
  - 10 players and 2 coaches (within a 1/4 size pitch area).
  - 14 players and 3 coaches (within a 1/3 size pitch area).
  - 18 players and 4 coaches (within a 1/2 size pitch area).
- Where contact training is allowed, players do not need to adhere to physical distancing whilst on the pitch, but all coaches must maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times.
- It is important that we don't push our players too hard and cause an increased risk of injury.
- Physical intensity should start low and increase gradually.
- Hand shakes are not allowed.
- Please avoid using your hands at any stage during the activity to feed the balls to players. For goalkeepers, please adhere to COVID Goalkeeper guidelines, which can be found here: <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/media/6918/guide-for-gks-24-august.pdf>
- Players should stay well hydrated at all times.
- Spitting is not allowed.
- Heading is permitted as per Scottish FA guidance.  
<https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/participation/childrens-youth-football/heading/>
- Ensure players touch or share as few items of equipment as possible.
- Always follow club guidance from, for example, other coaches, COVID Co-ordinator and committee members. Stay with your own training group when several training groups are active.
- Adhere to all appropriate first aid guidelines. These can be found on the Scottish FA Return To Football Hub.
- <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/adult-football/>

# AFTER TRAINING

- Please leave the football club or facility promptly after the training session.
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including any goals used, before and after training.
- Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of the activity.
- Do not leave anything at the venue/facility.
- At this stage, home-based training and setting individual skill and fitness challenges are vital to maximise development within the limited contact time.
- Remind and manage your players, regardless of age, to maintain 2 metre physical distancing at ALL times out-with your organised training sessions. This applies when not on the pitch immediately before and after the session and whilst within the confines of the facility being used.



# ROLE OF THE PLAYER



# PLAN & PREPARE

- If you are feeling unwell, don't come to training. Scottish Government advice remains that anyone with symptoms of COVID should self-isolate for 10 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility/activity.
- For test and protect purposes please ensure you register with your team COVID Officer before each training session.
- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, including just before you leave for training.
- Come ready to take part in training:
  - Have your training kit on.
  - Bring a water bottle that is clearly identifiable as yours.
- Wear clean kit.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser.
- Put your belongings in your designated 'Players Area' (if applicable).
- Do not come to training any earlier than ten minutes before the start.
- Use only your own equipment where possible.
- You must to maintain 2 metre physical distancing with everyone, until you are on the pitch.

# DURING TRAINING

- Where contact training is permitted, players do not need to adhere to physical distancing whilst on the pitch, but all coaches must maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times.
- Follow the instructions of your coaches, club officials or facility staff regards procedures for keeping everyone safe.
- Try to avoid touching hard surfaces. This includes, goalpost, cones, markers, poles, hurdles or any other equipment that is used for training.
- Goalkeepers, please adhere to Goalkeeping COVID Guidelines. Goalkeeping COVID Guidelines can be found on the Scottish FA Return To Football Hub.
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or your elbow and then wash your hands at the hygiene station provided.

# AFTER TRAINING

- Please leave the football club or facility immediately after the training session.
- Please limit your attendance at the football club or facility and only attend for arranged training sessions.
- Apply hand sanitizer.
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including water bottles before and after use.
- Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of the activity and do not leave anything at the venue/facility.
- You must to maintain 2 metre physical distancing, with those out with your household, once you leave the pitch.



# FACILITY SET-UP



# PLAN & PREPARE

- Clubs must be aware of their local authority COVID Protection Level and get information on what you can and cannot do at each level.
- You can check which COVID Protection Level your Local Authority is at here:  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/>
- Football specific guidance for each COVID Protection Level can be found at the Scottish FA 'Return to Football Hub':  
<https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/football-development/return-to-football-hub/covid-protection-levels-guidance/>

Clubs should plan their activity to ensure that there is the following:

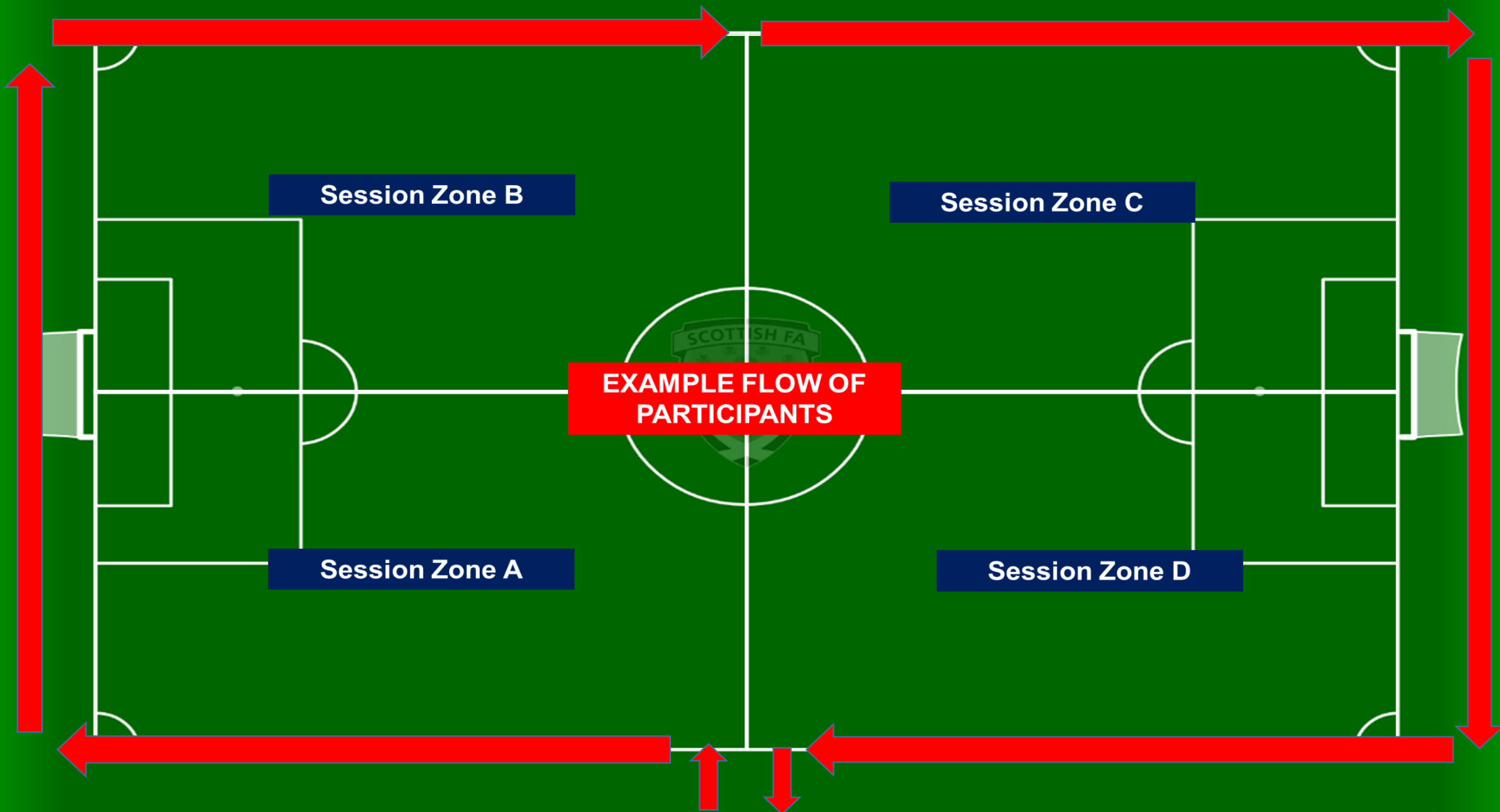
- A COVID Co-ordinator/Officer to ensure that groups enter and exit the pitch / court correctly.
- Adhere to maximum number of individuals and recommended coach/player ratios at all times.
- An agreed meeting area for each individual group to meet before entering the park / indoor centre.
- All groups must exit the park / indoor centre on an individual group basis before the next groups can enter.
- There should be an agreed running order for groups, e.g:
  - Group A move to 'Red Zone'
  - Group B move to 'Green Zone'
- Non players/officials should stay in their cars or leave the facility during a session. They must not congregate thus maximising safety and minimising congestion.

# PITCH SET-UP

- Coaches must ensure players avoid congregating at gates and other potential 'pinch points'.
- The pitch should be marked out into individual training areas. It is recommended a full size pitch is marked out in quarters, thirds or halves (examples included).
- Remember: During organised training Adults can only participate in groups of up to:
  - 10 players and 2 coaches (within a 1/4 size pitch area)
  - 14 players and 3 coaches (within a 1/3 size pitch area)
  - 18 players and 4 coaches (within a 1/2 size pitch area)
- Where contact training is permitted, players do not need to adhere to physical distancing whilst on the pitch, but all coaches must maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times.
- Coaches are responsible for informing all players of the entry and exit protocols at the training venue including hand sanitising on entry and exit.
- Coaches should not enter the pitch before the previous group has vacated it and any remaining equipment is cleaned.
- Group members should remain constant with the same groups of players attending each session.

# PITCH SET-UP

- Coaches should only handle their own equipment (e.g. markers, bibs, small goals etc.) and care should be taken to avoid others touching it.
- Stray footballs should be kicked/dribbled back to position and not picked up.
- Players should not enter adjacent zones at any stage.
- To avoid congestion you could increase change over time between sessions.





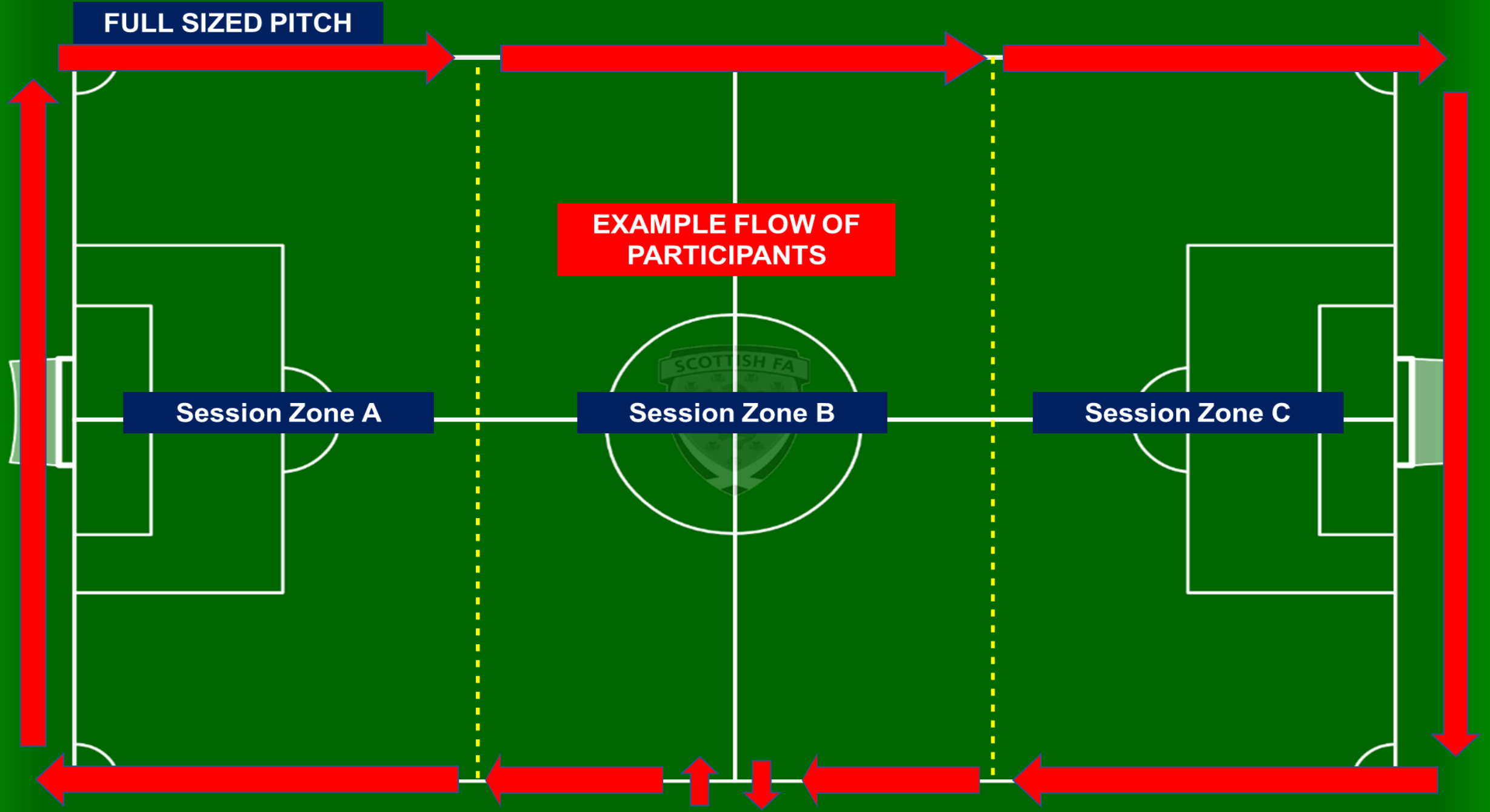
FULL SIZED PITCH

EXAMPLE FLOW OF PARTICIPANTS

Session Zone A

Session Zone B

Session Zone C



# FULL SIZED PITCH

## BUFFER ZONES

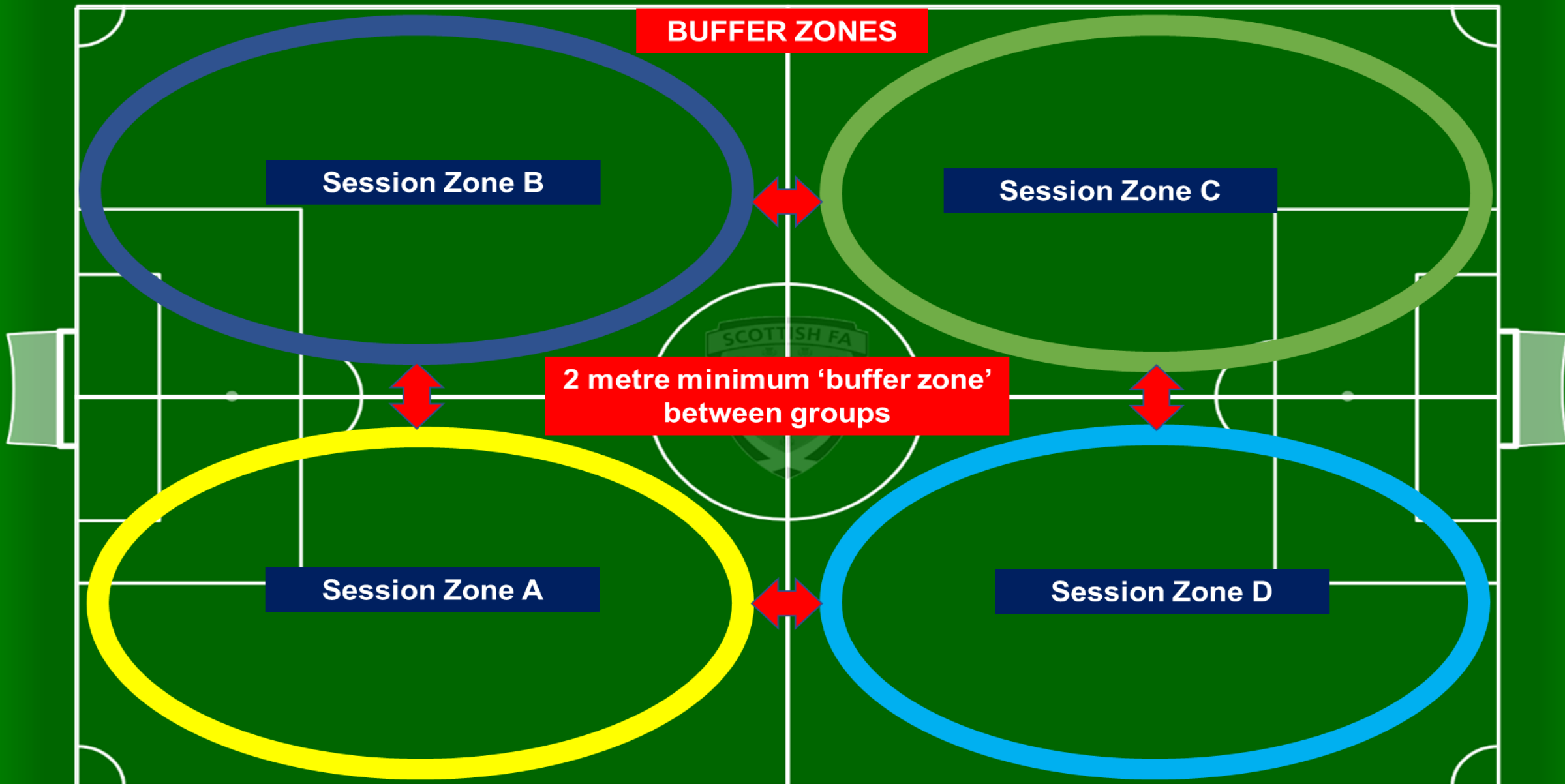
Session Zone B

Session Zone C

2 metre minimum 'buffer zone'  
between groups

Session Zone A

Session Zone D



# FULL SIZED PITCH

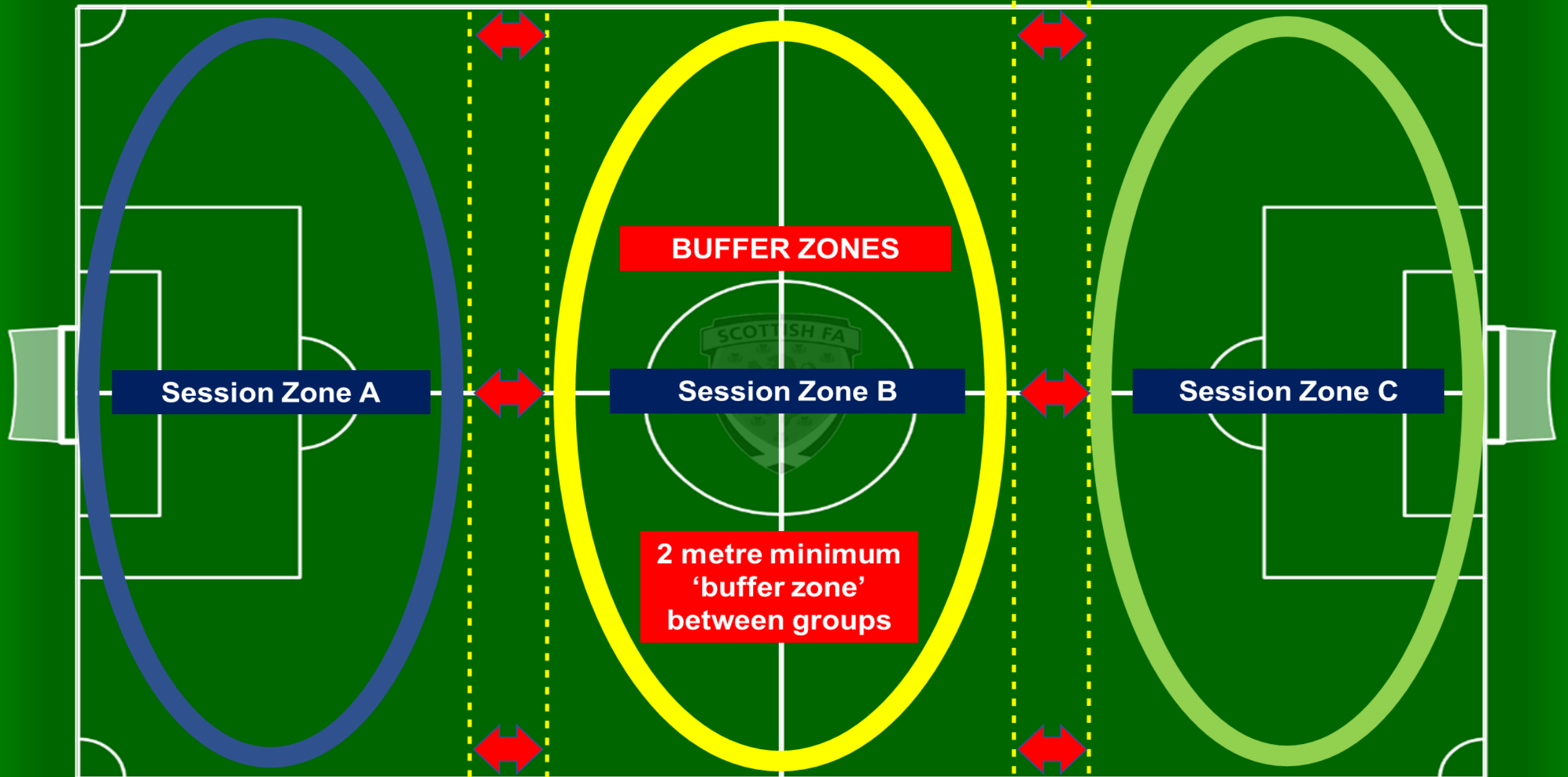
Session Zone A

BUFFER ZONES

Session Zone B

Session Zone C

2 metre minimum  
'buffer zone'  
between groups



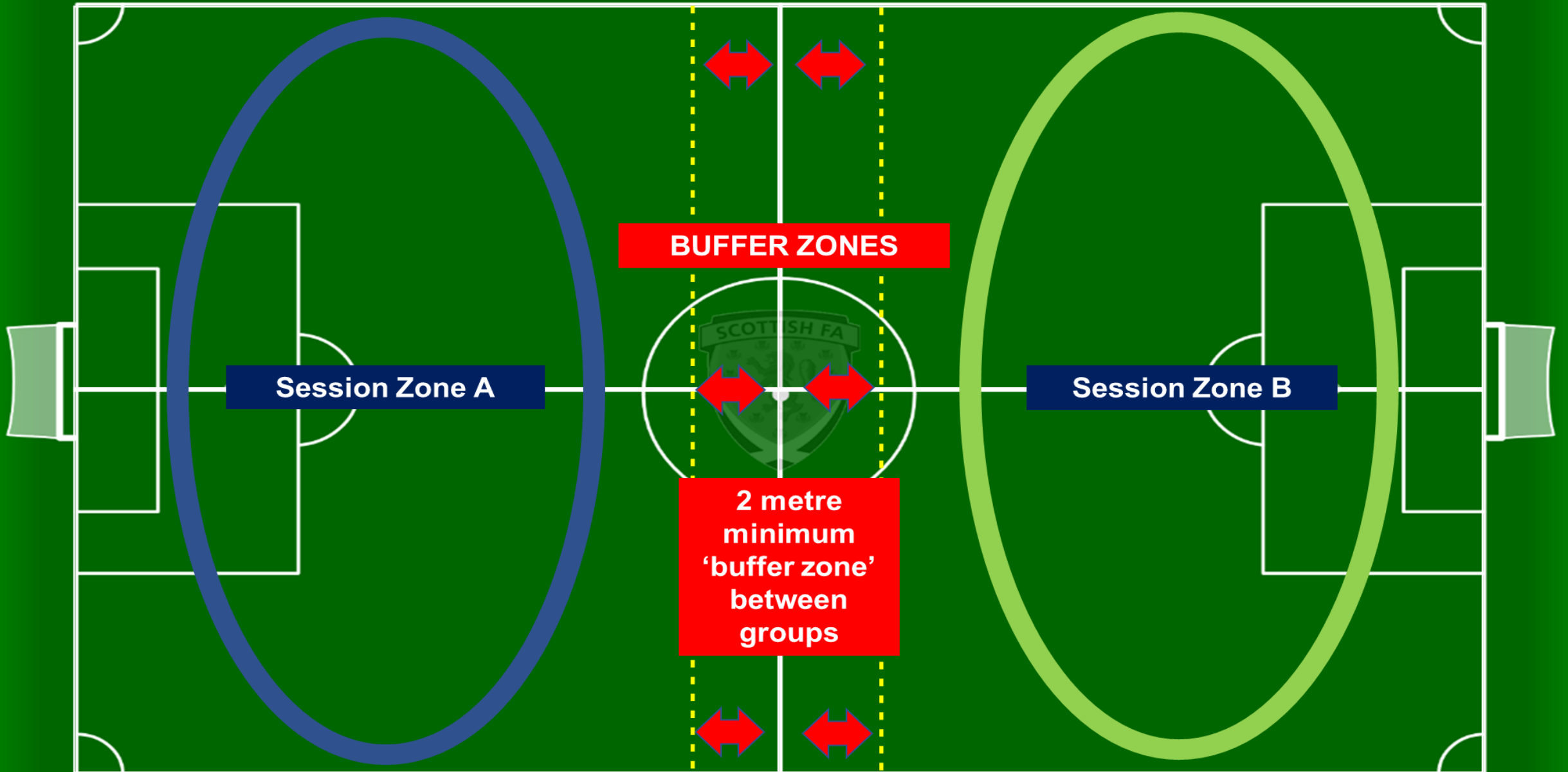
# FULL SIZED PITCH

Session Zone A

BUFFER ZONES

Session Zone B

2 metre  
minimum  
'buffer zone'  
between  
groups



## BUFFER ZONES

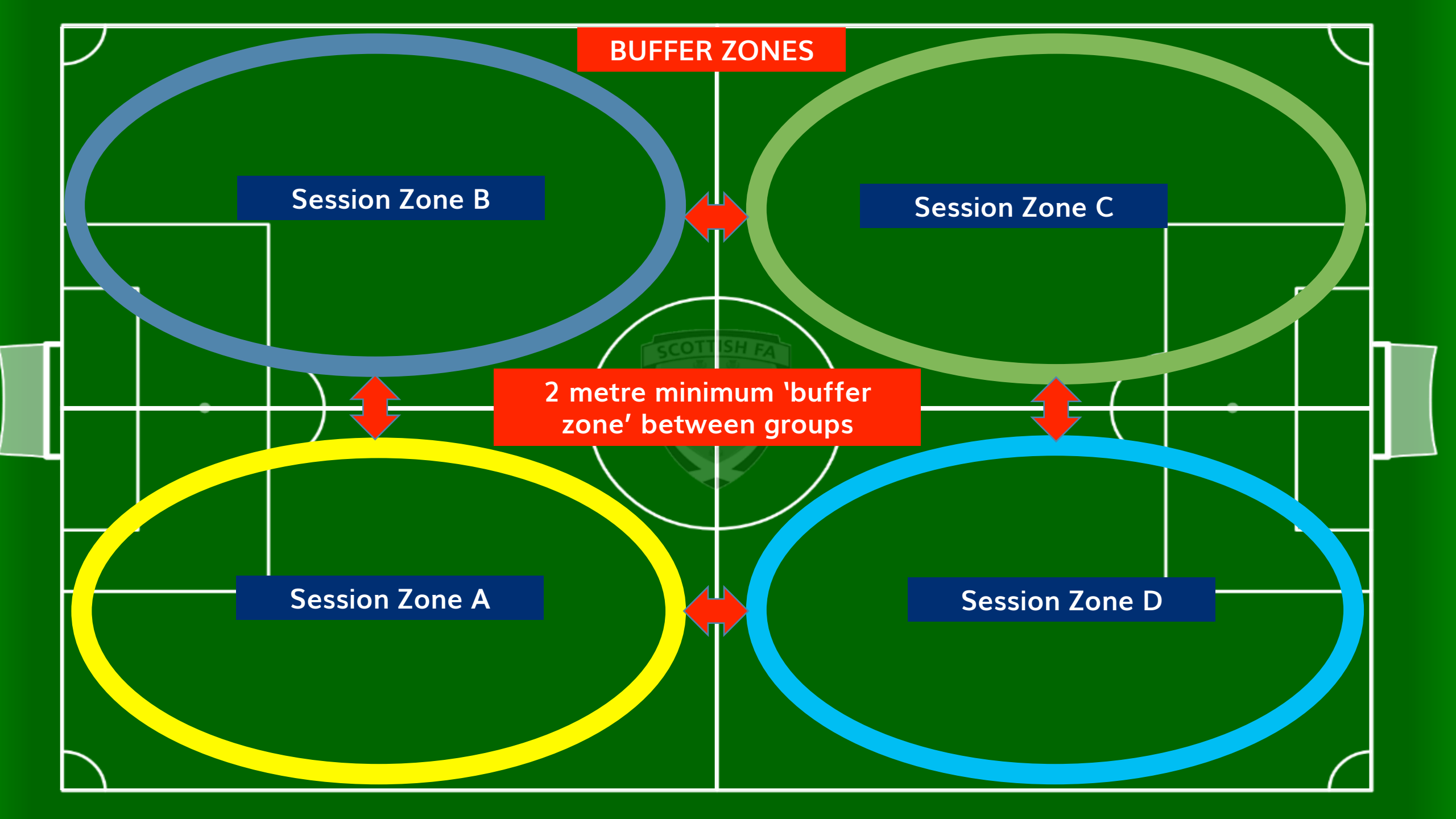
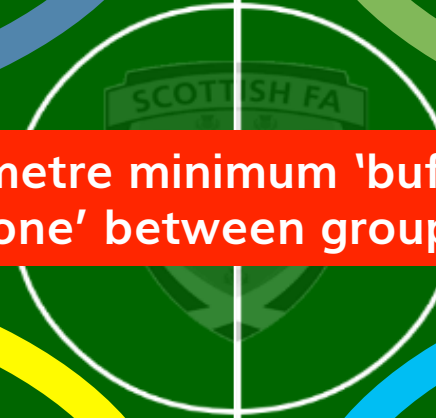
Session Zone B

Session Zone C

2 metre minimum 'buffer zone' between groups

Session Zone A

Session Zone D





Maximum 17  
individuals  
(14 players, 3  
coaches) on 1/3 pitch

Groups must stay  
within agreed  
training area

Maximum 51  
individuals  
(42 players, 9  
coaches) across the  
full pitch

COVID Officer and  
First Aiders can be  
off pitch i.e. does  
not need to be a  
coach within the  
group

First Aid protocol  
must be followed

Maximum 22 individuals  
(18 players, 4 coaches)  
on 1/2 pitch

Session Zone A

Groups must stay  
within agreed  
training area

Maximum 44 individuals  
(36 players, 8 coaches)  
across the full pitch

COVID Officer and  
First Aiders can be  
off pitch i.e. does not  
need to be a coach  
within the group

Session Zone B

First Aid protocol  
must be followed

# TIMETABLE

- Adult activity should NOT exceed 3 training sessions per week for no more than 90 minutes per session.
- Clubs and facility operators must timetable the arrival of all groups and ensure that car parking areas are marked out accordingly.
- Individual groups must know their arrival time and should wait at agreed meeting point before entering the pitch.
- Groups must enter the pitch and move directly to the designated area.
- All groups must clear the pitch 15 minutes before the next groups enter.
- Incoming groups must remain in their cars or at specified waiting areas until the pitch is clear.

## Example Timetable (3<sup>rd</sup> of a Pitch)

Arrival Time	Training Time	Finish Time	Maximum group on full pitch
4:45pm	5:00pm	6:00pm	51 (Max 14 Players & 3 Coaches in one zone)
6:15pm	6:20pm	7:20pm	51 (Max 14 Players & 3 Coaches in one zone)
7:35pm	7:40pm	8:40pm	51 (Max 14 Players & 3 Coaches in one zone)
8:55pm	9:00pm	10:00pm	51 (Max 14 Players & 3 Coaches in one zone)



Visit: [scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball](https://scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball)