

# MINNESOTA PGA

## COVID-19 Procedures & Policies



**PGA**  
Minnesota Section

### Section Officers

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Attached are a set of Procedures and Policies the **MINNESOTA PGA** has generated for Section tournaments. The MNPGA has created these policies to keep golf played responsibly and to follow the guidelines set by the Minnesota Governor and local and national agencies. The MNPGA is working with each host site facility to ensure that they are following the proper procedures for retail, food and beverage, and golf course operations as outlined in Governor Walz's executive orders. We believe golf can be a tremendous vehicle to get exercise, be outside, and enjoy this great sport in a responsible manner. As such, the MNPGA will be implementing the attached Procedures and Policies until it is responsible to remove them. Please note, that where these Policies and Procedures directly conflict with either the MNPGA Rules & Regulations or the USGA/PGA Rules of Golf, these Policies and Procedures will override.

### Section Staff

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All players that attend a MNPGA event must self-screen before coming to an event for possible COVID-19 signs or symptoms. If an individual does not feel well, they **MUST** stay home and take the proper precautions. ***If you are sick, please stay home.*** Note that players will be given a full refund during the time that these policies are in effect.

It is the responsibility of all players participating in a MNPGA event to fully read and understand these policies and abide by them. By registering for and participating in a MNPGA event, players are agreeing to all these policies and to accepting any potential penalties deemed appropriate by the MNPGA Staff. It is each participants' choice if they would like to enact stricter measures than are outlined in this document for themselves, however, restrictions beyond these Policies & Procedures for others are not guaranteed.



### COVID-19 Education & Protection

Based off national and local guidance, it is important for players to understand how COVID-19 spreads and ways to protect yourself.

- **Knowing How It Spreads** – The virus is spread mainly from person to person:
  - Between people who are within 6-feet of each other.
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- **Basic ways to protect yourself:**
  - Washing your hands often
  - Avoid close contact
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others
  - Cover coughs and sneezes
  - Clean and disinfect
  - Remain 6-feet away from individuals
- **Self-Screening:**
  - All MNPGA players will be required to self-screen prior to being on-site at tournaments.
  - Players must stay at home if they display any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
    - Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit, known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.
- **Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer:**
  - When washing your hands, you should:
    - Use soap and water
    - Wash for a minimum of 20 seconds
- **Social Distance & Player Contact:**
  - The MNPGA asks that regardless of their position on the golf course, that players maintain six (6) feet of distance between themselves and other players. This includes when they are preparing for a shot, walking down the fairway/rough, on the teeing area, on the putting green, and all other locations.
  - All players must refrain from touching their fellow competitors in any way, including shaking hands prior to and following the round.
  - Players must not touch, handle, or share each other's equipment.
- **Coughing & Sneezing:**
  - If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
  - Throw used tissues in the trash.
  - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer.

# MINNESOTA PGA

## COVID-19 Tournament Procedures & Policies



Below are guidelines for **MINNESOTA PGA** events. These guidelines are based on recommendations from the WHO, CDC, and Directive Health Measures from local, state, and federal governments. A player who blatantly disregards these guidelines may be subject to disqualification and removal from the facility. These are subject to change due to Executive Order protocols.

- Do NOT play if you feel sick or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last two weeks.
- Stay at least six (6) feet away from anyone at all times.
- Do NOT touch or handle any tournament supplies or equipment that is not yours.

### GENERAL PLAYER INFORMATION:

- **Arrival** – Players are NOT allowed to access the golf course more than 30 minutes prior to their starting time. If a player arrives to the facility prior to this time, the player must stay in one's vehicle.
- **Paperwork** – All tournament paperwork, including hole location and local rule sheets, will be provided electronically prior to the tournament. A player is encouraged to view these materials on one's phone or to print these materials before their round.
  - **NOTE:** Links to these materials will be sent to tournament participants.
- **Scorecards** – Online scoring is **mandatory**.
  - If a player is unable to online score, the player is encouraged to bring his or her own score marking materials (i.e., paper and pencil) as paper scorecards will NOT be given to players.
- **Golf Cars** – When allowed per the competition, one player per car will be mandated.
  - Priority will be given to players over 50 years of age and those who have a valid handicap card.
- **Starting Format** – All events will be Tee Time starts to reduce the number of people congregating in one area.
- **Online Access** – Players are encouraged to download the *MN PGA BlueGolf App*.
  - This will allow a player to access online scoring, review hole locations and local rules, and summon a rules official.

### TOURNAMENT OPERATIONS:

- **Practice Facilities** – Players within 30 minutes of their tee time will be allowed access to the facilities.
  - Driving range stations will be spread out and limited to maintain social distancing.
  - The number of players allowed to access the practice putting or chipping greens will be restricted to the number of holes that have been cut in the green, with a maximum of nine (9) players allowed at one time. The MNPGA will have all host facilities remove the flagsticks from both the putting green and chipping green.
    - Players will be restricted to five (5) minutes in these areas when other players are waiting for access.
  - Practice after a player's round is **prohibited**.
- **Starting Tees** – Players will register on their starting tee ten (10) minutes prior to their starting time. It is the player's responsibility to know his or her starting time. NOTE: If the previous group has not left the tee, wait until the group leaves before arriving on the tee.
  - Pencils, scorecards, tees, sharpies, sunscreen or water bottles will NOT be available on the starting tees.
- **Caddies** – Players are NOT permitted to use caddies.
- **Spectators** – Spectators are NOT allowed on the golf course.
- **Scoring** – After completing the round, ONE group will be allowed to enter the "scoring area" at a time. Players will maintain six feet of distance between them and verbally agree to their hole-by-hole scores with their group and the scoring official.
  - After verbally verifying one's scores and leaving the scoring area, a player's scorecard is deemed returned and the player will receive an email with his or her scorecard.
  - All scoreboards and BlueGolf TV platforms will be removed.
  - Once players leave the scoring area, please return to your car and exit the property upon completion of the round.

# MINNESOTA PGA

## COVID-19 Tournament Procedures & Policies



### TOURNAMENT OPERATIONS (continued):

- **Playoffs** – In the event that a player is close to the lead or in contention for a qualifying spot, the player must immediately return to his or her vehicle.
  - Players will be contacted by cell phone to inform them if a playoff is necessary.
- **Awards** – Award ceremonies will NOT be conducted. Awards will be shipped to players following the event.
- **Weather Delays** – In the event of a horn blast signaling a discontinuing of play, only one (1) player will be allowed per golf car to evacuate and all players must proceed directly to their vehicles.
  - Communication regarding resumption of play will be sent by text message.

### PLAYING THE COURSE:

- **Social Distancing** – Regardless of a player’s position on the golf course, a player must maintain six (6) feet of distance between themselves and other players.
  - This includes when preparing for a shot, walking down the fairway/rough, on the teeing ground, on the putting green, and all other locations.
- **Bunkers** – All rakes will be removed from the golf course.
  - Players are encouraged to use their feet to smooth bunkers *after* making a stroke from one. Please reference the COVID-19 local rules for proper relief procedures.
  - If possible, sanitized rakes will be provided to one (1) player per group, and these rakes are NOT to be shared with another group member.
- **Holing Out** – To allow players to remove the ball without touching the hole, a raised cup liner, upside-down cup liner, pool noodles in the cup or a ball retrieving device (which only requires a player to use his or her putter shaft to retrieve the ball from the hole) will be used.
- **Flagsticks** – Players must NOT touch the flagstick under any circumstance. Tending of the flag as outlined in the Rules of Golf is **suspended** until further notice.

### FOOD & BEVERAGE:

- **Clubhouse F&B** – If food and beverage services are available at the host facility, players may order “to go” items.
  - Organized food banquets will NOT be conducted by the MNPGA.
- **On-Course Water Coolers** – Host facilities will be asked to remove all on-course coolers.
  - If a facility should elect to have an on-course water cooler, the MNPGA accepts no liability for them and encourages players to use extreme discretion regarding their use.
  - The MNPGA will NOT provide water bottles to players. Golfers should bring an adequate supply of water for the round with them from home.
- **Snacks** – Snacks will NOT be provided by the MNPGA.

### FACILITY EQUIPMENT:

- **Sand Buckets** – Host facilities will be asked to remove all sand buckets from Par 3’s.
- **Ball Washers & Benches** – If the facility has not removed ball washers and benches from the golf course, players will be asked to refrain from using these items.
- **Starter Boxes** – Starting tees will NOT have a starters box.
  - Players are encouraged to bring a writing utensil, paper, ball markers, and tees.
- **Hand Sanitizer** – The MNPGA will provide hand sanitizer stations on starting tees and in the scoring area.
- **Clubhouse** – The MNPGA will defer to facilities practices on whether the clubhouse is open to guests or not.
  - The MNPGA will ensure that each host site has at least one (1) male and one (1) female bathroom available.

# MINNESOTA PGA

## COVID-19 Policies & Local Rules



The following Policies and Local Rules will be in effect at all **MINNESOTA PGA** events until the Committee deems them unnecessary.

These Rules are in addition to the terms of the competition and notice to players for each event.

### POLICIES

#### PRACTICING BEFORE THE ROUND:

A player will only be allowed to start practicing at the competition facility 30 minutes before his or her official starting time.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:

- First Breach – Warning
- Second Breach – *Disqualification*

#### PRACTICING BETWEEN ROUNDS:

A player will NOT be allowed to practice at the competition facility between rounds.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:

- First Breach – Warning
- Second Breach – *Disqualification*

### LOCAL RULES

#### BUNKERS:

Any disturbed area in a bunker is deemed Ground Under Repair, and the player may take full relief under GUR procedures (USGA Rule 16.1c) but must stay inside the bunker. NOTE - Rule 16.1 is modified in this way: Interference does not exist if the disturbed area in a bunker only interferes with the player's stance.

- Disturbed areas include (but are not limited to) footprints and other disturbances that may have been caused by players, spectators, caddies or others.
  - Reminder – Under Rule 16.1c, the player must drop the ball from knee height and is not permitted to place the ball. The player also has the option to play the ball as it lies.

#### FLAGSTICK:

Rule 13.2 is modified in this way: A player is prohibited from removing the flagstick from the hole or intentionally touching the flagstick. NOTE: Touching the flagstick attachment to get the ball out of the hole or unintentionally touching the flagstick to remove the ball from the hole is not in breach of this Local Rule.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule:

- First Breach – Warning
- Subsequent Breaches – *General Penalty*

#### HOLED:

The definition of Holed is modified in this way: If any part of the ball is in the hole below the surface of the putting green, the ball is treated as holed even if the entire ball is not below the surface. The ball is also treated as holed if it hits or touches a raised hole liner that is intended to prevent a ball from falling into the hole.

#### SCORING:

A player's scorecard is considered returned after verbally agreeing to the hole-by-hole scores and leaving the scoring area.

# MINNESOTA PGA

## COVID-19 Weather Warning Procedures



**PGA**  
Minnesota Section

The following weather warning procedures will be in effect at all **MINNESOTA PGA** events.

### SEVERE WEATHER COURSE EVACUTION PLAN

#### SIGNALS

- **ONE (1) long blast** = Discontinue play *immediately*
- **TWO (2) short blasts** = Resume Play
- **THREE (3) short blasts** = Discontinue play for darkness

In the event of severe weather, players shall return to their vehicles **IMMEDIATELY**. Golf cars may be staged on the golf course for evacuation purposes. While evacuating the golf course, only one (1) player is allowed on a golf car at a time. Communication regarding resumption of play will be sent by text message.