



Protocol for Re-opening Tubbercurry Golf Club on 18th May 2020



INTRODUCTION

The following Protocol for our golf club and golfers has been prepared by the Committee of Tubbercurry Golf Club (TGC), and is mainly based on the protocol set out by the Irish Ladies Golf Union and the Golfing Union of Ireland, which has been prepared following extensive consultation with the relevant government departments and state agencies in the Republic of Ireland. It aims to ensure that golf can be played safely during the COVID-19 Pandemic where public health measures permit such activity.

This Protocol is the basis on which the Unions and Golf Ireland sought the inclusion by the Government of the resumption of golf in Phase 1 of its Roadmap.

As one of the first sports to be allowed to resume, there is a major responsibility on golf clubs and golfers to ensure that our sport is conducted in a safe and responsible manner. Full adherence to the provisions of this Protocol is absolutely essential.

It should be noted that the Government continues to monitor the situation closely and has not ruled out the reintroduction of restrictions which could see golf clubs closed once again if the Protocol is not followed.

It is essential that our golf club take whatever steps to ensure we can implement this Protocol. We are asking all members to demonstrate their determination to keep golf safe and open by adhering to guidelines set out in this document.

Public health measures are likely to be continually updated by the Government. Even if golf continues to be allowed in such circumstances, the Protocol governing the safe playing of the game may be updated in line with any changes to public health measures.

For these reasons, we will continue to monitor developments very closely and will update our advice as required. It is essential, therefore, that our golfers regularly check the Tubbercurry Golf Club Website, Facebook page and WhatsApp group for updates on these matters.

If you are not a member of the WhatsApp group, we encourage you to join it for the next few months, and all members are expected to observe the rules applicable to the group (a copy which will be posted later), while a member of the group.

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY

We are aware that there are several other unofficial guidelines in circulation. These documents have not been reviewed by the relevant government departments and state agencies. Therefore, our golf club and golfers must exclusively adhere to the Protocol below. We have followed closely the GUI's protocol and amended it to suit with what we feel is best for our club at this moment.

At no point have we diluted the rules set out by the GUI, rather we have added some further restrictions. Members are expected to be aware of our protocol and may not deviate from the same.

Points to Consider

Coping with demand and expectations:

The reopening of our golf course will be done in phases as per government and GUI guidelines. Demand for golf may be high as we progress through the phases, as golf is amongst a relatively small number of recreational activities available to people. It is essential that Tubbercurry Golf Club puts in place tee time restrictions in line with the Protocol below immediately to manage expectations. We will also ensure that decision-making can be rapid and efficient to respond to issues as they arise. Following a committee meeting on Saturday the 9th of May these decisions will be made by a group (Covid Committee) consisting of the Captain, Vice-Captain, Secretary, Treasurer, Handicap Secretary, Membership Secretary, Course Convener and Competition Secretary. Members should be aware of the following:

- A) Members will need to be aware of the limited basis on which they have the opportunity to play in the initial months.
- B) Members need to understand the necessity of restrictions to minimize the risk of a reintroduction of lockdown measures. While everyone may have an opinion on what should be done, full compliance with the measures in place is essential.
- C) Members should be aware that these restrictions are not going to last forever, but must live within them and be patient while they are in place. We all want to get back to normal as soon as possible, but this will be a gradual process and will be reliant on golf clubs and golfers observing this Protocol.
- D) Returning to golf after a lengthy period in which courses have been closed, yet maintained, may create certain expectations among members about the quality of the course they will find when they return. We are fortunate in our club that our Greenkeeper Paul Mcloughlin and Course Convener John Brennan have worked tirelessly to keep our course in excellent condition. To this end, we would like members to note the following:
 - We expect all members to follow good course etiquette on their return. Replace your divots, repair your pitch marks, etc. Paul and John have done a fantastic job heretofore, let's not burden them with extra tasks.
 - As Paul will be removing or cordoning off ball washers, rubbish bins etc., you are expected to take any litter you are responsible for, home with you. So any drink bottles, snack wrappers, broken tees etc., are not to be discarded on the course, put them in your bag and take your litter home.



TGC Rules in Phase 1

This Protocol sets out the basis on which golf can be played at TGC in a safe manner, during Phase 1 of the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. These rules are subject to change and golf clubs are asked to check Tubbercurry Golf Club Website, Facebook page and WhatsApp group regularly for updates.

TGC will ensure that:

- Members with colds or any symptoms of COVID-19 stay away from the golf course/clubhouse.
- Physical distancing rules are observed by all members at all times in the car park, clubhouse and on the course.
- Play is restricted to:
 - Paid up members only
 - Casual golf only (no club competitions or opens).
- Where possible, personnel will be on hand to monitor adherence with physical distancing rules and the rules for golfers set out in this document. CCTV is in operation at the Golf club and this will be monitored continuously by members of the committee.
- Tee times are booked in advance online or through the Master Scoreboard website which you can do on your computer or via your telephone.
- Timesheets will be opened for 2 days in advance, with tee times starting at 7am and finishing at 8.24pm. All golfers are expected to have exited the course no later than 10pm.
- Members are asked to refrain from "block booking" tee times.
- Members are also asked to book tee times outside peak times if possible. We would like to leave the later times in the day for people who have returned to work, as this may be their only opportunity to play.
- Members who book tee times and then fail to use them, run the risk of being sanctioned by the committee and suspended from playing for a number of days.
- We will be monitoring how this system evolves, and may make adjustments to ensure that all members get a fair opportunity to play.
- There will be certain times of the week which will be reserved for our senior men and ladies.
- You may see certain tee times taken on the timesheet when it initially opens. These will be times reserved for members who have volunteered to supervise the course for a time period prior to that tee time.
- These and other instructions for booking will be posted on the various platforms outlined above
- TGC must ensure that players names are recorded on timesheets and timesheets must be kept for a period of at least 6 weeks to assist with contact tracing should the need arise.
- Daily timesheets will be restricted to a minimum of 12 minute intervals, with 2 golfers playing per start time.
- **Members will be restricted to a maximum of 9 holes per day initially.**
- Clubhouse access should be confined to use of toilet facilities, you enter the premises through the appropriate locker room door and exit via the main door in the foyer.
- There are no social gatherings, of any size, at the facility.
- Members are instructed not to touch the flag or flagstick.
- Rakes are removed from the course. Players are requested to smooth bunkers using their feet or a club.
- Hire trolleys will not be available in the initial phases.

- Caddies are not permitted, except in the following instances:
 - It is a person from the same household of the member.
 - They are either a Parent, Spouse/Partner or child of member.
 - There is only one caddy per group.
 - You have notified Luke O'Connor, Brian Henry or Brendan Murphy 1 hour in advance of your tee time the name of that caddy (to comply with Contact tracing requirements)

In addition, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Signage will be erected to reinforce physical distancing rules.
- Holes/cups will be altered to facilitate easy retrieval of golf balls.
- Hand sanitisers will be made available in and around the clubhouse.
- Regular cleaning of toilets will take place.
- Where possible ball washers, bins, sand bags, benches, divot boxes and non-essential furniture will be taken in off the course, otherwise they will be cordoned off.
- The practice putting greens will be open, the holes will be filled in or covered, and you should use a tee instead.
- Where possible, members of the same household should play together, rather than split into mixed groups.
- The use of golf buggies is discouraged. Where a golf buggy must be used, it should be used by one person only and cannot be exchanged between people during the round.
- Juniors to play only if they are accompanied by an adult. In addition, wherever possible juniors should restrict themselves to playing with other members of their own household.
- Our defibrillator will be moved to the Men's Locker Room.



Rules for Golfers in Phase 1

This Protocol sets out the basis on which golf can be played in a safe manner, during Phase 1 of the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. Golfers are expected to observe the underlying public health guidance set out at: www.hse.ie/coronavirus/ and www.gov.ie. These rules are subject to change and golfers are asked to check [Tubbercurry Golf Club Website, Facebook page and WhatsApp group](#) regularly for updates.

To ensure that the game is played safely, golfers must observe the following rules:

In advance of play:

- If you are ill or have symptoms, stay at home.
- Schedule your tee-time in the manner prescribed by your golf club. Under no circumstances should you arrive at the club without booking in advance.
- Ensure that your group size is no greater than 2
- Ensure that you have sufficient numbers of golf balls, markers, tees to avoid having to exchange equipment with others.
- Wash your hands and your golf equipment before you leave home.
- Aim to arrive at the club no more than 15 minutes prior to play.
- Travel to the golf course on your own or with members of your own household only.
- Park your car in such a way as to facilitate physical distancing.
- Observe physical distancing rules at all times following your arrival at the club.
- Change your shoes in the car park.
- Warm-up alone. Observe physical distancing rules on the practice putting green.
- Avoid holing out on practice putting green, putt to a tee-peg instead.

On the course:

- Do not arrive at the first tee more than 5 minutes before your allotted tee time.
- Observe physical distancing at all times on the course.
- Following play of a hole, do not enter the next teeing ground until all members of the group in front have played their tee- shots and exited the teeing ground.
- If you must use a golf buggy, it must only be used by you and cannot be shared with or used by another player during the round.
- Do not exchange or share equipment, food or drink with other players during your round.
- If your ball is lost, unplayable, or in a penalty area, don't take an option under the rules that involves doubling back on your position on the course. Instead, use an option that allows you to keep your position on the course.
- Do not pick up another player's equipment or golf ball.
- Do not use on-course water fountains, ball cleaners etc.
- Do not use rakes in bunkers.
- Do not touch the flag or flagstick. Putt with the flagstick in and remove your own ball from the hole.

After your round:

- Return directly to your car, change your shoes, put your equipment in your car and leave. Do not store your equipment in your locker.
- Avoid entering the clubhouse. If you must use the toilet facilities, ensure you adhere to health and safety guidelines.

In addition, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Use the toilet facilities before you leave home.
- Bring your own hydration/food to the course.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser to the course & use regularly during the round.

Finally

The TGC Committee have had meetings on several occasions over the past few weeks since our course was closed due to Covid restrictions.

We have done considerable work to ensure that the club would be fully prepared in the event of re-opening.

In preparing the above protocol, we have mainly based it on the protocol outlined by the GUI. We encourage each member to familiarise themselves with the same.

Our priority has been to ensure a safe return to golf for our members and to be mindful of the health of the wider South Sligo community.

We realise that some members will have different interpretations of what the protocol should contain, however, it is imperative that you follow the one that we are implementing.

To that end, we expect that each member to follow the guidance and instructions of the volunteers at the club who are there to supervise our re-opening. Any deviations from the same may result in sanctions by the club.

If any member feels they have a legitimate suggestion to improve the operations of the club, and it falls within the GUI's protocol, then contact a member of the Covid Committee and we will give it consideration.

Above all, when we return on the 18th, stay safe, keep apart and enjoy your golf.

The Committee, Tubbercurry Golf club

