

2026 Terms of Competition & Local Rules – The Hard Card

The Current Rules of Golf of the USGA and R&A, published on USGA.org, govern play. The Notice to Competitors and the Entry Guidelines for each event supersede any conflicting conditions below. The local rules of the host course are not applicable. Referenced Model Local Rules published in the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf, Section 8, are preceded by MLR. Unless otherwise stated, the penalty for a breach of a local rule or condition is the General Penalty. Violations of the COPGA Tournament Rules and Regulations may result in the revocation of the player's entry and additional sanctions on the player by the COPGA.

The Committee: The following on-site or available by phone, text, or email: The COPGA Sr. Director of Operations, COPGA Director of Member Competitions (TD), and the COPGA Chief Officials. A decision by the Committee is final.

Close of Competition: The competition is closed when all scores have been posted on the official scoreboard or approved by the Committee. Ties: Decided as outlined in the COPGA Tournament Rules and Regulations.

The official clock is with the starter.

The Scoring area must be defined by the TD

Return of Scorecards: A player must immediately return their scorecard even if it is marked as a "No Card (NC)", "Withdrawal (WD)", or "Disqualification (DQ)".

Missing Player or Marker Certification: MLR L-1

Conduct, Dress Code, Footwear: The standards as prescribed in the COPGA Tournament Rules and Regulations apply to all players and their caddies. Male players must wear pants.

Pace of Play/Undue Delay of Play: The Pace of Play Policy in the COPGA Tournament Rules and Regulations governs play MLR K-2, Rule 1.2, Rule 5.6

Bad Times in Multiple Rounds-Stroke Play: MLR K-2

Practice between holes: Prohibited MLR I-2, Rule 5.5.

Practice (Stroke Play): Prohibited on the day of and between rounds on the competition course(s). Permitted on the committee any designated practice areas MLR I-1.1, Rule 5.2.

Suspension of Play: Suspension and resumption of play are signaled by air horn. All practice areas are closed during an immediate suspension of play until the Committee declares them open MLR J-1.

Automotive Transportation (Motorized Carts): Permitted. The use of pushcarts is subject to the host course policy.

Audio & Visual Devices: The use of all personal audio/video devices during the round is prohibited, MLR G-8, Rule 4.3. Cell/Smartphone usage is discouraged except for emergencies and to request a ruling.

Out of Bounds: Defined by white lines, white stakes, the course-side edge at ground level of walks, roads, or fence posts.

A ball lying on or beyond a public road defined as out of bounds is out of bounds even if lying on another part of the course, MLR A-5.

Penalty Areas (Red and Yellow): When a penalty area is defined on one side only, it extends to infinity. When a penalty area edge adjoins a course out-of-bounds, the penalty area extends to and coincides with the out-of-bounds edge of the course.

Ground Under Repair (GUR): Areas defined by white lines, Flower beds, turf nurseries, and French drains. Only the Committee may designate an additional part of the course as Ground Under Repair.

Wood Chips and Mulch are Loose Impediments

Integral Objects: Include cables, rods, wires, or wrappings when closely attached to trees and artificial walls and pilings when located in Penalty Areas or in or adjoining Bunkers.

Exposed bunker liner may be treated as GUR under Rule 16.1c; however, relief is not available if the liner only interferes with the player's stance MLR F-6.

Ball Embedded in the wall or lip of a bunker: No free relief under Rule 16.3, MLR F2.2

No Play Zones (NPZs): No Play Zones are designated by green-topped stakes and signs. Relief is required under the applicable Rule 16.1f, Rule 17.1e, MLR E-8

Protected Areas of Course: Flower beds, turf nurseries, and freshly sodded areas are No Play Zones from which play is prohibited; the player must take relief under applicable Rule 16.1f or Rule 17.1e, MLR E-8

Equipment: The following optional conditions are in effect

- Conforming Driver Heads: MLR 8G-1.
- Conforming Golf Balls: MLR 8G-3.
- Groove and Punch Mark Specification: The exception for the pre-March 1990 Ping Eye 2 Irons is not in effect. MLR 8G-2.
- The One Ball Local Rule MLR G-4 is not in effect.
- Replacing Significantly Damaged Club MLR G-9

The following additional MLRs are in effect

- **Immovable Obstructions Close to the Putting Green:** The ball and the Immovable Obstruction must be in the same closely mown area cut to fairway height or less. MLR 8F-5.2
- **Artificial Surfaced Roads, Maintenance Roads, and Cart Paths** are Immovable Obstructions MLR F-17
- **An Abnormal Course Condition Tied Into an Artificially Surfaced Road or Paths:** Treated as a single Abnormal Course Condition. MLR F-3.2
- **Landscaped Areas or similar encircled by an immovable obstruction** are part of the obstruction, MLR 8F-3.3
- **Play from Fringe of Wrong Green; Prohibited** MLR D-4, F-6
- **Seams of Cut Turf:** Relief is for the lie of the ball or the stroke only, not for stance, MLR F-7.
- **Protection of young trees** MLR E-10
- **Ball Striking an Elevated Power Line or Cable** MLR 8E-11
- **Animal Located Near Ball** MLR E-13