V23 – 30 Apr 2021

LOCKDOWN LEVEL 1

# GOLFRSA GOOD GOLF PRACTICE GUIDELINES

## Playing Golf Under COVID-19 Restrictions

## COURSE SETUP

### ON-COURSE ITEMS

1. All rakes and ball retrievers to be removed.
2. Ball washers and drinking fountains to be covered up.
3. It is recommended that clubs position hand sanitizers at strategic places on the course.
4. Benches and bins to be removed, covered or sign-posted in such a way that players do not touch them.
5. All other removable items to be removed.
6. Due to the risk of touch transmission, Nearest to the Pin, Longest Drive, Straightest Drive and similar competition boards/holders may not be used.

### HOLE AND FLAGSTICK

1. Flagsticks can be centred, attended or removed by a player, or a person on their behalf, provided all persons touching the flagstick sanitize their hands PRIOR TO and AFTER touching the flagstick.
2. Clubs should insert a hole liner/plate that restricts the ball from falling into the hole below the surface of the putting green, and so that the ball can be easily retrieved. There are various options in order to do this, such as turn the cup upside down, cut a pool noodle to the right height and wrap it around the bottom of the flagstick, or put in a plate that rests against the top of the cup liner.

### PRACTICE AREAS

1. Practice areas, including practice nets, to be closed unless safe sanitizing practices can be guaranteed.
2. The following practices will be a necessity: wash range balls regularly, remove benches/seating and club cleaning facilities, control availability on the range, ensure three- to five-metres spaces between bays, sanitize range buckets after every use and use own towel.

## BEFORE THE ROUND

### BOOKINGS

**(Refer to the GolfRSA Risk Mitigation Guidelines)**

- Clubs/facilities to organise a system of booking and allocation of tee times that ensures the safety of staff and golfers.
- The maximum number of golfers in a group per tee time to be confirmed by the club/facility and must be in accordance with the GolfRSA general guidelines and any government requirements.

### ARRIVAL AND WAITING TO PLAY

**(Refer to the GolfRSA Risk Mitigation Guidelines)**

- The clubhouse/facility (ie. halfway house, restaurant, bar, conference/meeting facilities) may open, subject to compliance with the relevant government gazetted regulations/directions.
- Locker rooms and shower facilities may be opened subject to regular sanitizing of the facilities, wearing of a face covering/mask, physical distancing of 1.5m, those showering bringing their own towels, and compliance with SA Government Regulations and Directions for Alert Level 1.
- Clubs/facilities to communicate in advance with golfers to advise on physical distancing requirements that are being applied on arrival at the club/facility, for example not leaving cars until a certain time before their tee time.
- Clubs/facilities to have procedures in place to ensure physical distancing requirements in the area of the professional's shop or starter's building in advance of golfers teeing off.
- Trolleys, carts or other items available for hire, on condition of using safe sanitising practices.
- Facilities to have procedures in place for the practice putting green, for example giving priority of use to the players in the next group due to tee off, remove cups, or using a method of inserting the hole liner to be used that means that all of the ball does not fall below the surface of the putting green and can be easily retrieved.

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## DURING THE ROUND

Golfers should keep a minimum of 3m apart, and 5m apart during windy conditions (>24km/h).

### TEEING AREAS

- Remind golfers to keep 3m apart at teeing areas.

### GENERAL

- Remind golfers to stay more than 3m apart when walking, searching for a ball or playing shots.
- Remind golfers not to touch stray balls.
- No sharing of scorecards. Electronic scoring is preferred.

### BUNKERS

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

### PUTTING GREEN

- Remind golfers to keep 3m apart on the putting greens and always only handle their own equipment such as clubs and balls.

## AFTER THE ROUND

- Score entry by the golfer using HNA App.
- Use of facilities subject to Club/Facility Risk Mitigation Plan and SA Government Alert Level 1 Regulations and Directions.
- Sanitize or return rental equipment for sanitizing.

## RULES OF GOLF RELATED MATTERS

The R&A released Covid-19 Guidance on Rules of Golf on 29 June 2020. As such, GolfRSA has implemented amendments to the Covid-19 Rules of Golf.
**Note:** If a committee follows any of the options contained in this guidance, the competition is being played under the Rules of Golf. Modifications to the Rules of Golf during Covid-19 are also for handicap purposes.
The following are acceptable on a temporary basis:

### FORMS OF PLAY AND SCORING

1. Amateur Competitions may be played, provided all other Risk Mitigation requirements are in place.
2. Foursomes/Greensomes may be played subject to: Each partner should use their own ball, which is only handled by that player for the playing of the hole. *For example, the player teeing off from hole 1 is the only one that touches the ball from teeing off through to completion of the hole, subject to taking relief/preferred lies as set out below.*

   When marking and replacing the ball on the green, this should be conducted by the partner the ball belongs to. Under this situation (or any other where the ball must be replaced) the original ball must be used and must not be substituted by another ball.

   **Note:** Under the Rules of Golf, a partner is permitted to drop another ball in taking relief. If Preferred Lies is in effect, the side may substitute the ball while taking relief, allowing the 2nd player to put their own ball in play.
3. In competitive stroke play or match play, a method of scoring needs to be used that does not require handling/exchanging of scorecards. (Use HNA App or alternative means for electronic score submission, including the use of scoring devices, which if used shall be sanitized before and after use by the player.)
4. For competitive rounds, committees may allow methods of scoring in stroke play and match play that do not comply with Rule 3.3b. For example:
   - Players may enter their own scores on the scorecard (it is not necessary for a marker to do it).
   - It is not necessary to have a marker physically certify the player's hole scores, but some form of verbal certification should take place.
   - It is not necessary to physically return a scorecard to the club.

### BUNKERS

- Should clubs not deploy an assigned individual per hole to rake bunkers, they can declare bunkers "waste areas" that are raked each morning and encourage members to smooth with their foot/club.
- Committees may elect to adopt the Local Rule below:

**MODEL LOCAL RULE FOR BUNKERS**
*When a player's ball lies in a bunker, the player may take free relief once, by placing the original ball or another ball and playing from the relief area.*
**Reference Point:** Spot of the original ball.
**Size of the Relief Area:** One club length, but must not be closer to the hole and must remain in the bunker.

### FLAGSTICK

- The flagstick may be centered, attended or removed by a player/or a person on their behalf, provided ALL persons sanitize their hands PRIOR and AFTER handling the flagstick.
- As a temporary provision, for the purpose of player safety, flagsticks that do not meet the specifications in Part 8 of the Equipment Rules, can be used.

### HOLE AND 'HOLED'

- The hole liner (or 'cup') is to be set in a way that all of the ball cannot be below the surface of the putting green, so the ball is considered holed if any part of it is below the surface of the putting green.
- To minimise the need to lift the ball from the hole, it is recommended that the Most Likely Score (MLS) Rule, Rule 3.3 of the Rules of Handicapping, be applied. This does not prevent a player in match play conceding a stroke that is outside this length or allowing a player to putt out should they elect to do so.

**NOTE:** Treating a ball as "holed" when it has bounced out of a hole (eg: when it has bounced off the flagstick, a tray attached to a flagstick or the hole liner) is not in accordance with the Covid-19 Rules of Golf.