



## 2026 LOCAL RULES & TERMS OF THE COMPETITION

Play is governed by the Golf Canada Rules of Golf (effective January 2023), and, where applicable, by the following Local Rules and Terms of the Competition, subject to changes, additions or deletions for particular championships. See applicable championship notice to players and entry application for modifications or additions to these Local Rules and Terms of the Competition. Complete text of Local Rules may be found in the Golf Canada Official Guide to the Rules of Golf (effective January 2023).

Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for a breach of a Local Rule is the General Penalty.

### **Match play – Loss of hole / Stroke Play – Two strokes**

- 1. Out of Bounds (Rule 18.2)** – Defined by the line between the course-side points at ground level of white dots, lines, stakes, and posts of fences defining out of bounds. A ball is out of bounds when it is beyond any wall defining the boundary of the course.

Closed gates that are attached to boundary walls and fences are part of the boundary object. Relief is not allowed from such a gate under Rule 15.2 or 16.1. **But** an open gate is not treated as part of the boundary object and may be closed or moved to a different position: Model Local Rule F-26 is in effect.

- 2. Penalty Areas (Rule 17)** – When a red penalty area is defined on only one side, it is deemed to extend to infinity. When a red penalty area adjoins a boundary, the penalty area edge extends to and coincides with the boundary.

- 3. Abnormal Course Conditions (including Immovable Obstructions) (Rule 16) –**

Ground Under Repair – Rule 16.1 includes:

- Areas defined by white lines.
- Drainage ditches filled with stones (French Drains).
- Seams of Cut Turf – Model Local Rule F-7 is in effect. Interference exists if a player's ball lies in or touches a seam of cut turf or a seam interferes with the player's area of intended swing. However, interference does not exist if the seam only interferes with the player's stance. All seams within the area of cut turf are treated as the same seam in taking relief.
- White-Lined Areas Tying Into Artificially Surfaced Roads and Paths – White-lined areas of ground under repair and artificially surfaced roads, paths or other identified obstructions that they are connected to are a single abnormal course condition when taking relief under Rule 16.1.
- Painted Lines or Dots – Model Local Rule F-21.1 is in effect. Painted lines or dots on the putting green or in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less are to be treated as ground under repair from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1. But interference does not exist if painted lines or dots only interfere with the player's stance.

4. **Immovable Obstructions Close to Putting Greens** – Model Local Rule F-5.2 is in effect. For a ball in the general area, relief may be taken under Rule 16.1b when both the ball and obstruction lie in an area cut to fairway height or less. The ball must be within two club-lengths of the obstruction and the obstruction must be located:
  - a. On or within two club-lengths of the putting green, and;
  - b. On the player’s line of play.
5. **Wood Chips and Mulch** – Wood chips and mulch are loose impediments.
6. **Integral Objects** – The following are integral objects from which free relief is not allowed:
  - a. The portion of cables, wires, wrappings and other similar objects closely attached trees;
  - b. Artificial retaining walls and/or pilings when located within penalty areas or which are adjacent to the edge of bunkers;
  - c. Bunker liners in their intended position. An exposed bunker liner may be treated as ground under repair by the Committee. However, interference by a bunker liner does not exist if the bunker liner only interferes with a player’s stance.
7. **Animals Near Ball** – Model Local Rule E-13 is in effect. An animal that is not defined as a loose impediment and is touching or near a player’s ball may be removed. If the ball moves, there is no penalty, and the ball must be replaced.
8. **Temporary Immovable Obstructions** – Model Local Rule F-23 is in effect. Temporary Immovable Obstructions include, but are not limited to, starting and scoring tents.
9. **Specifications of Clubs and the Ball**
  - a. List of Conforming Driver Heads: Model Local Rule G-1 is in effect.  
Penalty for making a stroke with a club in breach of this Local Rule: **Disqualification.**
  - b. Groove and Punch Mark Specifications: Model Local Rule G-2 is in effect but is modified as the exception to G-2 does not apply.  
Penalty for making a stroke with a club in breach of this Local Rule: **Disqualification.**
  - c. List of Conforming Golf Balls: Model Local Rule G-3 is in effect.  
Penalty for making a stroke with a ball in breach of this Local Rule: **Disqualification.**
  - d. Replacing Club that is Broken or Significantly Damaged – Revised Model Local Rule G-9 effective January 1, 2026, is in effect. Penalty for breach of Local Rule: **See Rule 4.1b.**

**10. Caddies** – Rule 10.3a is modified in this way: A player must not have another player in the competition, who has played or will play in the same round, as their caddie during a round.

The player gets the **General Penalty** for each hole during which there is a breach of this Local Rule. If the breach occurs between the play of two holes, it applies to the next hole.

**11. Pace of Play (Rule 5.6b(3))** – The PGA of Ontario’s Pace of Play Policy will be in effect at all championships and will be communicated prior to the start of each event. The full policy is available at [pgaofontario.com/events/tournament-policies](http://pgaofontario.com/events/tournament-policies), in the PGA of Ontario, and will also be available with the player message.

**Note:** Rule 5.6a (Unreasonable Delay of Play) is still applicable.

**12. Stopping and Resuming Play (Rule 5.7)** – Model Local Rule J-1 is in effect as follows:

- a. **Immediate Suspension (Dangerous Situation):** One prolonged note of the air horn.
- b. **Normal Suspension (Non-Dangerous Situation):** Three short notes of the air horn.
- c. **Resume Play:** Two short notes of the air horn.

**Note:** During an immediate suspension for a dangerous situation, all practice areas are closed until the Tournament Committee has declared them open. Players who practice on closed practice areas will be asked to stop practicing. Players who fail to do so will be subject to penalties under the Code of Conduct.

**13. Practice (Rule 5.2 and 5.5)**

- a. **Before or between rounds in Stroke Play** – Model Local Rule I-1.2 is in effect and Rule 5.2b is modified in this way: A player must not practice on the competition course (except on or near the first teeing area or any practice area) on the day of a competition or between rounds.

Penalty for first breach: **General Penalty** (applied to the player’s first hole).

Penalty for second breach: **Disqualification**.

- b. **Between holes in Stroke Play** – Model Local Rule I-2 is in effect and Rule 5.5b is modified in this way: Between the play of two holes, a player must not:
  - Make any practice stroke on or near the putting green of the hole just completed, or
  - Test the surface of that putting green by rubbing the putting green or rolling a ball.

**14. Anti-Doping** – Players are required to comply with and are bound by the PGA of Ontario Anti-Doping Policy, as detailed on the entry form, [pgaofontario.com/events](http://pgaofontario.com/events), and any communication in advance of the championship.

**15. PGA of Ontario Tournament Policy (Rule 1.2)** – PGA of Ontario Tournament Policy (Rule 1.2) – The PGA of Ontario has adopted a Local Rule under Rule 1.2b setting standards of player conduct on the golf course during play at all championships. The full policy is available at [pgaofontario.com/events/tournament-policies](http://pgaofontario.com/events/tournament-policies), in the PGA of Ontario Office, and will also be available with the player message.

## 16. Scorecard Responsibilities

- a. **Scorecard Returned** – The scorecard of a player or a side is returned to the Committee 15 minutes after the scorecard is accepted into the electronic scoring system. See Supplemental Notice to Players for all relevant information.
- b. **Missing Player or Marker Certification** – Model Local Rule L-1 is in effect and Rule 3.3b(2) is modified in this way: If a player returns a scorecard without the hole scores being certified either by the player, the marker, or both, the player gets the **General Penalty**. The penalty applies to the last hole of the player's round.

17. **When Result of Competition is Final** – The competition is final when the trophy has been presented to the winner, or in the absence of an awards ceremony, when all scores have been validated in the scoring system and approved by the Tournament Committee.

**PGA OF ONTARIO RULES COMMITTEE**