

# Reopening Protocols for Golf Courses

## Recent Updates

**3/18/2021:**

- Updated to align with Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) Protocols for Youth and Adult Recreational Sports Leagues. Employee break rooms must have posted occupancy limits and must be reconfigured to enable physical distancing between employees when they are eating and drinking.

COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to fall, but still remain high. COVID-19 continues to pose a significant risk to communities and requires all people to follow precautions and to modify operations and activities to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Due to Los Angeles County entering the “Red Tier” of the State’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy framework, this protocol has been updated to lift some local activity-specific restrictions. Golf courses should proceed with caution and adhere to the requirements in this protocol to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 within their business operations.

To aid in reducing the spread of COVID-19, all golf courses must take appropriate steps to adhere to the following protocols. The following issues are critical and must be addressed to ensure that workers and consumers reduce the risk of spread at golf courses:

- (1) Protecting and supporting employee and customer health
- (2) Ensuring appropriate physical distancing
- (3) Ensuring proper infection control
- (4) Communicating with the public
- (5) Ensuring equitable access to services

These critical areas have been incorporated into the checklist below and must be implemented as required golf course reopening protocols.

If applicable, additional County protocols relevant to Golf course operations must also be followed, including but not limited to protocols for:

- Restaurants
- [Retail Establishments](#)
- Office-based Worksites

NOTE: All organized youth or adult recreational golf teams or leagues must also adhere to the LACDPH [Protocol for Youth and Adult Recreational Sports Leagues](#) available at the following link:

[http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/protocols/Reopening\\_SportsLeagues.pdf](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/protocols/Reopening_SportsLeagues.pdf).

In the protocols that follow, the term “household” is defined as “persons living together as a single living unit” and shall not include institutional group living situations such as dormitories, fraternities, sororities, monasteries, convents, or residential care facilities, nor does it include such commercial living arrangements such as boarding houses, hotels, or motels.<sup>1</sup> The terms “staff” and “employee” are meant to include employees, volunteers, interns and trainees, scholars and all other individuals who carry out work at the site. The term “visitors” or “customers” should be understood to include members of the public and others who are not staff or employees who spend time at the business or site. The terms “establishment”, “site”, “worksites”, “workplace”, and “facility” both refer to the building, grounds, and any adjacent buildings or grounds at which permitted activities are conducted.

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available so be sure to check the LA County website <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/> regularly for any updates to this document and related guidance.

**All Golf Courses must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable.**

**Golf Course name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### A. GOLFER CHECK-IN, GOLF PLAY AND CLUBHOUSE SURROUNDS - RESTRICTIONS

- Reservations are highly encouraged to reduce gathering, and golfers are encouraged to pre-pay using debit/credit cards at the time of reservation.
- Instructional and informational signage is posted throughout the facility regarding infection control, physical distancing and the use of face masks.
- Visitors arriving at the establishment are reminded to wear an appropriate face mask at all times while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment. For more information, see LACDPH COVID-19 Mask webpage at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/masks>. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Individuals who have been instructed not to wear a face mask by their medical provider must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face mask should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Entry screening is conducted, in compliance with LACDPH Screening Guidance, before players and visitors may enter the facility. Checks must include a check-in a) concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever or chills and b) whether the individual is currently under isolation and quarantine orders. These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through signage posted at the entrance to the facility stating that visitors with these symptoms or currently under isolation or quarantine may not enter the premises.
  - Negative Screen (Cleared). If the person has no symptoms and no contact with a known or suspected COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter and participate for that day.
  - Positive Screen (Not Cleared).
    - If the person has had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine).
    - If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- Golf competitions organized by youth or adult recreational sports leagues, club sports, travel sports, and private and public schools serving students in TK-12 schools may resume and must adhere to this protocol and the LACDPH Protocol for Youth and Adult Recreational Sports Leagues.

- No shotgun tournaments are allowed at this time.
- Payment of green fees is done from an existing outdoor facing starter window or from a check-in table inside the facility. Six-foot social distancing markings are installed to let customers know where to wait to pay.
- Contactless payment systems are in place, where feasible. If not feasible, payment systems are sanitized regularly.
- Markings or delineators are set up to create a six-foot barrier around the golf starter area in order to minimize close contact between employees and the public.
- Hand sanitizer, soap and water, or effective disinfectant/wipes is made available to golfers at or near each entrance to the facility at any beverage carts and food stations/facilities and restrooms.
- Tee time intervals are no less than 10 minutes apart.
- Tee times are limited to no more than 4 players who need not be from the same household or living unit). Each group must be stable (i.e., persons may not substitute in or out of the group).
- Players are not allowed to arrive on any tee box until the previous group has left the teeing ground.
- Score cards and pencils are handed out when requested only, and not placed on the counter.
- Rental clubs are not made available.
- Public counters and service windows are frequently sanitized.
- Club racks are removed or cordoned off.
- Trash cans are touchless. Lids have been removed if present.
- Golf carts can have individuals from different households provided that all riders wear a face mask at all times. Otherwise, golf carts must be single rider only or used by members of the same household only. Golfers are not allowed to touch, remove or adjust the flag stick during their round.
- Golf carts, riding and hand carts, are sanitized before and after each use.
- All golf course restrooms are serviced and disinfected frequently. Doors are propped open when possible to minimize touching of door handles or surfaces.
- Since bunker rakes are not available, golfers are instructed, as per USGA COVID 19 Rules, to “try their best to smooth the disturbed area with a foot or a golf club after playing their ball.”
- Private lessons and group lessons are allowed using proper social distancing techniques. Both the students and instructor will be required to wear face masks.
  - All participant information normally distributed and collected during registration shall be done electronically prior to arrival. Encourage participants to print out themselves or plan to use in digital form.
  - Participants and instructors are required to remain at least 6-feet from one another and must refrain from physical contact with each other such as handshakes, embraces, high fives and fist bumps.
  - Instructors and participants shall wear face masks for the entirety of class.
  - Participant to instructor ratio shall not exceed 6:1.
  - Instructors shall not share equipment with other coaches or participants without such equipment being sanitized.
  - All equipment issued to participants shall have been sanitized. In addition, said golf equipment shall remain with the student throughout the class and shall not be shared.
  - Participants shall not handle range baskets or shag bags at any time.
  - Instructors will remain with their assigned group throughout the session. Participants shall not rotate

to different **instructors** during a given session.

- Consecutive sessions shall be staggered to allow staff time to disinfect equipment and to minimize gathering and cross traffic of student beginning and ending sessions.

All retail areas must comply with public health [retail establishment](#) protocols.

No congregating or tailgating in the parking lot is allowed.

#### For Employees or Staff present on site:

All employees **and volunteers working onsite** have been told not to come to work if sick, or if they are exposed to a person who has COVID-19. Employees understand to follow DPH guidance for self-isolation and quarantine, if applicable. Workplace leave policies have been reviewed and modified to ensure that employees are not penalized when they stay home due to illness.

- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home has been provided to all employees. See additional information on government [programs](#) supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID19, including employee's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 exposures occurring between March 19 and July 5, 2020 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).

Upon being informed that one or more employees test positive for, or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (case), the employer has a plan or protocol in place to have the case(s) isolate themselves at home and require the immediate self-quarantine of all employees that had a workplace exposure to the case(s). The employer's plan should consider a protocol for all quarantined employees to have access to or be tested for COVID-19 in order to determine whether there have been additional workplace exposures, which may require additional COVID-19 control measures. See the public health guidance on [responding to COVID-19 in the workplace](#).

[Employee screenings](#) are conducted, in compliance with the LACDPH [Employee Screening Guidance](#), before employees, vendors, contractors, and delivery personnel may enter the workspace. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entrance to the facility stating that visitors with these symptoms should not enter the premises. A temperature check should also be done at the worksite if feasible.

- **Negative Screen (Cleared).** If the person has no symptoms and no contact with a known or suspected COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter and work for that day.

- **Positive Screen (Not Cleared).**

- If the person has had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine).

- If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).

In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer should report this cluster to the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821 **or online**

- at [www.redcap.link/covidreport](http://www.redcap.link/covidreport). If a cluster is identified at a worksite, the Department of Public Health will initiate a cluster response which includes providing infection control guidance and recommendations, technical support and site-specific control measures. A public health case manager will be assigned to the cluster investigation to help guide the facility response.
- Employees who have contact with others are offered, at no cost, an appropriate face mask that covers the nose and mouth. For more information, see LAC DPH COVID-19 Mask webpage at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/masks>. The face mask is to be worn by the employee at all times during the workday when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Employees who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face mask must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used.
  - All employees must wear face masks at all times, except when working alone in private offices with closed doors or when eating or drinking. The exception made previously for employees working in cubicles with solid partitions exceeding the height of the employee while standing is overridden
  - To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are prohibited from eating or drinking except during their breaks when they are able to safely remove their masks and physically distance from others. At all times when eating or drinking, employees must maintain at least a six-foot distance from others. When eating or drinking, it is preferred to do so outdoors and away from others, if possible. Eating or drinking at a cubicle or workstation is preferred to eating in a breakroom if eating in a cubicle or workstation provides greater distance from and barriers between workers.
  - Occupancy is reduced and space between employees is maximized in any room or area used by employees for meals and/or breaks. This has been achieved by:
    - Posting a maximum occupancy that is consistent with enabling a distance of at least six feet between individuals in rooms or areas used for breaks;
    - Staggering break or mealtimes to reduce occupancy in rooms or areas used for meals and breaks; and
    - Placing tables eight feet apart and assuring six feet between seats, removing or taping seats to reduce occupancy, placing markings on floors to assure distancing, and arranging seating in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact. Use of partitions is encouraged to further prevent spread but should not be considered a substitute for reducing occupancy and maintaining physical distancing.
  - Employees are instructed to wash or replace their face masks daily.
  - Employees have been reminded to adhere to personal prevention actions including:
    - Stay home when you are sick. Stay home for at least 1 day (24 hours) after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands before meals, after using the restroom and after coughing and sneezing.
    - Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and then dispose of the tissue and clean your hands immediately. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow (not your hands).
    - Do not touch your mouth, eyes, nose with unwashed hands.
    - Avoid contact with people who are sick.
    - Avoid sharing items such as phones or other devices. If devices must be shared be sure to wipe them down with a disinfectant wipe before and after sharing.
    - Constantly observe your work distances in relation to other staff. Always maintain the recommended



- minimum 6 feet separation from others unless specific work assignments require less distancing and wear a face **mask** when working near or with others.
- Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, machines, shared devices, and doorknobs. This should be done hourly during business hours.
  - Copies of this Protocol have been distributed to all employees.

## B. FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- Any onsite restaurant must comply with the required public health [restaurants protocols](#).
- Beverage carts may be operated. Staff manning the carts wear a face **mask** and protective gloves to conduct transactions. Social Distancing Safety Protocols are observed.

## C. GOLF COURSE SET-UP

- Rakes, ball washers, benches, divot boxes and sand bottles have been removed in order to eliminate common touch points.
- Practice putting green cups are installed in a 'touchless' manner. Foam or another material may be inserted. At no time is the entire ball resting below the putting surface. No pins. No more than 2 golf balls may be used per player. Cups shall be installed no closer than 18 ft from each other
- Practice pitching green cups are installed in a 'touchless' manner. Foam or another material may be inserted. At no time is the entire ball resting below the putting surface.
- Encourage participants to bring their own pre-filled reusable or purchased water bottles. Water fountains are available to fill water bottles only. Participants should not drink from the same beverage container or share beverages.

## D. PRACTICE FACILITY

- Practice putting and chipping greens **may reopen with physical distancing and mask use required.**
- No congregating is allowed on the driving range, **putting green, and chipping green.** If necessary, a 1-hour maximum time limit for use of the driving range, **putting green, and chipping green** has been implemented.
- No golfer is allowed to stand behind a hitting station while waiting for another golfer to finish.
- Driving range mat centerlines can be 8 feet apart as long as areas for left-handed players are grouped together and separated from those for right-handed players by at least 12 feet.
- Range baskets are regularly sanitized.
- Range balls are washed after each use.
- Ball dispensing machines are frequently sanitized.

## E. MAINTANENCE EMPLOYEE PROTOCOLS

- Staggered start times for staff and split shifts are put in place to limit the number of staff on site, at staff meetings, which should be held outdoors whenever feasible, at lunch breaks, and during departure times. No one is allowed to congregate in groups.
- Staff meetings are held in open air spaces such as parking lots or large storage bays in order to maintain physical distancing.
- The use of time clocks has been discontinued, if possible.

- All employees are required to wash their hands for 20 seconds prior to the start of their shift, before and after the lunch break, after using the restroom and prior to departing for the day. More frequent handwashing is recommended as feasible. Locker room facilities are cleared of all belongings. Additional uniforms, gear and all belongings can be kept in personal vehicles on-site. No personal belongings are allowed to be stored on-site.
- The use of the breakroom facility common use items (e.g., coffee pots, vending machines, refrigerators and microwaves) has been suspended. Personal coolers are suggested for meals/personal beverages and should be stored in personal vehicles.
- No employees other than the golf course mechanic are permitted in mechanics area. Mechanics are instructed to take all necessary precautions to ensure all tools and key touch points are cleaned and wiped down regularly (e.g. grinders, workbenches and commonly used tools). All mechanics are encouraged to always use good hand hygiene and wear protective latex gloves during work hours.
- Management will set guidelines for cleaning facilities at least three times daily; (In the morning after staff arrivals and teams depart to golf course, after the lunch hour and at the end of the shift once everyone has departed for the day and focus on all key touch points (doorknobs, restrooms, tables, chairs, sinks, computers/keyboards etc.). High touch areas may require more frequent cleaning.

#### F. ON COURSE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- A minimum of 6 feet social distancing is maintained at all times.
- Disposable protective gloves are worn and changed out when necessary by staff.
- Equipment such as carts and radios are assigned to staff. Protocols for cleaning all touch points on all equipment are put in place. Staff will be responsible for disinfecting equipment prior to usage and periodically during operation. Disinfectant at key tool stations are available for staff to wipe down tools prior to and after use. (e.g. shovel, rakes, fuel cans, cup cutters etc.).
- Crews will be broken up into pods of a front nine crew and back nine crew and remain in these pods as much as possible in order to reduce interaction of the entire crew.
- Training on various pieces of equipment is done while maintaining social distancing. When possible, equipment training will be executed by mirroring, with the trainer and trainee each working with their own identical piece of equipment to eliminate the need for sharing equipment in close proximity.

#### G. END OF SHIFT PROCEDURES

- Staff are responsible for disinfecting equipment after operation. Disinfectant at key tool stations will be available for staff to wipe down tools prior to and after use (i.e. shovel, rakes, fuel cans, cup cutters etc.).
- All staff members are required to leave the property immediately after their shift.
- Each team member is reminded of the importance of social distancing away from the job as well as on the job.

#### H. MONITORING PROTOCOLS

- A copy of this protocol, or if applicable, the facility's printed Los Angeles County COVID-19 Safety Compliance Certificate is posted at all public entrances to the facility. For more information or to complete the COVID-19 safety compliance self-certification program, visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/covid19cert.htm>. Facilities must keep a copy of the Protocols onsite at the facility for review, upon request.
- Signage at the entry and/or where customers line up notifies customers of occupancy limit, reminds

customers to maintain physical distancing of six feet, and the requirement to wear a face mask at all times. See the County DPH COVID-19 Guidance: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/guidances.htm#business> for additional resources and examples of signage that can be used by businesses.

- The golf course operator has a 'Safety Ambassador' on-site during all business hours. The sole purpose of said staff member is to ensure that golf course staff and patrons are practice all required Social Distancing Safety Protocols. The Safety Ambassador wears a name tag and the golf cart used shall be clearly marked with 'Safety Ambassador'. The safety monitor always has this document with them to reference the required safety protocols.
- Friendly, yet firm communication with any patron violating the required safety protocols is a must. Patrons are reminded that any violation of Social Distancing Safety Protocols will jeopardize the continued operation of local golf courses.
- Any patron, who refuses to adhere to the safety protocols after one warning is asked to leave the property immediately.

**Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the business should attach to this document.**

**You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:**

**Golf Course  
Contact Name:**

**Phone number:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date Last  
Revised:**

\_\_\_\_\_