CPG MEMBER COUNTRY PGA CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 RE-OPENING GUIDELINES

As part of the gradual reintroduction of golf and the reopening of golf clubs, facilities and various other golf coaching venues, the Confederation of Professional Golf (CPG) and Golf & Health Project have issued a set of practical COVID-19 guidelines below.

These have been compiled from a variety of sources including various governing bodies, PGAs and authorities, to provide you with a universal and consistent set of instructions. These focus on seven key activities in golf (listed below), alongside online learning resources to provide practical help and advice on how to minimise the risk posed by each activity.

- Playing
- Coaching
- Clubhouse / Professional Shop Services
- Practicing
- Facility Management / Operations
- Facility / Course Maintenance
- Events / Competitions
- Online Learning Opportunities

PLAYING

Playing of golf can be undertaken however there are firm measures in place to ensure the health and safety of all in the golf sector and the community whilst doing so.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- Online tee time booking only. If this is not possible, email or telephone contact should be enforced at all times. No in-person bookings should be made.
- Tee times should be staggered every ten minutes, with a starter on the tee throughout to control pace of play and maintain safe time gaps.
- Group numbers to be determined by each golf club, in line with relevant government guidance (Two players per group is currently recommended).
- Physical distancing (2 metres) between all staff, players and visitors should be maintained.
- All players should wash and dry their hands before and after play (provision of sanitiser / soap at key points across the venue should be ensured).
- Pins / Flagsticks can be on the course however they should be left in the hole and should not be touched or removed by any player.

- A form of insertion which prevents the ball dropping to the bottom of the hole should be used for each flag, enabling contactless pick up when the ball is holed.
- All bunker rakes should be removed from the course.
- All none-playing related amenities on the course should be closed or blocked off (benches, drinking fountains, ball washers, shared sunscreen stations, halfway houses etc.)
- Communicating all of the above points to each group before must be done at check-in.

LOCAL RULES TO EMPLOY

- **Model Local Rule For Bunkers – Due to COVID-19**

  "When a player's ball lies in a bunker which has had the rake removed, the player may take free relief once by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this relief area:

  Reference Point: Spot of the original ball.
  Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: one club–length
  but with these limits:
  Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and must remain in the bunker.

- **13.2c Model Local Rule for Ball Resting Against Flagstick in Hole – Due to COVID-19**

  If a player's ball comes to rest against the flagstick left in the hole or any artificial insert inside of the hole below green surface:

  Note:
  1) The essential purpose of this Local Rule is to clarify that if any part of the ball is in the hole under the surface of the putting green and the ball is touching any artificial insert inside of the hole, the ball is treated as holed even if the entire ball is not below the surface.
  2) Results are acceptable for handicap adjustments while using this Local Rule.

COACHING

Golf Instruction and Club Fitting in person may be conducted on an individual basis where strict social distancing requirements can be met.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- Coaching can be undertaken on a contactless basis and with strict 2 metre distancing being observed.

- Group lessons can be undertaken if permitted by relevant government guidance. Group sizes will also be determined by such guidance.
- Any shared club equipment must be cleaned and sterilised after each use.
- Coach on the side of the range that fewest people have to walk past.
- Promote outdoor coaching and playing lessons where social distancing is easier to observe.
- Avoid coaching in an indoor studio. If unavoidable, social distancing guidance must be followed.
- If using a practice ground or similar, create a 2 metre exclusion zone around the lesson tee/golfer that no one enters.
- If you have to move a player into certain positions, use an alignment stick, which is easy to wipe down with a sanitising wipes before and after the lesson.
- Wash hands with soap and water before and after the session.
- Provide sanitising wipes for you and your golfers.

CLUBHOUSE / PROFESSIONAL SHOP SERVICES

The safe use of the Professional's shop and clubhouse facilities will require the adoption of a range of procedures.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- Clubhouses should remain closed however restaurants may provide take-out food options only.
- Locker rooms should remain closed however limited essential access (use of toilets) is permitted.
- There should be clear external signage to inform golfers a maximum of 2 golfers will be allowed in the shop at any one time (this may need to be 1 golfer at a time for small shops).
- There should be a clearly defined queuing area outside the shop where golfers must adhere to social distancing of a minimum of 2 metres.
- Hand sanitiser should be positioned at the entrance to the shop and all customers should be asked to sanitise before entering.
- The shop door could remain open to avoid contact with handles by golfers and to easily view number of customers in the shop.
- In store signage should direct customers to the till area and then back out of the shop.
- Where possible, a clear screen should be employed to protect shop staff at the payment point / till.
- Contactless transactions must be encouraged and communicated to customers as much as possible.

PRACTICING

The safe use of a driving range or practice area must also be considered. It should be noted that driving ranges might not necessarily be allowed to open at the same time as golf courses.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- All pins should be removed from practice putting and chipping greens.
- A form of insertion which prevents the ball dropping to the bottom of the hole should be used for each flag, enabling contactless pick up when the ball is holed.
- Ask people to use their own equipment. If not, any shared club equipment must be cleaned and sterilised after each use.
- A maximum limit on the number of people who can use the practice chipping and putting green at any one time. This should be scaled to the size of each green and the number of holes available, using 50% as an approximate guide (e.g 6 holes = 3 people maximum).
- If bays are not separated by partitions or walls, close every other bay to allow for social distancing.
- Make sure the ball washer has soap in the machine.
- Provide sanitising wipes for people to use as required.
- Clean the ball dispenser surfaces frequently.
- Have a separate entrance and exit at each side of the range, to avoid congregation of people at one entrance.
- One person per bay at all times. No spectators are permitted.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT / OPERATIONS

The management and operations of the club will in many ways continue to run as normal. However, certain procedures and policies will need to be introduced or amended to ensure the welfare of the staff, golfers and those outside personnel who will visit the club in their normal working day.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- Stagger working shifts to limit the number of staff on site at any one time.
- A system to record and retain the contact details of all staff, players and visitors must be in place to enable contact tracing should it be required.
- For golf clubs, strict hygiene and sanitisation practices must be maintained throughout the facility including all common touch points and surfaces. Facilities must have a written plan for safe operation in place.
- Any staff who are on site should be provided with any appropriate personal protection equipment to ensure they can remain healthy and safe.

- Lone working should be adopted, whereby one member of staff only fulfils a given role or working area.
- Offices will need to be sufficiently arranged to ensure that either lone working or adequate social distancing is adhered to.
- Ensure all safety measures are shared with employees and that their health and wellbeing is the number one priority, encourage them to share any concerns and report any issues to managers.

FACILITY / COURSE MAINTAINANCE

It is likely that due to reduced maintenance it will take some time for the course to return to 'normal' condition. It is important to manage golfer expectations and explain that the conditions they will experience are the result of limitations imposed by the pandemic essential maintenance safety measures and not through neglect.

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- Any staff who are on site should be provided with any appropriate personal protection equipment to ensure they can remain healthy and safe.
- 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 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 that the staff member has come into contact with.

EVENTS / COMPETITIONS

Golf tournaments and competitions, along with other sporting events are currently restricted in most countries, or are done so without any spectators. Running and managing a club competition poses different social distancing risks that normal play does not, and so various other information should be considered.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- Club events and competitions can be held so long as there is strict adherence to hygiene, distancing and gatherings regulations.
- While the national handicap system will be operational, physical scorecards should be avoided if possible. If scorecards are used, exchanging of cards should not occur.
- Tee times and group sizes must also follow the same guidelines above regarding 'Playing' golf.
- Digital scoring should be encouraged as much as possible, if there is resource to do so.
- Player's recording should be done one group at a time at a designated scoring area, with sufficient provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitising equipment for the scorer in question.
- Verbal communication should be used to verify each score rather than the exchange of any cards to the recording desk.
- Presentations and functions are not permitted and if possible, prizes should be of a nature that can be electronically awarded to a recipient (e.g. online shop credit, virtual gift certificates).

MODEL LOCAL RULES TO EMPLOY

- **5.2 Model Local Rule For Score Return – Due to COVID-19**

  The committee can lower any risk by accepting any other form of score return. There is more than one solution and solutions accepted should be the most practical for all involved. One proposal of Local Rule for that situation might be:

  Score Card is deemed to be returned when it is delivered to a proposed person / area (Committee member, Golf club reception, any other authorized person) via email. Acceptable forms can be a scan, picture or a verbal transcription of hole-by-hole results, which are easily identifiable as to who's scores are to be recorded. Penalty: DQ

  Note:
  1) It is more than welcome to confirm to the competitor that his/her results has been received
  2) The receptionist can take a picture of the Score Card straight after play is finished
  3) In case any player will keep the Scorecard, he/she should keep it for some time (for example, one week), in case any questions about it are raised.

ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

CPG Masterclass Series

The CPG Masterclass Series embodies a range of talks and presentations for PGAs and PGA Professionals that cover a variety of subjects and topics, delivered by world-class, industry leading experts from their respective fields.

Find out more at https://cp.golf/masterclass.

Club Managers Association of Europe (CMAE) – High Impact CMAE Webinars to be Released For the Whole Industry

The CMAE's highly relevant and practical new Powerplay webinar programme, which is designed specifically to support and guide CMAE members through the current Covid-19 crisis, is being made public in order to support the whole of the club industry.

- Leading your club through Corona Crisis - Darshan Singh - https://youtu.be/HNsro_OgcjQ
- Powerplay Coffeeshop with Chris May CCM - https://youtu.be/jOBHYlxpETg

Find out more at http://www.cmaeurope.org/high-impact-cmae-webinars-to-be-released-whole-industry.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Health Benefits of Golf visit golfandhealth.org.

World Health Organization, Rolling updates on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) - https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control National information resources for the public by EU Country - https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china/sources-updated

For more information in countries not listed above then more information will be available on your government's own Coronavirus COVID-19 guideline websites.

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