



**COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY ACTION
PLAN**

**BAFA STAGE 5 – MODIFIED CONTACT FOOTBALL
COMMUNITY CLUB GUIDANCE FOR SCOTLAND**

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With effect from 17 May 2021

These guidelines apply to Scotland and have been produced in line with sportscotland's latest [sport and physical activity guidance](#). These guidelines have also been created to reflect the most recent version of Scotland's [coronavirus strategic framework](#) and changes detailed in the [lockdown easing timetable](#) shared by the Scottish Government that come into effect from **17 May 2021**.

Make sure you read this guidance carefully and fully understand the requirements in place to meet with the varying restrictions outlined by Scottish Government.

Protection levels

It is the responsibility of clubs to be aware of their local area protection level and the associated restrictions that may be placed on American football activity and consider this at all times as part of their risk assessment and activity planning.

Clubs must use the [post-code checker](#) to confirm which protection level their club activity will take place in, and then review the protection level activity guide on the BAFA website for an overview of what activity is permitted in which level. **Given the small number of BAFA clubs in Scotland, particular notice must be taken of any travel restrictions in place and what this may mean for members who live outside of the local authority region in which the club operates and who may be in a higher or lower [protection level](#).**

Please also be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced at short notice. Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, guidance in this document may not apply. Please also make sure you check with BAFA, **sportscotland** and the [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#) website for any additional updates or changes.

BAFA Stage 5 Return to Play – overview

BAFA Stage 5 Return to Play allows for the gradual phased return of contact American football activity, over four steps of gradually increasing modified contact activity and duration, on top of unlimited non-contact practice activity.

The reintroduction of modified contact activity is hugely important to ensure players in all our contact formats of American football can start to practice core skills and are able to progress back towards regular contact practice and games.

Our guidance details what level and duration of activity is permitted at each step of Stage 5 but is also designed to allow coaching staff some flexibility to use their own judgement at the speed at which their teams move through the process. Our guidance recommends a two-week period for each step of Stage 5, but as a minimum we expect teams to hold at least two practice sessions at each stage before moving to the next.

Please note that completing Stage 5d requirements does not mean teams are then permitted to return to full contact practice. This will not be permitted by BAFA until Stage 6 – the date for which will be advised by BAFA. Teams should continue to work to no further than Stage 5d guidelines until then.

The wellbeing of participants is vital, so we must continue to be cautious in our approach to ensure the safety of our members. Please also be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced at short notice. Please take particular notice of the following key points:

- Only organised American football activity following BAFA Return to Play guidance is permitted at this time. Informal sport and physical activity (for example, a gathering of friends for a throw-about in the park or an unsanctioned game or tournament) is not covered by any exemption and will have to follow the legal gathering limits for outdoors activity.
- Spectators are not currently allowed at any American football activity sessions or games. This includes injured players intending to observe only or parents / guardians who may normally observe their children practicing or playing. Only those people actively participating in a practice session should attend. This does not apply to carers for disabled people or adults needed to supervise under-18s. Where it is necessary for them to be present, supervising adults must adhere to the legal gathering limits.
- Cross-border travel between Scotland and England and Wales is now permitted - with the exception of travel to or from any areas of Scotland in Protection Level 3 or Level 4. Please check what local restrictions on travel or organised outdoor activity are in place before visiting another UK nation to participate in sport. Should you travel to a different nation to take part in American football activity, you must always strictly adhere to local regulations.

If you have any questions relating to this document, or the guidance contained within, please contact covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org in the first instance.

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL CLUBS

University clubs must ensure they work with the Sports or Athletic Union at their institution to meet their own specific return to play and risk assessment requirements. There is no requirement for risk assessment documentation or Club Covid-19 Officer details to be entered in BAFA's GoMembership system. Institution specific guidance for managing positive cases of Covid-19 and recording attendance should also be followed.

In addition, university clubs must also ensure that institution-specific regulations are followed in respect to registering playing membership ahead of facilitating physical activity. Please note, the £20 player affiliation fee has been waived for the 2020-21 academic year, but coaches must be registered on BAFA's GoMembership system as usual ahead of activity resuming.

As with National Leagues clubs, no inter-club games are permitted during BAFA Return to Play Stage 5. University clubs who plan to hold inter-university or varsity games as part of Stage 6 will need to provide advance notification and a risk assessment to BUCS Competition Commission Lead Marcus Boswell at bucs@britishamericanfootball.org in order to confirm plans have been overseen and approved by their Sports or Athletic union or other appropriate departments. BAFA will then sanction as appropriate and confirm to BAFRA that officials can be provided if requested.

AMENDMENTS

The table below lists amendments to this guidance since the last version effective on 29 April 2021.

Reference	Summary of change
Introduction	Amended wording to amend effectiveness date of guidance and key changes to note
4	To reflect that consideration of creating a safe environment for participation includes officials
20, 21	To reflect that activity can now take place indoors, subject to facility guidance and capacity limits
32	To include information on Protection Level restrictions
34	To reflect that overnight stays are now permitted for the purposes of American football activity
57	Updated wording to reflect socialising is now permitted, but must be within legal gathering limits
66	Updated to reflect participation caps for different protection levels
141	Updated to reflect participation caps for different protection levels

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OFF-FIELD ACTIVITY

CLUB PREPARATION

1. Clubs are only allowed to return to the activity detailed in each stage of our Return to Play process advised they may do so by BAFA.
2. Club management should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of the measures outlined in this document.
3. It is expected that clubs will draw up their own detailed practice protocols, however the Covid-19 adapted behaviours outlined in this document should be common to all clubs.
4. All clubs need to conduct a risk assessment of their facilities, operating procedures and planned activities prior to returning to American football activity. They should have appropriate measures in place to provide a safe environment for players, volunteers and other relevant **individuals including officials**. These measures should be aligned with BAFA and Government guidance. The aim is to introduce suitable control measures to reduce the risk of contracting the virus to as low a level as is 'reasonably practicable'. A BAFA risk assessment template is available [here](#) and an example **sportscotland** risk assessment template is also available [here](#).
5. Clubs should upload a copy of their Return to Play Risk Assessment in BAFA's GoMembership system, where it will be reviewed. Where clubs have multiple teams returning to play in different facilities, a separate Return to Play Risk Assessment should be uploaded for each team. Clubs should make sure their risk assessments are regularly updated to reflect any additional risks and mitigations for modified contact activity, including the provision of adequate first aid supplies and cover as normal.
6. Clubs must also make sure they have an Emergency Action Plan for reacting to incidents. An example template is available [here](#).
7. Participants must be made aware that relevant COVID-19 mitigations are in place and complying with these measures as a condition of participation.

CLUB COVID-19 OFFICER / COVID-19 TEAM LEADS

8. Each club should appoint a Club Covid-19 Officer to help assist in ensuring that the club has taken and maintains the appropriate measures to resume activity safely.

9. The name of your Club COVID-19 officer must also be entered in the club details section of the GoMembership system.
10. All Club Covid-19 Officers should complete BAFA's [ReActivate Covid-19 Awareness Award](#). This training is mandatory for all designated BAFA Club Covid-19 Officers and recommended for all Covid-19 Team Leads and any coaches leading activity, and supersedes any other equivalent training completed. Completion of this training will be tracked by BAFA and certificates should be loaded up within the GoMembership system as an individual qualification for approval.
11. In addition, we recommend the **sportscotland** [Covid-19 COVID 19 Officer e-learning module](#) developed in partnership with Scottish Rugby is also completed by Club Covid-19 officers, team leads and, where appropriate, coaches and club volunteers. The certification of completion should also be loaded up within the GoMembership system as an individual qualification for approval.
12. As we appreciate many of our clubs comprise multiple teams operating across different third party provided facilities, and running to different timings, we know that having a single volunteer club Covid-19 Officer may be impractical. In these instances, we request that each team within the club has a designated Covid-19 Team Lead, reporting to an overall Club Covid-19 Officer.
13. Club management must make sure that the appointed persons will receive all necessary support to undertake their roles.
14. The club must ensure that all members are notified of who their Club Covid-19 Officer is, should they have to pass on their details to a member of the NHS Scotland Test and Protect team
15. The Club Covid-19 Officer and any Covid-19 Team Leads should not put themselves at risk whilst carrying out the role. Duties of these roles include but are not limited to:
 - Completing documented risk assessments and ensuring all appropriate mitigations are put in place by the club before any activity is undertaken.
 - Being aware of and understanding government and BAFA guidelines, communicating these with relevant club volunteers and monitoring that these are strictly adhered to especially in terms of the 2m social distancing rules and the practice activity undertaken by the club.
 - Ensuring there is awareness of your club's Covid-19 protocols across club volunteers and participants, and that processes are in place to ensure participants and parents / guardians for those under 18 take individual responsibility to self-assess for symptoms of Covid-19 prior to attending sessions.
 - Making sure a record of attendees practicing or attending games or tournaments is kept within the club. This may be delegated across the club, for example to Covid-19 Team Leads or coaching staff, but must be accessible by the Club Covid-19 Officer at all times.

- Ensuring all records must be kept for 21 days and used in accordance with GDPR legislation. Clubs should decide how these records will be kept and stored, for example on paper or using an online format e.g. Google Docs or a shared drive.
- Providing safety information and protocols to all players, coaching personnel and parent/guardians prior to the resumption of club activities.
- Ensuring relevant club volunteers are aware of the need to regularly clean and sanitise all equipment after each session (e.g. balls, flags).
- Making necessary representations to club management about any COVID-19 concerns. (Covid-19 Team Leads should raise any issues with the Covid-19 Officer to share first).
- Reporting any areas of non-compliance immediately to club management and ensuring that these are addressed. (Covid-19 Team Leads should raise any issues with the Covid-19 Officer to report first).
- The Club Covid-19 Officer should Inform club management if they become aware of a confirmed case of Covid-19 or if they have been made aware of an individual with COVID-19 symptoms. (Covid-19 team leads should advise the Covid-19 Officer first)
- Ensuring Test and Protect protocols are followed should the club be contacted

A [Covid-19 Officer](#) role summary is also available from [sportscotland](#) to help you return to sport safely.

DEALING WITH A POSTIVE CASE OF COVID-19

16. If an individual receives a positive test result following testing for Covid-19, they will be contacted by NHS Scotland's Test and Protect team and asked to share information about their activities and close contacts just before and/or after developing symptoms or testing positive. Participants who have taken part in club activities during this period should be encouraged to identify this activity on their Test and Protect record to support the contact tracing process. Further information is available on the [NHS Scotland Test and Protect](#).
17. Should the confirmed case be unable to identify all those they may have had contact with during practice or play at the club, they should advise NHS Scotland's Test and Protect during their interview who may contact the club directly to see if contacts may be identified. Evidence of risk assessments, practice plans, record keeping, and other relevant documentation may be requested as part of this review and should be readily available to share if requested.
18. Please note, it is not the responsibility of the club to inform members if someone at the club has tested positive for Covid-19. This will be done by the NHS Scotland Test and Protect team if deemed appropriate, who will advise anyone identified as a close contact to self-isolate or seek testing if required. An individual's right to privacy must be observed.
19. In the event that a club becomes aware of a confirmed positive case of Covid-19, either by being notified by the individual or by NHS Scotland's Test and Protect team, BAFA should be notified by emailing [Covid- 19@britishamericanfootball.org](mailto:Covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org) This information is requested to allow BAFA to monitor the number of confirmed positive Covid-19 cases occurring in clubs, and to make sure clubs have the appropriate support.

VENUE AND FACILITIES

20. All adult American football activity must take place outdoors, with the exception of adult activity in Level 0 areas where this may also take place indoors providing clubs adhere to the capacity limits advised by their facility providers.
21. American football activity for participants under 18 may take place indoors in Level 0 – 3 areas, providing clubs adhere to the capacity limits advised by their facility providers.
22. Use of changing rooms and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although they may be made available (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. It is recommended that players should arrive changed and shower at home afterwards.
23. We know that our member clubs are reliant on third party owned or managed facilities. Adherence to the following guidelines should be worked out collaboratively between club and facility. Clubs should request information from their facility provider on venue operations plans, risk assessments and any special requirements relating to Covid-19 to help inform their planning and understand requirements around the following:
 - Entry exit and parking arrangements in place at venues to ensure social distancing can be maintained.
 - Traffic flow systems and signage at entry and exit points, to ensure that people maintain social distancing rules.
 - Socially distanced areas for teams, officials, and spectators.
 - Hygiene provisions in place.

More information can be found in **sportscotland's** guidance on [getting facilities fit for sport](#).

TEAM EQUIPMENT

24. Before returning to activity, contact teams should make sure all kit that may have been in storage, including any helmets, shoulder pads or other equipment that will be used by participants has been thoroughly inspected and to ensure it meets required safety standards.
25. Players who have their own personal playing equipment, or who hold team playing equipment on loan, should be asked to thoroughly inspect it to ensure it meets required safety standards before returning to practice activity. Parents / guardians should be engaged in this process for younger players. Please refer to Appendix 1 on safe equipment fitting.

REGISTERING WITH THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

26. BAFA clubs in Scotland who use any form of QR code or online check-in to capture information for a venue should be aware that this may mean they have to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and pay a data protection fee.
27. You may need register because you are using an electronic system to gather and store data and most organisations that process personal information are required by law to do so and pay the fee which for small organisations, is between £40-60 per year. If you're subject to the requirement, it's important that you register and pay the fee as otherwise the ICO can impose financial penalties.
28. You do not need to register if you are only using the QR code to capture information to keep an attendance record for your own members. This is because data processing which is only for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership is exempt. Your organisation must also have already been exempt from the requirement to register with the ICO.
29. You also don't need to do this if your venue has a QR code members scan on arrival, but this was not created and is not administered by your club. For example, the people who hire your pitch from require all your members to do this as a condition of use. You also do not need to do this if you are simply recording attendance using pen and paper. Records should be kept no longer than 21 days, in line with data protection regulations.
30. If you are unsure whether or not you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113, or visit <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

SPECTATORS

31. Spectators are not currently allowed at any American football activity sessions or games. Only those people actively participating in a practice session should attend. This does not include injured players who intending to observe only or parents / guardians who may normally observe their children practicing or playing. This does not apply to carers for disabled people or adults needed to supervise under-18. Where it is necessary for them to be present, supervising adults must adhere to the legal gathering limits.

TRAVEL AND OVERNIGHT STAYS

32. Cross-border travel between England and Wales is permitted, and between England and Wales and Scotland - with the **exception** of travel to or from any areas of Scotland in Protection Level 3 or Level 4. Please check what local restrictions on organised outdoor activity are in place before visiting another UK nation to participate in sport. Should you travel to a different nation to take part in American football activity, you must always strictly adhere to local regulations.

33. [Travel guidance and restrictions](#) outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Particular attention must be paid to what this may mean for club members who live outside of the local authority region in which the club operates, and who may be in a higher or lower protection level. Please see the table below for an overview of travel restrictions.

Age Group	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
U18s	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18+ (Adults)	✓	✓	✓	L3 Travel Only	Local Travel Only

34. Overnight stays to take part in American football activity are permitted as long as they are in line with social contact rules for the nation you are in and take any local restrictions into account.

35. No carpooling is permitted – players, parents, coaches and staff should arrive separately unless they are part of the same household. Guidance is available at [Transport Scotland’s advice on how to travel safely pages](#).

36. Participants should, where possible, avoid any unnecessary travel out of area and keep journeys within area to an absolute minimum.

BAFA MEMBERSHIP

37. Only individuals registered in the [BAFA GoMembership System](#) are eligible to participate in sanctioned National Leagues American football activity. The only exception to this is new club members – who may undertake three trial sessions as long as their details are captured as per BAFA’s existing three trial session process. New members MUST be registered after their third trial session.

38. Accurate player, coach and support staff data including full name, email address and phone number is collected upon registration and is available to designated club administrators to help enable detailed Test and Protect record keeping.

39. To support maintaining records for Test and Trace, participants should only take part in activity sessions with their registered BAFA club team and age group.

40. Players, coaches and support staff registered for any BAFA football format may participate in non-contact flag American football activities with their registered BAFA club team and age group.
41. University clubs must ensure that institution-specific regulations are followed in respect to registering playing membership ahead of facilitating physical activity, but coaches must be registered on BAFA's GoMembership system as usual ahead of activity resuming.

TEST AND PROTECT

42. [Test and Protect](#), is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.
 - The gathering of contact information from anyone attending American football activity in a secure and safe manner, will assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service to identify any clusters of cases, contact those who may have been exposed to the virus, and request them to take appropriate steps to prevent potential onward spread.
43. In order to support Test and Protect, Club Covid-19 officers for BAFA affiliated clubs are required to keep a record of the name, contact number, date of activity session and timings for all those attending organised American football activities within the club. This may be delegated across the club, for example to Covid-19 Team Leads or coaching staff, but must be accessible by the Club Covid-19 officer at all times.
44. This information should be stored for 21 days and shared with public health officers when requested. Clubs should decide how these records will be kept and stored, for example paper or using online format e.g. Google Docs.
45. Clubs may be spot-checked by BAFA to make sure this information is accurately captured and there may be sanctions failing to produce records or ensure members are registered.

PROTECT SCOTLAND APP

46. NHS Scotland has launched a free mobile app designed to help with contact tracing efforts and slow the spread of COVID-19. The app will alert users if they have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus.
47. Supported by a dedicated Protect Scotland website, the app is an extra tool complementing existing person-to-person contact tracing which remains the main component of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect system.

48. Further information on the Protect Scotland app is available at www.protect.scot.

PARTICIPANT SELF-ASSESSMENT

49. Prior to attending practice or games, all participants in American football activity must self-assess themselves for symptoms of Covid-19. No one should leave home to participate in activity if they, or someone they live with, have symptoms of Covid-19 currently recognised as any of the following:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss, or change, to their sense of smell or taste.

Any individual who displays such symptoms must follow NHS Scotland and Test and Protect guidance on self-isolation.

50. In addition, any participants who are quarantining following overseas travel or have been asked to isolate by NHS Scotland's Test and Protect because they are a contact of a known Covid-19 case, must not participate in activity.

51. Clubs should ensure that as a minimum a regular reminder process is in place to make sure participants take individual responsibility to complete a symptom self-assessment before attending practice or games. Other assessment processes including paper or online forms or apps may be used by clubs to manage self-assessment.

52. Participants resuming activity should be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the risks associated with playing American football and the transmission of Covid-19 and are happy to comply with the safety measures in place. This should be completed by a parent or guardian for members under 18. A [template form](#) is available here.

53. Ahead of their return, players should be encouraged to thoroughly inspect any contact kit that they own or they hold on loan from their club has not been used in some time, such as helmets and shoulder pads, to ensure it meets required safety standards. For younger players, coaches and club staff should ensure parents / guardians are engaged in this process ahead of any return to practice.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING – BEFORE AND AFTER PRACTICE OR GAMES

54. BAFA clubs should always adhere to current Scottish Government social distancing guidelines before and after any activity, and during breaks.

55. Clubs should strictly limit the time spent congregating at a venue before activity begins. Meet-up times should reflect this – arrival no more than five

minutes before the start time of a session is recommended. This includes arriving changed and ready to begin the warmup, if possible, to minimise time spent waiting or in holding areas.

56. No formal presentation ceremonies or other activities that encourage gathering such as group photographs should take place during or after an activity and the focus should be on reducing numbers in attendance at any one time.

57. Participants socialising after practice or games and reminded that they must adhere to current government guidance on legal gathering limits should they do so.

58. Participants should be strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour outside of your club setting to reduce the risk to their fellow club members when they do attend.

SAFEGUARDING

59. Ongoing restrictions in place during the pandemic will have affected children in many ways. While most will have had a positive time with family, others may have had negative experiences and could be at increased risk. Please continue to follow the process outlined in your club Safeguarding Policy and report any concerns to BAFA by contacting our safeguarding team at safeguarding@britishamericanfootball.org

60. There will be no alteration to the standards we had in place pre-Covid 19, therefore Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership will still need to be in place for designated roles, including coaches, and for any new recruits to roles, prior to any activity resuming with children teams.

61. Coaches and those working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

62. Covid-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to Covid-19:

- Older people
- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities

- Women
- People from deprived communities

63. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

64. The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include;

Communication – Digital exclusion is a key issue. With so many services and so much information moving online it risks worsening the health impacts of the pandemic. We have to think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people about sport and physical activity.

Accessibility – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and leisure centres re-open it's important to build understanding of people's specific accessibility needs around things like hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings so we can provide the best possible support to people to take part in sport and physical activity.

Anxiety, mental health and wellbeing – The pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health for people who share all characteristics. We know that sport and physical activity can have significant benefits for people's mental health so it's vital that we continue to promote those benefits, so people are encouraged to get involved.

Confidence - Confidence to return to sport is a big issue across all groups. We know that some groups are at higher risk from Covid-19 than others (including some ethnic minorities, disabled people and households experiencing poverty). These groups may be even more nervous about returning to sport or starting to participate. They are also less likely to participate in sport in the first place, so we'll need to give extra attention to their needs to help build their confidence.

GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT COACHES

65. Guidance for coaches is available from **sportscotland** at [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#) and from the return to play section of the [British American Football Coaches Association](#) website.

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

PERMITTED AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY AND PRACTICE PLANNING

66. Participants are permitted to undertake American Football activity in line with BAFA rules and regulations as follows:

- Level 0 -1 – non-contact practice, modified contact practice, non-contact intra-club games only. Restrictions on participant numbers per pitch area or per group no longer apply up to a maximum of 100 participants per session for Level 1 and 500 participants per session for Level 0
- Level 2 – non-contact practice, modified contact practice, non-contact intra-club friendly games only. A maximum of 30 people is allowed per half pitch, including coaches in BAFA Stages 5a, 5b and 5c and a maximum of 50 people is allowed in BAFA Stage 5d.
- Level 3 – over 18s – 2m physically distanced group activity or exercise only. Under 18s non-contact practice, modified contact practice, non-contact intra-club games and inter-club friendly games only. A maximum of 30 people is allowed per group, including coaches. Ball transfer (eg, passing activities), is permitted with regular cleaning protocols in place.
- Level 4 - over 12s – 2m physically distanced group activity or exercise only. A maximum of 15 people is allowed per group, including coaches. Under 12s - non-contact practice or exercise only. A maximum of 30 people is allowed per group, including coaches.

67. During BAFA Stage 5 participants aged under 18 in Level 0-3 areas are permitted to undertake modified contact American Football activity as detailed within this guidance, plus non-contact flag and touch American football activity in line with BAFA rules and regulations. This includes non-contact skill development (ie, ball handling, route running) or fitness activities.

68. Modified Contact is defined as non-game contact. Drills should have an emphasis on reduced numbers, for example five groups of six players rotating through drill stations working on 1v1 or 2v1 exercises within their own group. Coaches are encouraged to work to BAFA activity levels 0-1 (on-air and bags) as much as possible.

69. Coaches should risk assess and plan appropriately for each session in advance, be aware of their responsibilities and be clear on expectations with participants. Practice planning should reflect the requirement for regular scheduled breaks for hand and equipment hygiene – before, during and after sessions.

70. Head coaches and team management should ensure all session activities are clearly communicated in advance to coaching staff and players to set expectations. Holding coach and team meetings using virtual conferencing tools such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams prior to your first session is highly recommended where possible in order to brief participants and answer any questions.

71. To help with preparation and pre-planning for modified contact groups, we recommend teams ask players to confirm their attendance in advance.
72. When developing practice plans initially it is important to remember that players have had no contact exposure since March 2020 or even longer, so need to be reintroduced at an appropriate pace suited to the individual to reduce risk of injury.
73. As per [BAFA Competition rules and regulations](#) item 3.8, mixed age ranges may practice alongside each other in the same facility or field but must operate distinctly from each other. No game like scenarios should take place across (or mixing) any age ranges.
74. Under no circumstances should kitted contact players – those wearing helmets and / or shoulder pads - be mixed with un-kitted players during practice activity, even during non-contact drills.
75. Coaches must work to BAFA recommended coach to player ratios for non-contact practice activities and during Stage 5d and beyond. These are:
 - For 13 to 18 years – one adult to every 10 children (1:10)
 - For 18+ years – one supervising adult to every 10 participants (1:10)

TEAM EQUIPMENT

76. All team equipment such as tackle bags, blocking shields and other hand-held training aids are now permitted with appropriate hygiene protocols and any other necessary mitigations in place, such as the use of face coverings when holding hand-held tackle bags and blocking shields in place.
77. Clubs should carry out the following to make sure all equipment is regularly sanitised:
 - Balls should be regularly sanitised throughout, including at the start and at the conclusion of activity.
 - If flag football is included as part of any practice activity, each player should have their own set of flags which they will keep for the duration of the practice or game. Flags and belts should be sanitised at regular intervals during activity, and at the conclusion of practices or games by either the individual, coach, team manager or Club Covid-19 Officer or Covid-19 Team Lead. During games, players should sub-out if equipment sanitisation is required.
 - Each pitch area should have antibacterial wet wipes or spray available to enable this. At the end of each practice or game, the Covid-19 Officer or Covid-19 Team Lead should ensure any other equipment which has been handled (such as cones) is sanitised.
78. Playing Equipment must not be shared between individuals in the same session, and all equipment used by participants and collected back by the team afterwards must also be thoroughly sanitised after use.

79. Cones should be put out and collected by the same person on each pitch - preferably by a coach.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING DURING PRACTICE

80. Close contact face-to-face exposure between participants must be limited to fleeting duration only throughout activities – a max of no more than 3 seconds during drills is recommended.
81. Normal physical distancing and legal gathering limits apply before (including warmups) and after any activity takes place or when taking breaks.
82. Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance, as set out in [Scottish Government guidance](#). This extends to organised sports activity and the field of play.
83. For all other participants a ‘field of play bubble’ can be created during organised sports activity in Levels 0-3 for participants aged under 18 and in Levels 0-2 for participants aged over 18 where permitted that allows contact whilst the activity is taking place, in effect suspending physical distancing guidelines for the duration of the activity. Normal physical distancing and household number guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place - players aged 12 years and over MUST physically distance before and after the activity or when taking breaks.
84. Coaches and others supporting organised activity should attempt to keep physically distant where possible, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible. In such circumstances the responsible Club Covid-19 Officer should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of their risk assessment, for example, recommending the wearing of a face covering.
85. There are no restrictions on the number of households (or extended households) that a coach can instruct per day.
86. Specific consideration should be given to supervision of children under the age of 5 years as it is not appropriate for young children to maintain the models of physical distancing that are suitable for older children, either practically or in terms of child development. You may, for instance, ask a parent to be present.
87. Coaches, officials, parents and guardians should continue to observe physical distancing when involved in children’s activity as a coach, official or spectator.
88. Particular attention must be paid to ensure participants who are not currently active don’t congregate in groups and breach social distancing rules – avoid queues to participate in drills, ensure practice plans are designed to avoid this and keep people moving, set clear expectations before

practice and consider additional mitigations such as encouraging participants to wearing a face covering when not active.

89. Huddles – it is recommended that where possible team huddles do not take place before, after and during practice or non-contact game activities. If these are essential, it is recommended that teams all face in the same direction to receive instructions.
90. Team scoring celebrations involving person-to-person contact are not permitted.
91. No pre or post-game handshakes, or alternatives of any sort e.g. elbowbump or foot taps are permitted.

PARTICIPANT EQUIPMENT AND ETIQUETTE

92. Participants should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser to practices and games and use it at regular intervals in activity.
93. Participants should bring their own clearly labelled or otherwise highly distinguishable water bottle to practice and not share it under any circumstances. No communal water buckets or bottles are to be used.
94. Participants must not share towels, toiletry products, clothing such as practice jerseys or bibs, water bottles, boots, gloves, mouth guards, or disposables such as tape or ice packs.
95. Personal equipment should not be shared between individuals in the same session – for example, helmets and shoulder pads.
96. Should personal playing equipment such as helmet and shoulder pads needs to be fitted by a coach, please refer to Appendix 1 on safe equipment fitting.
97. As the virus is transmitted from respiratory secretions, mouthguard etiquette is very important. Players should refrain from touching or removing their mouthguard, and if they do so must sanitise their hands. Mouthguards must not be left on shared surfaces or public places but be placed in a personal container and stored with personal possessions.
98. Shouting - There is an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations where people are shouting or conversing loudly. This particularly applies when face to face. Coaches and participants who are not currently active should refrain from shouting, and players active on the pitch should avoid shouting or raising their voices where possible, and especially facing each other during.
99. No spitting or mouth rinsing is permitted.

FIRST AID, HEALTH AND HYGIENE

100. Ensure that access to first aid equipment is maintained, and has been updated appropriately for the Covid-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training
101. In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognised that a suitably qualified person, coach or supervising adult may require to attend to the injured participant. The Club Covid-19 Officer should consider processes for managing this as part of the risk assessment. This could include but not be limited to:
- Provision of suitable PPE
 - Training of coaches/supervising adults
102. After contact with an injured participant, medics, physios or first aiders are encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. Records should be kept of any injury treated and passed to the Covid-19 Officer or Covid-19 Team Lead so there is a record of the participants medics, physios or first aiders have come into close contact with for Test and Protect purposes.
103. Participants should wear face coverings, if indoors, before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of a facility – e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas. This is a mandatory requirement. This is a **mandatory** requirement except where an exemption applies, or where there is a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering. For example, if you have a health condition or you are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia or a learning disability. Face coverings do not need to be worn when undertaking physical activity, exercise or showering / changing.
104. Coaches should wear face coverings indoors at all times, except where exemptions apply.
105. Be aware that face coverings discriminate against some deaf people who need to look at lips to help communicate. Staff in facilities should be made aware that it is okay to remove their face coverings to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading and facial expressions.
106. If you are not wearing face coverings and need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue into an appropriate bin supplied at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for 20 seconds.
107. Avoid touching your face and ensure to clean your hands with at least 60% alcohol gel when you finish participating.

108. Further guidance is available at:

- [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)
- [St. John's Ambulance: Covid-19 advice for first aiders](#)
- [HSE: First Aid during the coronavirus](#)

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – STAGE 5 OVERVIEW

	Stage 5a	Stage 5b	Stage5c	Stage 5d
How long for?	Two weeks or a minimum of two practice sessions	Two weeks or a minimum of two practice sessions	Two weeks or a minimum of two practice sessions	Two weeks or a minimum of two practice sessions. Once reached, teams must remain at Stage 5d until Stage 6 is permitted.
Permitted numbers	30 max per wholly separate practice and play area for non-contact practice. Split into groups of 6 players + 1 coach max for modified contact activities.	30 max per wholly separate practice and play area for non-contact practice. Split into groups of 6 players + 1 coach max for modified contact activities.	30 max per wholly separate practice and play area for non-contact practice. Split into groups of 6 players + 1 coach max for modified contact activities. Two groups of 6 players + 1 coach may now also practice opposed.	Protection Level 2 - 50 max per wholly separate practice and play area Protection Level 1 and Level 0 – full roster, BAFA coach to player ratios should be followed
Player equipment	Full contact kit permitted - no sharing of personal equipment during sessions	Full contact kit permitted - no sharing of personal equipment during sessions	Full contact kit permitted - no sharing of personal equipment during sessions	Full contact kit permitted - no sharing of personal equipment during sessions
Team equipment	All equipment may be used and shared with appropriate hygiene protocols and mitigations such as face coverings when hand-held tackle bags and blocking shields in place.	All equipment may be used and shared with appropriate hygiene protocols and mitigations such as face coverings when hand-held tackle bags and blocking shields in place.	All equipment may be used and shared with appropriate hygiene protocols and mitigations such as face coverings when hand-held tackle bags and blocking shields in place.	All equipment may be used and shared with appropriate hygiene protocols and mitigations such as face coverings when hand-held tackle bags and blocking shields in place.
Contact level	Non-contact and modified contact only	Non-contact and modified contact only	Non-contact and modified contact only	Non-contact and modified contact only
Total duration of contact per session	20 mins (Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity)	30mins (Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity)	30 mins (Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity)	30 mins (Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity)
Contact activity permitted	Modified contact only On air unopposed activities 1v1 blocking and tackling 2v1 blocking and tackling within groups	Plus 2v2 blocking and tackling within groups	Plus groups of 6 players +1 coach may now practice opposed with distancing between groups and no press coverage	Plus team activity – offense v defense, special teams vs scout
Contact activity not permitted	No full contact scrimmaging No mixing of modified contact groups No inter-club contact activity No competitive contact games	No full contact scrimmaging No mixing of modified contact groups No inter-club contact activity No competitive contact games	No full contact scrimmaging No inter-club contact activity or competitive contact games	No inter-club contact activity or competitive contact games

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – STAGE 5A

109. Our guidance recommends a two-week period for Stage 5a for contact teams, but as a minimum we expect teams to hold at least two practice sessions at this step before moving to the next.

PERMITTED CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

110. The following activities are permitted in Stage 5a:

- On air unopposed activities
- 1v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach

PERMITTED DURATION OF CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

111. In Stage 5a the permitted duration of contact American football activities is 20 minutes total. Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity is permitted.

NOT PERMITTED AT THIS TIME

112. The following are not permitted in Stage 5a:

- Mixing of modified contact groups
- Full contact scrimmaging
- Inter-club contact activity – for example, a joint practice session, scrimmage or game

PERMITTED NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS AND PITCH

113. Maximum non-contact practice groups of 30 individuals overall per 1/2 pitch are permitted – this is based on either a full-sized rugby pitch or 11s soccer pitch. The maximum number includes coaches.

- Two groups of maximum 30 participants may practice or play on one full sized pitch. However, these groups must remain wholly separate throughout the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for each group are highly recommended to minimise any risks.
- Should other spaces be used for practice – for example – a 7-aside soccer pitch or other area that is a third of a larger pitch or similar, coaches and the Club Covid-19 Officer should use the above numbers as a guide and exercise their judgement while being very careful to not exceed the maximum numbers detailed. This should also be recorded and detailed in the club risk assessment by the Club Covid-19 Officer.

114. During the modified contact element of BAFA Stage 5a practice participants should be split into groups of max 6 players + 1 coach for each drill

station. Groups should remain wholly separate throughout the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Care should be taken to not exceed the overall number of participants permitted per 1/2 pitch.

115. Where possible groups should be position specific to ensure continuity of group and appropriateness of drills, but the priority is not to exceed a maximum of six players per group.
116. Groups in BAFA Stage 5a may not mix or swap participants during the modified contact element of practice in BAFA Stage 5a. However, those holding the roles of Head Coach, Coordinator or Club COVID -19 Officer or Team Lead may move between groups to observe and give feedback as long as social distancing is maintained at all times.
117. If a coach is unavailable at short notice to lead a group, or there are not enough coaches available to split into a 1:6 ratio for groups, head coaches and coordinators may delegate leading drill activities to experienced players, while ensuring regular, distanced, supervision across multiple groups.

BAFA Stage 5a practice plan example – 20 minutes modified contact (featuring 1v1, 2v1 activity within groups)

Session Activity	Session Guidance	Time
Pre-Practice	Registration, contact details, equipment allocation, distribution of hand sanitisers.	N/A
Warm - Up	Team based warm-up activities modified to maintain social distancing (e.g. use of cones or yard line markers)	10
Individual	Players distributed to position groups. No more than 6 players per group. (i.e. if 7 O-Linemen in group create 2 groups of OL) Activities can include install, use of training aids such as blocking shields and tackle bags. If coach holding bags, then use of facemask advised. To include focus on technique versus bags.	30
Teach Contact (abiding by the current stage)	Introduction to contact activity opposed Start with 5-minute introduction and demonstration 1 v 1 Tackle. Tackling 5 Fights: Track; Prepare; Connect; Accelerate; Finish (can be taught without contact) Blocking v opposed. Heads Up. Coil, Uncoil, Fit, Finish	15 (10 contact)
Groups	Competition within group - no mixing of groups. Start with a 5 minute teach and prepare before	15 (10 contact)
Special Teams	Unopposed on- air. Install or review of units. Kicking/returners/Gunners Maintaining social distancing	10
On Air	Offense & defense installing/reviewing plays unopposed Coaches to spot ball	10
Team	Offense v Defense. No contact - 2 touch. Early whistle	20
Cool Down	Team based cool down activities modified to maintain social distancing (eg use of cones or yard line markers)	10

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – STAGE 5b

118. Our guidance recommends a two-week period for Stage 5b for contact teams, but as a minimum we expect teams to hold at least two practice sessions at this step before moving to the next.

PERMITTED CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

119. The following activities are permitted in Stage 5b:

- On air unopposed activities
- 1v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v2 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach

PERMITTED DURATION OF CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

120. In Stage 5b the permitted duration of contact American football activities is 30 minutes total. Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity is permitted.

NOT PERMITTED AT THIS TIME

121. The following are not permitted in Stage 5b:

- Mixing of modified contact groups
- Full contact scrimmaging
- Inter-club contact activity – for example, a joint practice session, scrimmage or game

PERMITTED NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS AND PITCH

122. Maximum non-contact practice groups of 30 individuals overall per 1/2 pitch are permitted – this is based on either a full-sized rugby pitch or 11s soccer pitch. The maximum number includes coaches.

- Two groups of maximum 30 participants may practice on one full sized pitch. However, they must remain wholly separate throughout the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for each group are highly recommended to minimise any risks.
- Should other spaces be used for practice – for example – a 7-side soccer pitch or other area that is a third of a larger pitch or similar, coaches and the Club Covid-19 Officer should use the above numbers as a guide and exercise their judgement while being very careful to not exceed the maximum numbers detailed. This should also be recorded and detailed in the club risk assessment by the Club Covid-19 Officer.

123. During the modified contact element of BAFA Stage 5b practice participants should be split into groups of max 6 players + 1 coach for each drill station. Groups should remain wholly separate throughout the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Care should be taken to not exceed the overall number of participants permitted per 1/2 pitch.
124. Where possible groups should be position specific to ensure continuity of group and appropriateness of drills, but the priority is not to exceed a maximum of six players per group.
125. Groups in BAFA Stage 5b may not mix or swap participants during the modified contact element of practice in BAFA Stage 5b. However, those holding the roles of Head Coach, Coordinator or Club COVID -19 Officer or Team Lead may move between groups to observe and give feedback as long as social distancing is maintained at all times.
126. If a coach is unavailable at short notice to lead a group, or there are not enough coaches available to split into a 1:6 ratio for groups, head coaches and coordinators may delegate leading drill activities to experienced players, while ensuring regular, distanced, supervision across multiple groups.

BAFA Stage 5b practice plan example – 30 minutes modified contact (featuring 1v1, 2v1, 2v2 activity within groups)

Session Activity	Session Guidance	Time
Pre-Practice	Registration, contact details, equipment allocation, distribution of hand sanitisers.	N/A
Warm - Up	Team based warm-up activities modified to maintain social distancing (eg use of cones or yard line markers)	10
Individual	Players distributed to position groups. No more than 6 players per group. Use of training aids such as blocking shields and tackle bags allowed. Focus on technique versus bags If coach holding bags then use of facemask advised. To progress to contact within group 1 v 1 Tackle and/or Blocking (10 minutes only)	30 (10 contact)
Install	Offense - Defense installs Social distancing required	10
Groups	Competition within group - no mixing of groups. 2 v 1, 2 v 2 blocking and tackling within same groups	20 (20 contact)
Special Teams	Unopposed on-air. Install or review of units. Kicking/Returners/Gunners Maintaining social distancing	10
On Air	Offense & defense installing/reviewing plays unopposed Coaches to spot ball	10
Team	Offense v Defense. No contact - 2 touch. Early whistle	20
Cool Down	Team based cool down activities modified to maintain social distancing (eg use of cones or yard line markers)	10

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – STAGE 5c

127. Our guidance recommends a two-week period for Stage 5c for contact teams, but as a minimum we expect teams to hold at least two practice sessions at this step before moving to the next.

PERMITTED CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

128. The following activities are permitted in Stage 5c:

- On air unopposed activities
- 1v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v2 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- Groups of 6 players + 1 coach may now practice opposed with distancing between groups and no press coverage - WR & RB/TE's v LB & DB's and/or OL & RB's v DL & LB's

PERMITTED DURATION OF CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

129. In Stage 5c the permitted duration of contact American football activities is 30 minutes total. Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity is permitted.

NOT PERMITTED AT THIS TIME

130. The following are not permitted in Stage 5c:

- Full contact scrimmaging
- Inter-club contact activity – for example, a joint practice session, scrimmage or game

PERMITTED NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS AND PITCH

131. Maximum non-contact practice groups of 30 individuals overall per 1/2 pitch are permitted – this is based on either a full-sized rugby pitch or 11s soccer pitch. The maximum number includes coaches.

- Two groups of maximum 30 participants may practice on one full sized pitch. However, they must remain wholly separate throughout the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for each group are highly recommended to minimise any risks.
- Should other spaces be used for practice – for example – a 7-aside soccer pitch or other area that is a third of a larger pitch or similar, coaches and the Club Covid-19 Officer should use the above numbers as a guide and exercise their judgement while being very careful to not exceed the maximum numbers detailed. This should also be recorded and detailed in the club risk assessment by the Club Covid-19 Officer.

132. During the modified contact element of BAFA Stage 5c practice participants should be split into groups of max 6 players + 1 coach for each drill station. When two groups are taking part in opposed activities in Stage 5c they are allowed to be close but must stay 2m away from other groups working opposed.
133. Where possible groups should be position specific to ensure continuity of group and appropriateness of drills, but the priority is not to exceed a maximum of six players per group.
134. Groups in BAFA Stage 5c may not mix or swap participants during the modified contact element of practice in BAFA Stage 5c. However, those holding the roles of Head Coach, Coordinator or Club COVID -19 Officer or Team Lead may move between groups to observe and give feedback as long as social distancing is maintained at all times.
135. If a coach is unavailable at short notice to lead a group, or there are not enough coaches available to split into a 1:6 ratio for groups, head coaches and coordinators may delegate leading drill activities to experienced players, while ensuring regular, distanced, supervision across multiple groups.

BAFA Stage 5c practice plan example – 30 minutes modified contact (featuring 1v1, 2v1, 2v2 within groups and mixed group activity)

Session Activity	Session Guidance	Time
Pre-Practice	Registration, contact details, equipment allocation, distribution of hand sanitisers.	N/A
Warm - Up	Team based warm-up activities modified to maintain social distancing (eg use of cones or yard line markers)	10
Individual	Players distributed to position groups. No more than 6 players per group. Use of training aids such as blocking shields and tackle bags allowed. Focus on technique versus bags If coach holding bags, then use of facemask advised. To progress to contact within group 1 v 1 Tackle and/or Blocking (10 minutes only)	30 (10 contact)
Install	Offense - Defense installs Social distancing required	10
Groups	Two groups of 6 players may now also practice opposed 2 v 1, 2 v 2 blocking and tackling between two groups	20 (20 contact)
Special Teams	Unopposed on-air. Install or review of units. Kicking/Returners/Gunners Maintaining social distancing	10
On Air	Offense & defense installing/reviewing plays unopposed Coaches to spot ball	10
Team	Offense v Defense. No contact - 2 touch. Early whistle	20
Cool Down	Team based cool down activities modified to maintain social distancing (eg use of cones or yard line markers)	10

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – STAGE 5d

136. Our guidance recommends a two-week period for Stage 5d for contact teams, but as a minimum we expect teams to hold at least two practice sessions at this step before moving to the next.

137. Please note that completing Stage 5d requirements does not mean teams are then permitted to return to full contact practice. This will not be permitted by BAFA until Stage 6 which is currently planned from 24 May onwards. Teams should continue to work to Stage 5d guidelines until then.

PERMITTED CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

138. The following activities are permitted in Stage 5d:

- On air unopposed activities
- 1v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v1 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- 2v2 blocking and tackling within groups of 6 players + 1 coach
- Groups of 6 players + 1 coach may now practice opposed with distancing between groups and no press coverage - WR & RB/TE's v LB & DB's and/or OL & RB's v DL & LB's
- Team activity – offense v defense, special teams vs scout

PERMITTED DURATION OF CONTACT AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

139. In Stage 5d the permitted duration of contact American football activities is 30 minutes total. Unlimited non-contact / distanced activity is permitted.

NOT PERMITTED AT THIS TIME

140. The following are not permitted in Stage 5d:

- Inter-club contact activity – for example, a joint practice session, scrimmage or game

PERMITTED NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS AND PITCH

141. Permitted numbers for Stage 5D are determined by the area's current Protection Level as follows:

- Protection Level 2, maximum practice groups of 50 individuals overall per 1/2 pitch are permitted – this is based on either a full-sized rugby pitch or 11s soccer pitch. The maximum number includes coaches. This participant cap remains in force for Stage 5d in Scotland unless otherwise advised by the Scottish government.
 - Two groups of maximum 50 participants may practice on one full sized pitch. However, they must remain wholly separate throughout

the activity and must be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone'. Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for each group are highly recommended to minimise any risks.

- Should other spaces be used for practice – for example – a 7-side soccer pitch or other area that is a third of a larger pitch or similar, coaches and the Club Covid-19 Officer should use the above numbers as a guide and exercise their judgement while being very careful to not exceed the maximum numbers detailed. This should also be recorded and detailed in the club risk assessment by the Club Covid-19 Officer.
- Protection Level 0 and Protection Level 1 – restrictions on participant numbers per pitch area or per group no longer apply up to a maximum of 100 participants per session for Level 1 and 500 participants per session for Level 0.
 - All other guidance relating to physical distancing during practice remains in force.
 - BAFCA coach to player ratios should be applied at all times.
 - Positional groups should be separated by a minimum 2m 'safe zone' during drills.
 - Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for each group are highly recommended to minimise any risks

BAFA Stage 5d practice plan example – 30 minutes modified contact (featuring 1v1, 2v1, 2v2 activity within groups – can feature team activity: offense vs defense, special teams vs scout)

Session Activity	Session Guidance	Time
Pre-Practice	Registration, contact details, equipment allocation, distribution of hand sanitisers.	N/A
Warm - Up	Team based warm-up activities	10
Individual	<p>Players distributed to position groups. No restrictions on positional group size. Overall practice groups must not exceed 50 participants including coaches in Protection Level 2, 100 participants in Protection Level 1 and 500 participants in Protection Level 0</p> <p>Use of training aids such as blocking shields and tackle bags allowed. Focus on technique versus bags</p> <p>If coach holding bags then use of facemask still advised.</p> <p>To progress to contact within group Tackle and/or Blocking (10 minutes only). No restriction on drill number of participants</p>	30 (10 contact)
Install	Offense - Defense installs	10
Groups	<p>No restrictions on groups who can practice opposed</p> <p>2 v 1, 2 v 2 blocking and tackling between two groups</p>	20 (10 contact)
Special Teams	<p>Unopposed on-air.</p> <p>Install or review of units. Kicking/Returners/Gunners</p>	10
On Air	<p>Offense & defense installing/reviewing plays unopposed</p> <p>Coaches to spot ball</p>	10 (10 contact)
Team	Offense v Defense. No contact - 2 touch. Early whistle	20
Cool Down	Team based cool down activities	10

MORE INFORMATION

For additional information, please visit www.britishamericanfootball.org/Covid-19

[Scottish Government Coronavirus guidance and routemap](#)

[Test and Protect](#)

[NHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) General advice](#)

[NHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) check your symptoms](#)

[sportscotland Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information and resources](#)

If you have any questions, please contact:

covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org - for Covid-19 safety and other off-field activity related questions

info@bafca.co.uk - for coaching specific queries

warren.smart@britishamericanfootball.org - for queries relating to adult contact football

arran.harrison@britishamericanfootball.org – for queries relating to women’s adult contact football

stuart.potts-perkins@britishamericanfootball.org – for questions relating to U16/19 contact football

bucs@britishamericanfootball.org – for questions relating to university football

registrations@britishamericanfootball.org – for questions relating to BAFA team or individual membership

APPENDIX 1 – SAFE EQUIPMENT FITTING

Where a coach is required to fit a player for personal playing equipment, such as helmet or shoulder pads, please always follow the guidance below to ensure this is carried out safely.

- Equipment must be fitted outdoors.
- Strong hand hygiene should be used prior to equipment fitting and post equipment fitting. Disposable gloves can be worn but if so must be changed between each individual.
- Both the participant and fitter must wear a face covering.
- Time spent in close contact fitting equipment must be minimised where possible, and the majority of fitting actions should be completed by the wearer under distanced, verbal direction. Share the approved fitting videos and resources with participants beforehand to set expectations and minimise time spent.
- Where equipment of different sizes is tried on by an individual, all equipment tried on but not used by them must be thoroughly sanitised with appropriate disinfectant wipes or spray before being tried on by another participant or returned to storage.
- Equipment must not be shared between individuals in the same session, and all equipment used by participants and collected back by the clubs afterwards must also be thoroughly sanitised after use.
- Game pants, practice jerseys and bibs etc should not be shared. Any team issued practice or playing uniform must be thoroughly washed before being reissued.

Helmet fitting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zi0smzNUk1M>


Shoulder pad fitting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLZ1vPBJrwQ>



A thumbnail for a video showing a coach fitting shoulder pads on a player. The coach is adjusting the pads on the player's shoulders. The player is wearing a dark jersey.

BAFCA
ENGAGE | EDUCATE | EMPOWER

1. Measure chest and record measurements
2. Measure shoulders and record measurements
3. Select pads
4. Put on pads
5. Secure straps and laces
6. Check for proper fit
7. Ensure coverage in front
8. Ensure coverage in back
9. Confirm proper fit



A thumbnail for a video showing a player putting on a helmet. The player is wearing a red jersey and is adjusting the helmet on their head. A person's hands are visible adjusting the helmet.

BAFCA
ENGAGE | EDUCATE | EMPOWER

1. Check head size and record measurement
2. Put on helmet
3. Adjust helmet height
4. Adjust helmet front to back and side to side
5. Adjust face pads
6. Check for proper fit
7. Adjust chin strap
8. Take off helmet