

**SWIM
IRELAND**

**Swim Ireland
Club Swimming**

**COVID-19 Return to Water Addendum
to Framework
(August 2020)**

**SWIM
IRELAND**

Me and
the water

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to continue to assist, empower and support you and your Club to Return to Water as safely as possible. It is fundamental that it is understood that it is not possible to eliminate the risk of the spread of COVID-19 completely and that we will work with all stakeholders to minimise risk; this concept must continue to be fully understood and accepted by all Swim Ireland members and the parents of our members who are minors

This document must be read in conjunction with/reference to Version 1 of the Framework issued in June 2020. It must also be understood and accepted by all readers of this document (and those practising the protocols within it) that where there are NO DETAILS CHANGED FROM VERSION 1 OF THE FRAMEWORK (JUNE 2020), THOSE ELEMENTS OF GUIDANCE AND BEST PRACTICE REMAIN IN FORCE

This revised Framework will provide key updates and important changes for Club based swimming. These updates are dependent on the fact that:

- 1) All athletes and members within a Club are familiar with, and have practiced extensively, the original protocols outlined in Version 1 of the Framework
- 2) Facility Operators are undertaking their own risk assessments within their own facilities. We are aware that each and every pool and its surrounds have their own idiosyncrasies and individual circumstances and as such Facility Operators are considered to have a level of expertise when it comes to their own facility

Number of Athletes per Lane

The age associated numbers per lane from Version 1 of the Framework can now be reviewed, with Clubs able to consider the following edit taking effect. Associated diagrams for these pool configurations are provided on pages 3-6 of this document:

- 20m Pool – In most cases, up to 4 athletes per lane working in lengths (**Figure 1**)
- 25m Pool – In most cases, up to 5 athletes per lane working in lengths (**Figure 2**) for adolescent and adult athletes with a maximum of 6 per lane working in lengths for young age group athletes. Please also note the point in the paragraph below
- 50m Pool – In most cases, up to 7 athletes per lane working in lengths (**Figure 3**). Please note additional points under '50m Pools' below
- 25m Pool – In most cases, up to 3 athletes per lane working in widths (**Figure 4**)

Where Facility Operators undertake an in-depth and robust risk assessment in association with a club who uses the facility and such a risk assessment suggests that numbers of athletes can be safely managed up to a maximum of 6 per lane in a 25m pool (for all ages of athletes), facilities and clubs can collaboratively agree to this - subject to such a process having been undertaken. The Club's COVID-19 Officer/Committee must have been involved in such a process and in all circumstances, the Club and the Facility Operator should take into account the size of the pool hall, the width of the lanes in question and the space available around the pool deck in making such a decision

50m Pools

It is recognised that the majority of 50m pools within Ireland are 10-lane pools and 25m in width. Although the above recommendations state that a maximum of 7 athletes per lane can operate in such an environment, there is a concern that the overall number of persons present in the pool hall at any one time should **currently not exceed 50 in total** (which includes athletes, coaches, lifeguards, POD's and anyone else present in the pool hall) up to and including a revised declaration from the Government of Ireland/Northern Ireland Assembly

Therefore, Clubs hiring an entire 10-lane 50m pool for a coaching session will need to take this into account; 7 athletes per lane is to be seen as a maximum and not as a target. Where Clubs hire lanes in 50m pools at the same time as another Club or user group, communication and collaboration between such groups and the facility must take place in relation to the finite number of no more than 50 persons within the pool hall. Reasonable negotiation and concession between such groups will be necessary to allow this to work safely and satisfactorily

Once the number of athletes present in a pool hall can exceed 50 persons, Swim Ireland will review the number of athletes able to operate within a 50m lane

In Water

With regards to pool sessions, the following details the edits and changes that Clubs can employ from Version 1 of the Framework:

- With care, attention and careful consideration, coaches can start to plan sessions which can safely incorporate all four of the recognised strokes
- With care, attention and careful consideration, kick boards and pull buoys may be used more frequently
- In terms of other training equipment (e.g. paddles and/or fins), coaches must consider how their use can be safely introduced with regard to the continued requirement for athletes to operate from 'Home Points'. There may need to be a reduction in the number of athletes per lane when using paddles and/or fins
- Coached relay takeover practice may be undertaken in outside lanes (with athletes adhering to social distancing on the pool deck, as outlined in the Dive Start protocols in Version 1 of the Framework)
- Coached turns practice may also take place in outside lanes, with athletes dropping into the water 10-15m out from the wall to undertake this. Any other athletes partaking in this would continue to practice social distancing on the pool deck, awaiting their turn

Number of Coaches

- Clubs may work off the ratio of 1 coach per 2 lanes of coaching activity
- For a 4 or a 5-lane pool, sessions would operate at a maximum of 2 coaches, with these coaches working from opposite sides or opposite ends of the pool. Coaches would be required not to transgress along the opposite end of the pool nor the opposite side to that which has been agreed as their coaching area with their counterpart
- For 3 or more coaches (e.g. for a 6-lane pool), coaches would be required to be staggered at opposite ends. For example, the coach for lanes 1 & 2 and the coach for lanes 4 & 5, would work from one end of the pool, whilst the coach for lanes 2 & 3 would work from the opposite end. Coaches would be required to have a designated side of the pool that they could move along to observe athletes and they would not transgress beyond the halfway point of the pool

Travel

On returning from an excursion outside of the island of Ireland, members training in Northern Ireland will be exempt from needing to self-isolate for 14 days (remain away from their club environment) if they are returning from an Exempt Country & Territory listed by the UK Government/Northern Ireland Executive at that time. Members training in the Republic of Ireland will be exempt from needing to self-isolate for 14 days (remain away from their club) if they are returning from a Green List country listed by the Government of Ireland at that time. In all cases, the current governmental legislation both north and south of the border states that 'non-essential travel' outside of the island of Ireland is to be avoided. Where anomalies arise in relation to the above, it is the governmental legislation which applies to the member's home address/place of permanent residence which should be applied in terms of whether a period of self-isolation is required on returning from travel outside of the island of Ireland

Car-Pooling/Lift Sharing

Members may now avail of car-pooling/lift sharing in travel to and from club activities. The following must be taken into consideration and aligns with government recommendations both north and south of the border at this time:

- As with the use of public transport, this should only be utilised when and where necessary
- The length of the journey should be taken into consideration. The shorter the journey, the more appropriate it is to consider this. Longer journeys may need to be broken up with short intervals of stoppage
- The number of people within the vehicle should be taken into consideration and maximum use of the vehicle's size and space should be utilised on such journeys
- The use of face masks for those travelling in a vehicle (who are 13 years of age or over) is strongly recommended
- At a time where certain counties may be in a lockdown scenario because of an isolated spike of cases within that particular area, members travelling through such counties for club/sporting purposes should not take comfort breaks during travel within such areas

Additional Important Changes

The following are additional important changes for Clubs to consider:

- If the facility operator permits this to occur and the Club feels that that this is in the best interests of the athletes, a reduced number of spectators may be allowed to attend pool sessions providing that current social distancing measures are observed. However, the overall number of persons present in a pool hall (athletes, coaches, spectators, lifeguards and POD) in association with the size of the pool hall must be considered by the facility in association with the COVID-19 officer/committee and should not exceed an absolute total of 50 persons. If clubs

choose to permit spectators, they must also complete the 'Swimming Club COVID-19 Self Report Screening (Athletes & Staff)' questionnaire (Appendix B in Version 1 of the Framework) prior to attending each session. If in any doubt as to what may be best, Clubs should continue to prevent spectators from attending pool sessions

- Where changing rooms have not been available to Clubs during the initial Return to Water, facilities may now be in a position to make changing rooms available. This will be the facility operator's decision and Clubs can start negotiating with their facility provider as to how this might work

If you are a Club member (parent or athlete), a member of your Club Committee is your first port of call for any questions or points of clarification

If you are a representative from a Club Committee, a member of the Clubs & Community team (or a relevant member of the Swim Ulster staff) is your first port of call for any questions or points of clarification:

Leinster - Aisling McKeever (Club Support Manager) – aislingmckeever@swimireland.ie

Connacht - Vincent Finn (Connacht Club Support Officer) – vincentfinn@swimireland.ie

Munster - Damien Fitzpatrick (Munster Club Support Officer) – damienfitzpatrick@swimireland.ie

Ulster - Ruth McQuillan (Club & Workforce Development) – ruth@swimulster.net

Water Polo (Leinster, Connacht & Munster) - Sarah Kelly (Discipline Support Manager) – sarahkelly@swimireland.ie

Water Polo (Ulster) – Phil Kelly (Water Polo Development Officer) – phil@swimulster.net

Health & Safety/Risk Assessments - Pat Daly (Competitions Manager) – patdaly@swimireland.ie

If you are a Coach, a member of the Performance team (or a relevant member of the Swim Ulster staff) is your first port of call for any questions or points of clarification:

Leinster - Mark Lappin (Regional Pathway Development Coach) – marklappin@swimireland.ie

Munster & Connacht - Sarah Fellner (Regional Pathway Development Coach) – sarahfellner@swimireland.ie

Ulster - Mark Craig (Regional Pathway Development Coach) – talentid@swimulster.net

Strength & Conditioning – Paul Talty (Associate Head of Performance Services) – paultalty@swimireland.ie

Sports Science – Cormac Powell (Associate Head of Performance Services) – cormacpowell@swimireland.ie

Health & Safety/Risk Assessments - Pat Daly (Competitions Manager) – patdaly@swimireland.ie

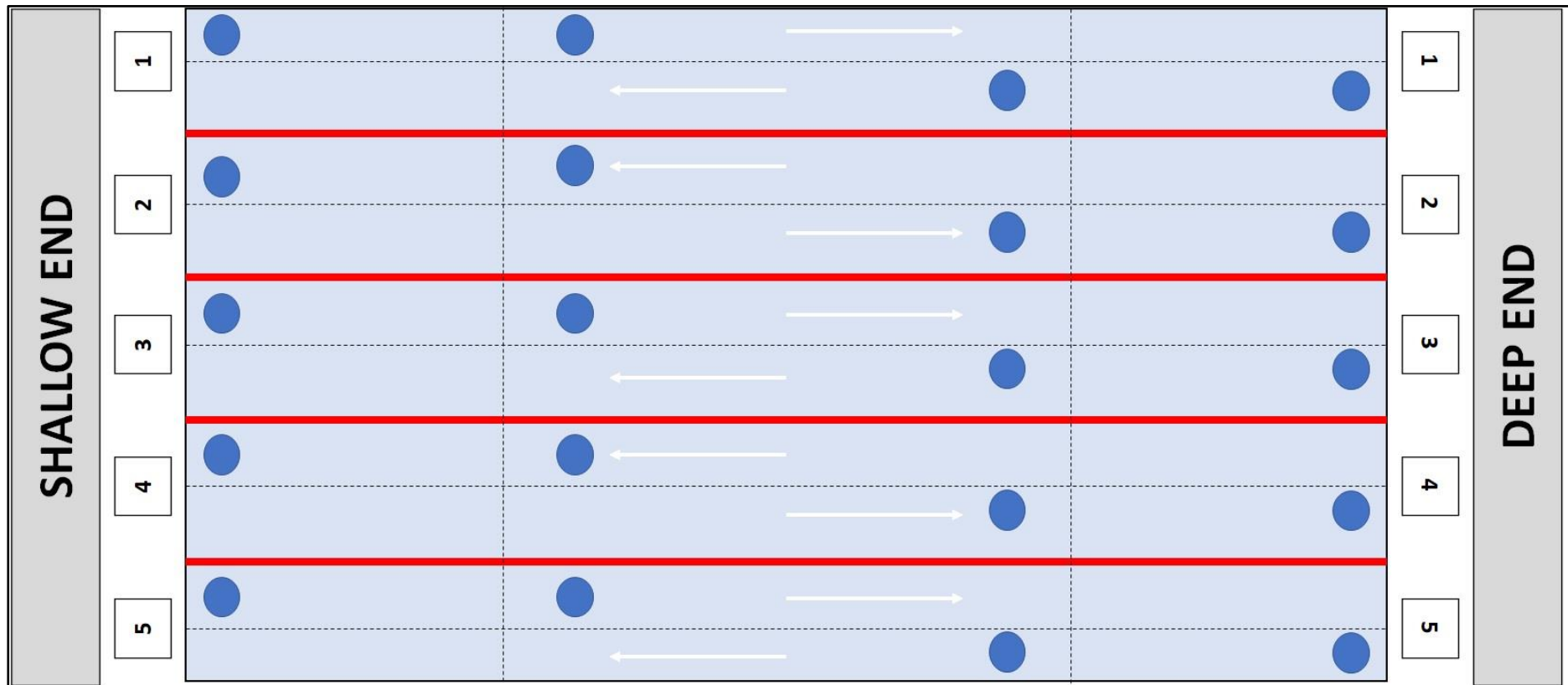


Figure 1. Four athletes per lane for a 20m pool. Lanes would alternate between clockwise and anti-clockwise. The above example allows for a maximum of **20 athletes** to be in the water at any one time.

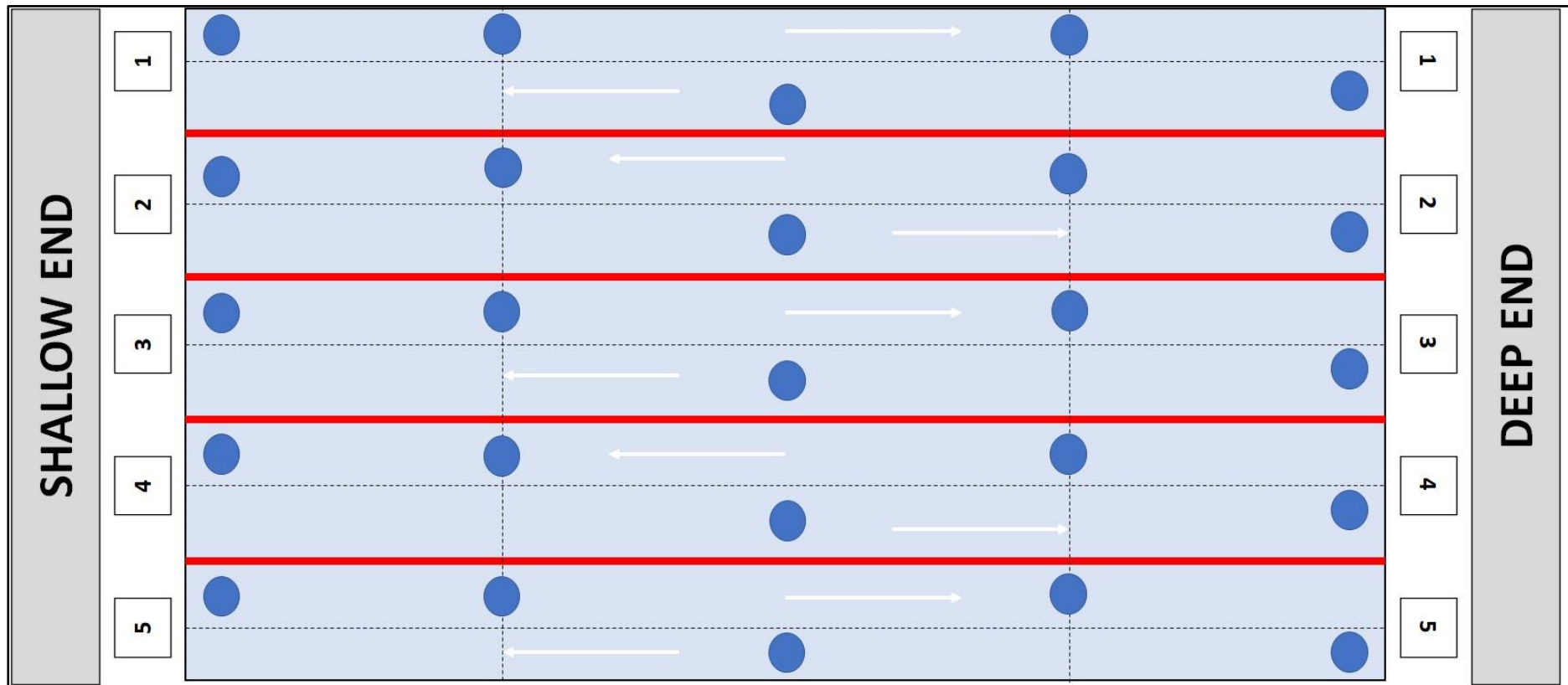


Figure 2. Five athletes per lane for a 25m pool. Lanes would alternate between clockwise and anti-clockwise. The above example allows for a maximum of **25 athletes** to be in the water at any one time.

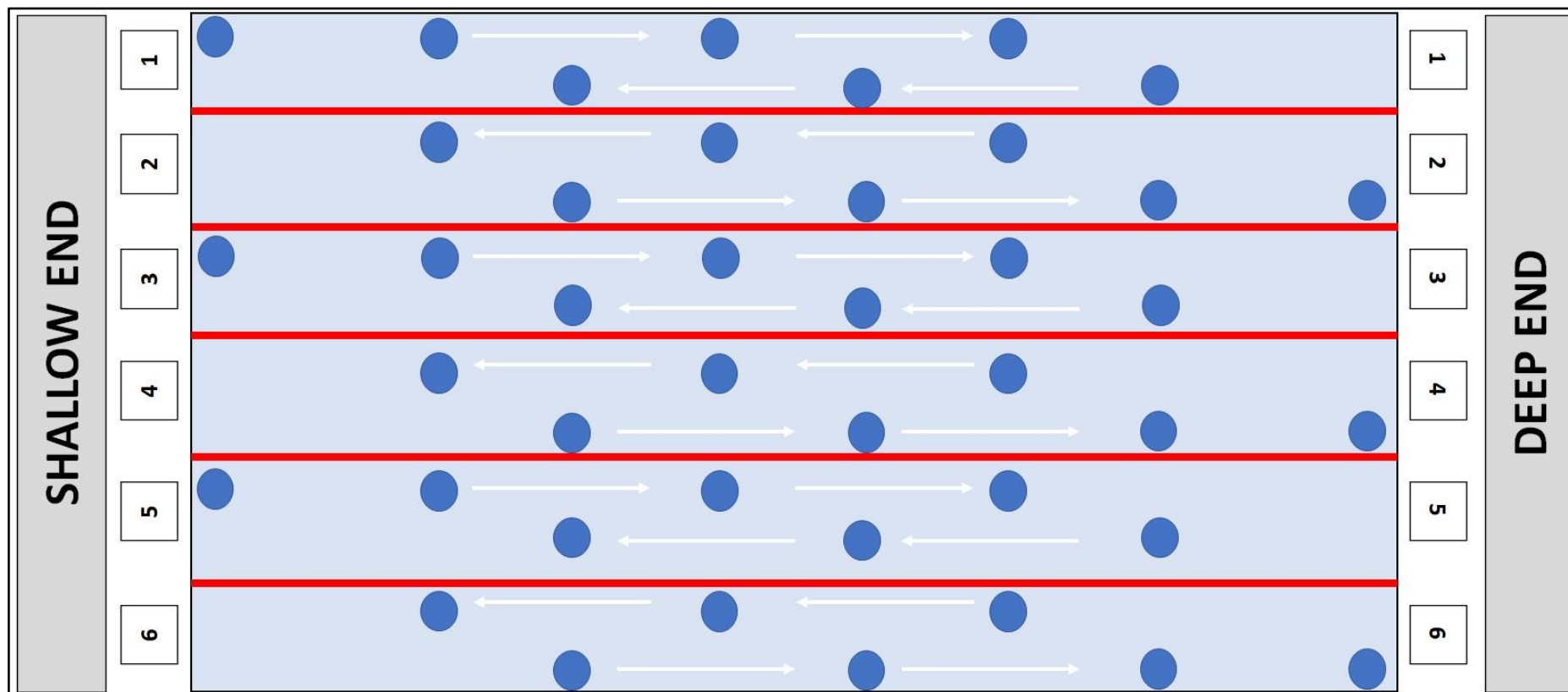


Figure 3. Seven athletes per lane for a 50m pool. Lanes would alternate between clockwise and anti-clockwise. No more than **50 persons** should be within an indoor pool hall at any one time up to and including 20/07/2020 and this will be reviewed after this date

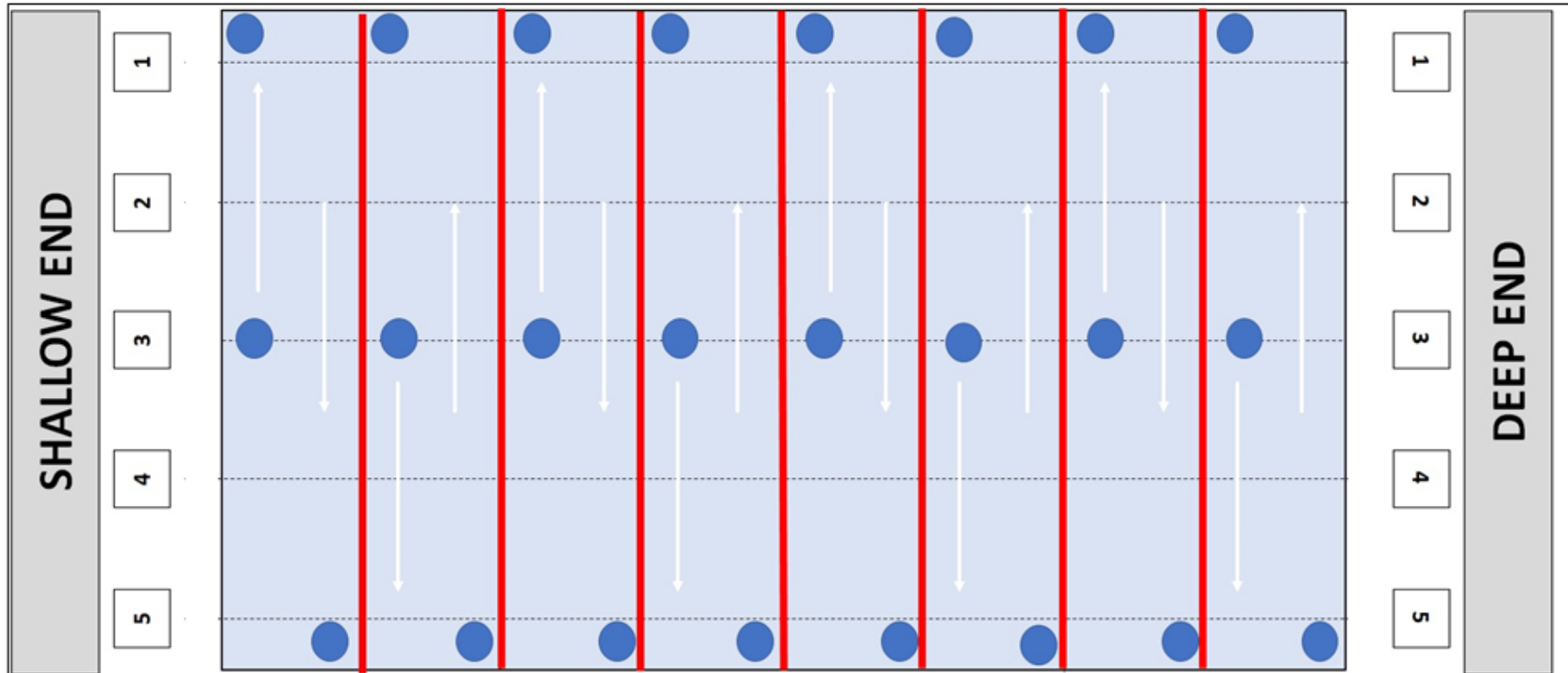


Figure 4. Three athletes per width lane (based on a five lane 25m pool). One athlete is stationed at each end of the width lane, with another athlete at the mid-point of the pool. Lanes will alternate between clockwise and anti-clockwise. The above example shows the pool being divided into eight width lanes. This can be increased, as long as there is a distance between width lanes which complies with current social distancing requirements. The above example allows for a maximum of **24 athletes** to be in the water at any one time.