

COVID-19

(Coronavirus)

Guidelines for Golf courses

COVID-19 spreads when contaminated respiratory droplets are released when a person infected with the coronavirus coughs, sneezes, talks and breathes.

People become ill:

- If they are in close contact with an infected person and inhale droplets
- If they touch surfaces which contaminated droplets have landed on, then touch their eyes, nose or mouth. Droplets can land on surfaces like telephones, desks, keyboards, door knobs, or hands—that then touch eyes, noses or mouths

It is important to protect staff and patrons from the spread of COVID-19 at your facility.

- For updates on COVID-19, go to www.gov.bm/coronavirus
- For questions on COVID-19, call the national helpline: 444-2844

Preparing the golf course

Golf courses have been permitted to carry out essential maintenance during the period of course closure. If government regulations allow increased maintenance levels, then the primary consideration should continue to be ensuring staff safety.

Measures relating to staff should include:

- Ensure suitable disinfectant and hand sanitiser are provided in all communal areas
- Stagger working hours and break times
- Limit or prohibit use of communal areas
- Ensure there is a robust lone working policy
- Encourage staff to bring their own food and drink for their breaks and for this to be stored safely and separately
- Appoint a senior member of staff to be responsible for disinfecting/sanitising all surfaces that are touched, for example, door handles, fuel pumps. The same member of staff should be responsible for opening and closing doors to the maintenance facility
- Ensure team meetings, if they are necessary, are held outdoors or in large indoor spaces with physical distancing implemented
- Use modern communication methods, for example online systems and mobile phones for team communications, rather than indoor briefings and job sheets

- Ensure there is a high focus on hygiene and physical distancing
- Ensure staff members work separately, not in pairs/groups, where possible
- Allocate individual machinery to one staff member only
- Fully sanitise all machinery after use, focusing on all areas staff members have come into contact with

While each club/facility will need to adapt its procedures to ensure compliance with government restrictions, aspects of the golfer experience, divided into the four following categories, will need to be considered:

- Course Set-Up
- Before the Round
- During the Round
- After the Round

Golfers will be required to comply with rules on physical distancing throughout.

A. COURSE SET-UP

On-course items

- All rakes and ball-retrievers to be removed
- Ball washers and drinking fountains to be covered up
- Benches and bins to be removed, covered, or sign-posted in such a way that players don't touch them
- All other removable items to be removed, except stakes defining areas of the course, which can be treated as immovable obstructions

Hole and Flagstick

- Flagsticks can be retained, but it is strongly recommended a sign is put on the flagstick stating it is not to be touched
- A method of inserting the hole liner to be used that means all of the ball does not fall below the surface of the putting green and can be easily retrieved by handling the ball only

Practice Areas

- Practice areas, including practice nets, to be closed unless safe sanitising practices can be guaranteed



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B. BEFORE THE ROUND

Bookings

- Play should be managed by professional staff/starter and they should remind golfers of guidance on physical distancing
- This guidance and advice for golfers should be posted on websites and tee-time booking pages
- Clubs/facilities to organise a system of booking and allocation of tee times that ensures safety of all staff and golfers
- The maximum number of golfers in a group per tee time should be confirmed by the club/facility and must be in accordance with any government requirements
- There is to be a minimum of 10-minute intervals between tee times, but longer intervals may be more appropriate depending on the club/facility

Arrival and Waiting to Play

- The clubhouse and locker room facilities will be closed. Limited essential access (for example, to use toilets) may be allowed
- Clubs/facilities to communicate in advance with golfers to advise on physical-distancing requirements being applied on arrival, for example, not leaving cars until a certain time before tee time
- Clubs/facilities to have procedures in place to ensure physical-distancing requirements in the area of the pro shop or starter's building in advance of golfers teeing off
- Clubs/facilities to have procedures in place for the practice putting green, for example, giving priority of use to players in the next group due to tee off

C. DURING THE ROUND

Guidance and reminders should be provided by clubs/facilities to golfers to ensure they keep at least two metres (six feet) apart during rounds.

Teeing Areas

- Remind golfers to keep two metres (six feet) apart at teeing areas vs the normal close proximity of golfers to one another when tee shots are played

General

- Remind golfers to stay more than two metres (six feet) apart when walking to the ball, searching for a ball and playing shots
- Remind golfers not to touch stray balls

Bunkers

- With no rakes allowed on the course, remind golfers to make their very best efforts to smooth the sand using clubs and/or their feet

Putting Green

- Remind golfers to keep two metres (six feet) apart on putting greens and not to touch the flagstick

D. AFTER THE ROUND

- Remind golfers physical distancing is as important after a round as it is during the round, so when the round is over, they must leave the course and the club/facility immediately to avoid gatherings around the clubhouse area

Resources:

1. Resources for PGA Members, golf clubs and the golf industry about the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.
<https://www.pga.info/covid-19-resource-hub/>
2. GCSAA COVID-19: www.gcsaa.org/pandemic
3. Operational guidance for the future phased re-opening of golf facilities.
<https://www.pga.info/media/2778/opening-plan-for-golf-guidance-document.pdf>
4. Playing Golf in the UK under COVID-19 restrictions
<https://www.pga.info/media/2780/playing-golf-and-adhering-to-covid-19-regulations-issued-29-april.pdf>

