

COVID-19 Guidance for Golf Courses

This guidance provides simple strategies for operators to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to keep everyone safe. Whether private or public, each golf course is unique. It is therefore the responsibility of each facility to review their policies and set up to ensure that infection prevention and control measures are followed. Stay informed through our website at toronto.ca/COVID19, as information changes frequently.

New bylaw on use of masks or face coverings

The use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces, as per a new City of Toronto [bylaw](#). Operators are required to develop a policy and protocols on the wearing of masks. Train staff on the new bylaw policy, including who is exempt and the [proper use of a cloth mask or face covering](#). More information about the bylaw is available [here](#). The mask bylaw has a set fine of \$1,000 for each offence.

Infection Control Measures

- Stay home when sick.
- Keep two metres/six feet distance from non-household members.
- Greet others with a smile, wave or nod from a distance, in place of handshakes.
- Clean hands often, using soap and water or hand sanitizer with 70-90% alcohol concentration.
- Avoid touching face with unwashed hands.
- Cover cough or sneeze into elbow or a tissue.
- Wear a mask or face covering when indoors and if physical distancing is difficult to maintain.
- Frequently clean and disinfect high-touch items, surfaces, and washrooms.

Hand Hygiene

Frequent [handwashing](#) is a good for everyone. When that is not possible, have hand sanitizer dispensers (70-90% alcohol concentration) available in all communal areas.

- Wash or disinfect hands after interacting with co-workers/ customers or completing tasks.
- Encourage frequent handwashing with signs in washrooms and high traffic areas.
- Provide hand sanitizer by entrances, service counters and other high-touch locations.
- Monitor and top up supplies of liquid soap, paper towels and sanitizers as needed.

Staff Training

- All staff should be trained on symptoms of COVID-19 and how the virus can spread in the workplace.
- Inform staff about what steps are being taken to protect them, and how they can protect themselves, including proper [hand hygiene](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#).
- Encourage staff to work separately, and not in pairs/groups when possible.

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- Staff should receive clear instructions on the new mask policy, and understand who is exempted from wearing a mask. Proof of exemption by customers is not required.
- Educate staff on the [proper use of masks/face coverings](#). Change masks away from customers when moist or dirty. Staff may remove their mask in an area not accessible by the public (e.g. lunch room, private office). More information on use of non-medical masks or face coverings can be found [here](#).

Staff Health Screening and Attendance

- All staff should complete a [health screening questionnaire](#) before each work shift. The questionnaire can be completed on paper or electronically.
- Remind staff about the importance of reporting illness to their supervisor/manager and not to come to work when they are ill.
- Maintain flexible policies so employees can stay home to care for a sick family member, or if they must self-isolate because they were in close contact with a person with COVID-19.
- If staff become sick with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) at work, send them home right away and [self-isolate](#). They can call Telehealth, their health care provider, or an [assessment centre](#) for testing.
- In general, staff can return to work 14 days after their symptoms began if they had COVID-19.
- There are no clearance tests required for staff to return to work. Be flexible about requirements for a doctor's note.
- For other illnesses, or if a staff has tested negative for COVID-19, they should not attend work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Print posters for your premise:

Download and print posters for entrances and/or other locations:

- [Mandatory mask bylaw for indoor spaces](#)
- [Physical Distancing](#) and [Physical Distancing in Elevators](#)
- [Protect yourself](#)
- [COVID-19 - Cover Your Cough](#)
- [Hand Washing](#) and [Hand Sanitizing](#)
- [How to safely put on and take off a mask](#)
- [Posters and Staff Screening Questionnaires](#)

Information can also be communicated on the golf course website, through automated booking systems, telephone messages and/or e-mail subscriptions.

Health Screening of All Golfers

- When booking tee off time, encourage all golfers to review the health [screening questions](#) before arriving at the course.
- The questionnaire can be posted online and at the front entrance and check-in areas. Do not permit entry if customer has symptoms.

COVID-19 Outbreaks and Contact Tracing

- Develop a response plan in the event that someone becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Encourage players and staff to download the [COVID Alert app](#) so they can be notified directly if they have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- Keep a list of the names and contact information of staff and golfers by date and time. Toronto Public Health will use this list to notify and provide instructions for close contacts to self-isolate or self-monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Any personal information that is collected for COVID-19 contract tracing can only be used for this purpose, unless an individual provides their consent. Records should only be kept for 30 days, and then shredded.
- Contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 for guidance if you have been notified that an employee has tested positive and/or you have concerns that employees may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in the workplace. Maintain confidentiality of employees' personal health information.

Preparing Golfers

Guidance and advice for golfers should be posted on the website and tee-time booking pages:

- Tee times must be reserved in advance, either online or by telephone.
- Golf course/club is accessible to golfers and employees only.
- No events, tournaments, camps or programs are permitted.
- No visitors or walk-ins are permitted.
- Limit lessons and clinics as much as possible, and maintain physical distancing at all times.
- Encourage golfers to bring their own hand sanitizer, sunscreen, water, or other personal items.
- Advise golfers to arrive no earlier than 20 minutes before their scheduled start time, and not to congregate in the parking lot.
- Advise golfers there is no bunker rake, and to smooth the sand using clubs or their feet.
- Limit access to locker rooms, club storage and other common areas.

Pro Shop

- Limit entry to two patrons at a time.
- Mask or face coverings are required in all indoor public spaces.
- Use floor markings and barriers to manage traffic flow and physical distancing.
- Remove furniture/ equipment to allow ease of movement while maintaining physical distancing.
- Offer scorecards and pencils at the starter hut, upon request. Advise golfers not to share pencils.
- Install plexiglass or other barriers by the registration/cash area, and other locations that may involve close contact between customer and staff.
- Use non-contact payment such as e-transfer instead of cash, when possible.

Practice Facilities

- Installing barriers/partitions or rope off alternate driving range to allow for 6 feet distancing.
- Reduce the number of practice holes on putting greens.

Power Carts, Pull Carts and Rentals

- Encourage golfers to bring their own clubs and pull carts if possible.
- Do not share clubs or ball with other players.
- Encourage golfers to walk, unless it will delay other groups.
- Limited power carts to one per player unless golfers are from the same social circle.
- Power carts can be shared, if plexiglass barriers are installed between riders. Have one dedicated driver and keep with the same seating arrangements for the duration of the game.
- Provide sanitizing wipes for customers to use on carts and hand held baskets.
- Cleaned and sanitized rental power carts and pull carts after every use.

Start / During Play

- Increase tee time intervals between groups.
- Provide dedicated waiting areas with signs for the next group to wait until cleared to approach the tee box.
- Starters should direct players and start groups off the first tee to ensure spacing of players.
- Marshalls should patrol and enforce the pace of play. Discourage players from congregating on the course.
- Water fountains can reopen with [routine cleaning](#), twice daily.
- Instruct players not to touch flagsticks/pin. When the player's ball hits the filler, consider it holed.
- Ask golfers to leave the course after completing their round.
- Food and beverage cart service on the course is permitted.
- If a golfer becomes ill while on the course, send them home immediately or offer to call for emergency service, if required.

Limit Communal Items

- Limit the number of staff using course equipment (e.g. mowers, leaf blower, turf sprayers)
- If possible, assign staff to their own equipment (e.g. golf cart).
- Ball washers should be removed or covered up.
- Bunker rakes, ball-retrievers, sand bottles, garbage lids and benches should be removed.
- Instruct players not to touch flagsticks. Use a hole liner or elevate the cup to prevent the ball from falling below the surface so it can be retrieved by handling the ball only.
- Common areas should have disinfectant wipes. If wipes are not available, general disinfectants can be used.

Reopening of Food Services

- Indoor dining and lounges can reopen with public health measures in place. See [Guidance for Food Service Premises](#).
- Customers must remain seated at all times, unless going to the washroom, to pay or to leave. Mask or face coverings must be worn, except when eating. No more than 10 people per table. Buffet and self-serve food stations are not permitted.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection

- Educate staff on the proper use of cleaning agents and disinfectants, including required disinfectant contact times (amount of time that the product will need to remain wet on a surface to achieve disinfection). Understand safety precautions and requirement for use of mask and gloves.
- Schedule [cleaning and disinfecting](#) of high-touch surfaces at least twice a day and more frequently as needed. High-touch surfaces and common areas include vehicle door handles, entrances/exits, pay terminals, waste bins, door handles, counters, cabinet doors, light switches, faucets, toilet handles, hand rails, touch screen surfaces, keypads, cell phones, keys, golf course equipment, powered hand tools, steering wheels, radio controls, rental power carts, pull carts and clubs.
- Ensure washrooms are always stocked with liquid soap and paper towels.
- Disinfectant kills germs on surfaces. Remove surface dirt first in order for the disinfectant to work.
- Most regular household cleaning products are effective at eliminating the virus.
- Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) to confirm it is [approved for use in Canada](#). Check the expiry dates of products and always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Cleaning/disinfection wipes should only be used for surfaces, and according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Equipment and tools that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected regularly, including between users (e.g. cashier's stations, machinery, golf cart, and pull cart).
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water immediately after cleaning the setting.

Note: Disinfectant wipes may have a combined cleaning and disinfectant in one solution, but depending on how dirty the surface is it may need to be pre-cleaned as disinfectants may become ineffective when dirt is present. Check instructions on the product's label.

For more information

Visit our website at toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.

References

Golf Ontario. Golf Ontario COVID-19 Updates. (May 14, 2020). Retrieved from <https://gao.ca/2020/06/29/golf-ontario-covid-19-updates/>

We are Golf. *Appendix 1: recommended best practices during COVID-19*. (May 2020). Retrieved from [https://www.ngcoa.ca/Userfiles/File/PDF-Link/We Are Golf Best Practices Appendix-May14.pdf](https://www.ngcoa.ca/Userfiles/File/PDF-Link/We%20Are%20Golf%20Best%20Practices%20Appendix-May14.pdf)

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