

Golf Operations Advisory with Provision Regarding Golf Carts (updated May 10)

On May 10, the Baker-Polito administration updated its guidance regarding golf course operations during the COVID-19 public health emergency, with further details regarding the implementation of COVID-19 Order 13 relative to the closure of non-essential businesses.

The update (*new provisions noted below in italics*) clarifies that golf courses that decide to operate within the directives stipulated by the Commonwealth shall provide appropriate accommodations within the context of the Americans with Disabilities Act, specifically regarding access to motorized golf carts.

The updated guidance is as follows, and can also be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-essential-services-faqs#other->:

Are golf courses considered essential? **NO**

- Golf courses are not essential businesses and cannot have employees working on-premise. Notwithstanding this restriction, essential services, such as groundskeeping to avoid hazardous conditions and security, provided by employees, contractors, or vendors are permitted.
- Private operators of golf courses may permit individuals access to the property so long as there are no gatherings of any kind, appropriate social distancing of six feet between individuals is strictly followed, and the business operator and golfers abide by the specific guidelines for golf courses outlined below.
- Municipalities may decide to open municipal courses under these guidelines, if they so choose.
- The specific guidelines for golf courses are:
 - Security personnel can be delineated by each club (ex. a pro and the head starter) and will be present to enforce social distancing. There can be no other employees working at the recreational component of the golf operation.
 - All staff must wear face coverings while on the property
 - Club facilities including but not limited to the club house, pro shop, restaurant, bag room and locker room must remain closed
 - No caddies allowed
 - No golf carts allowed, *except as outlined below:*
 - o *The use of a motorized cart may be permitted for any individual with a disability who is seeking a reasonable accommodation to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A golfer who wants to use a cart should provide documentation or otherwise certify in writing to the golf course that he or she has a disability that requires the use of the cart.*
 - o *Any carts used must be cleaned and sanitized after each use. The course operator may not use non-essential employees to handle the renting and/or cleaning of the carts. Only security and grounds-keeping personnel are permitted on the premises.*

- Push carts may be used. Players must either carry their own bag or use a push cart
- All golfers must maintain proper social distancing of at least 6 feet at all times
- Groups of players are restricted to no more than 4 players at one time.
- Members-only clubs can allow guests as determined by the security personnel on the golf course
- Private clubs that allow non-members to make reservations can do so at their discretion
- Maintenance personnel are permitted to work on the golf course
- Tee Time Policy must be 15 minutes between groups
- Golfers must stay in their car until 15 minutes before their tee time and must return to their car immediately following play
- Online and remote payment options must be utilized
- All golfers must use their own golf clubs. Sharing golf clubs or rental golf clubs is not allowed.
- Flag sticks must remain in the hole. Hole liners must be raised so picking a ball out of the hole doesn't occur
- Bunker rakes must be removed, and ball washers must be removed or covered.
- Practice putting green, driving range, and chipping areas must be closed.
- Facilities must have readily accessible hand sanitizer