



Technical Area Protocol September 2026

Cheshire RFU and Lancashire RFU in partnership with Liverpool and Manchester & District Referee Societies Disciplinary are reminding their clubs of the Technical Area Protocol that will continue to be applied by the referees of both societies this season.

Why the Reminder?

What is clear as we move into the 26/27 season, is the behaviour of personnel in the Technical Area (T.A.) has a direct impact of the behaviour of the spectators. Where coaches leave the technical area and walk up and down the touchline, to shout instructions, incite players and comment on the refereeing. The spectators who are watching the match will often then mirror that behaviour and interact with the individual who has left the T.A.

Technical Area personnel have a responsibility to follow this protocol and set an example. The excuse “the referee didn’t tell me to stay in it” is not a valid reason for leaving it. Consequently, It is now more important than ever that it is **self-policed** by all clubs in all matches (Adult & Age Grade) in order to reinforce the Core Values of the game.

For the avoidance of doubt this document sets out the technical area protocol.

The Technical Area

The home club are responsible for the following:

1. **Providing a permanent or temporary barrier.**
2. **Ensuring both Technical Areas are on the same side of the pitch as per Law No 1 and Regulation 6/26 i.e. on the same side of the pitch.**
3. **A marked technical area. Dimensions are on the accompanying diagram. If it is not possible to mark a permanent technical area one should be marked out with cones.**

Permitted Personnel

1. **Coach**
2. **Replacements**
3. **Appointed Medical Staff**
4. **Yellow Carded Player**

Responsibilities of Permitted Personnel

Coach or DOR

The coach or DOR must stay within the technical area at all times. They can enter the field of play only at half time. If the coach wants to move up and down the touchline it must be done from behind the barrier. However, it must be one or the other he/she cannot switch it must be technical area **or** behind the barrier not both.



Replacements

Replacements must stay in the technical area and have shirt/top on that differentiates them from the players on the pitch. The only circumstances where an individual can leave the T.A. are.

- 1. During a break in play replacements can take water on to the pitch. If a player requires water at any other time he /she must come to the technical area.**
- 2. One replacement may enter the field of play to take on the kicking tee.**
- 3. A player may leave the technical area to warm up prior to replacing a player. This must be done in an area that does not impact on the match in progress.**

Appointed Medical Staff

Medical staff must stay in the technical area except when entering the field of play to attend to an injured player. It is advisable to agree a protocol with the match referee prior to kick off.

Yellow Card

When a player is temporarily suspended (yellow card) the player may stand in the technical area but **must stay silent and not shout instructions to the players.**

Red Card

The player who has been sent off must leave the playing enclosure and cannot be in the technical area.

Discipline Sanctions

Coaches & DOR

If a coach or DOR is ordered from the technical area (red card) sanctions will be based on the equivalent on field offence.

- 1. An additional sanction could be considered as the Coach or DOR would be expected to set an example to the players.**
- 2. An additional sanction could be considered, if the referee reports that staying in the technical area at the appropriate times was not adhered to.**

Replacements

If a replacement is ordered from the technical area prior to replacing an on-field player that player can take no further part in the match.

Overall Conduct

All people in the technical area are under the same jurisdiction and control as the players on the field and are subject to refereeing sanctions. Any person, including replacements, can be asked to leave the technical area. Serious offences can result in a red card being issued and reported in the normal way. Players and coaches often think that because they are in the technical area they have licence to complain or abuse the opposition or the referee, they do not.