



May 20, 2021

## FINALLY ... Great News for Golf in Ontario!

### Golf to Open Saturday May 22nd!

It has been a long and frustrating few weeks for everyone involved. Thank you to everyone for your patience and commitment to your facilities as we have dealt with the restrictions in the Stay-At-Home order. As you know, Ontario's *We Are Golf* partners, along with everyone in the industry, have been working very hard to reopen golf courses. A ton of work has been done by everyone, and our clear and consistent messaging, along with significant pressure in social media has helped ensure our message was clear that golf needed to be open.

As you just heard during Premier Ford's press conference, **golf courses and driving ranges in Ontario are permitted to open on Saturday May 22 at 12:01 am**. As well, the Ontario Government has announced the framework that will be put in place for when the stay-at-home order is lifted on June 2. Below is the information available to us right now. Once the relevant details and framework is available from the Ontario Government, we will send another communication, but we wanted to communicate the great news to you as quickly as possible that golf is opening.

#### Protocols You MUST Adhere to Upon Reopening:

Now, more than ever, golf course operators must adhere to COVID-19 best practices and protocols. We have been very clear on our Golf Is Safe messaging, and we need to ensure we continue to be the gold standard in providing a safe experience for golfers and staff. Below are some key documents that are available for guidance.

- [Click here](#) to download the **complete protocol listing** that We Are Golf submitted to the Ontario Government and be sure to share with your management team.
- [Click here](#) to download the **Workplace Safety & Prevention Guidance on Health and Safety for Golf Courses**.
- All protocols that were implemented by the golf industry for the 2020 golf season must be in place as you reopen for the 2021 season. The only change is with regards to **use of power carts**. At the start of 2021, the Ontario government updated the regulations so that **ALL GOLFERS MUST WEAR A MASK** (unless both golfers are from the same household) at all times when in the cart. The alternative is for facilities is to proceed with solo carts only.

**\*\* The legislation will likely continue to evolve and your local Public Health Unit will have final decisions on all elements that impact your region's public health, as well as enforcement. We strongly urge you to contact your local Public Health Unit as soon as possible for clarity on all aspects of your business that you are unsure of (including cart usage, mask usage, access to buildings, food & beverage services, etc.). In terms of this weekend, though, it may be difficult to reach your unit so please err on the side of caution if you are unsure.**

#### Workplace Inspections:

It is expected that inspectors will be tasked to visit every golf course across the province in the coming days / weeks. Be properly prepared, including staff and golfers. You must have proper signage, postings, documentation, etc. in place or face fines / closure. [Click here](#) to access signage templates for your facility.





Key Operational Notes (from now until at least June 2 or until further notice):

- Clubhouses may only open for washrooms access.
- Green fee transactions need to be done in advance (phone/online) or outside at an outdoor table as there is NO ACCESS to your proshop.
- Restaurants may only open for take-out or curbside pickup.
- Patios cannot be open for use.
- Halfway house can be open for pickup, but no seating can be available for golfers.
- Beverage carts are able to be in operation. Please ensure golfers are masked when within 2 metres of staff.

Golf finally being allowed to open is great news for Ontarians. We believe golf should never have closed and we recognize that this lengthy shutdown has created some challenges for your business. We do believe, though, that demand will be stronger than ever, and we hope golf can play a key role in helping kickstart the economic recovery in Ontario. **It is very important that we get this right!** We must all commit to adhering to these guidelines to ensure that we provide a safe environment so that all facilities across the province can make up for lost time for the remainder of the year, beginning Saturday.

***Note: These continue to be tough times for everyone. While happy that golf courses will be open in Ontario, there will be many businesses very negatively impacted and we need to be mindful of this. We ask that in any external communications (social media, etc.) you are aware of your messaging and ensure you are being thankful that golf will be able to provide a SAFE outlet for the physical and mental well-being of Ontarians. We don't want to be too celebratory in our tone in light of the challenges other businesses are facing.***

We will continue to send you updates if more information becomes available. Thank you and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours in golf.

Mike Kelly  
Executive Director  
Golf Ontario  
mkelly@gao.ca

Shawn Hunter  
Regional Director  
National Golf Course Owners  
Association Canada (NGCOA)  
shunter@ngcoa.ca

Melanie van der Hoop  
Executive Director  
Professional Golfers' Association of  
Ontario (PGA of Ontario)  
melanie@pgaofontario.com

Al Schwemler  
President  
Ontario Golf Superintendents'  
Association (OGSA)  
alschwemler@gmail.com

Paul Bussiere, CCM  
Ontario Branch Director  
Canadian Society of Club Managers  
(CSCM)  
PBussiere@coppinwood.com

