



# Local Rules and Terms of the Competition

## FOR 2026 USGA CHAMPIONSHIPS

*The Rules of Golf as approved by the United States Golf Association and R&A Rules Limited govern play. These Local Rules and Terms of the Competition are in effect at all USGA championships and qualifying rounds. See applicable championship or qualifying round notice to players and entry application for modifications or additions to these Local Rules and Terms of the Competition. Complete text of the Rules and Local Rules may be found in the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf, effective January 2023.*

**Unless otherwise noted, the penalty for breach of a Local Rule is the general penalty.**

**Out of Bounds** — Defined by the line between the course-side points of white stakes and fence posts at ground level.

**Penalty Areas** — When a penalty area is defined on only one side, it extends to infinity. When a penalty area is connected to the out-of-bounds edge, the penalty area extends to and coincides with out of bounds.

**Ground Under Repair** — Defined by white lines. French drains are ground under repair. For grass-covered trenching, see Temporary Power Lines and Cables.

Ground under repair may include areas of unusual damage, including areas where spectators or other traffic has combined with wet conditions to affect materially the ground surface, but only when so declared by an authorized member of the Committee. When immediately adjacent to an immovable obstruction, such an area is part of that obstruction.

**Animal Near Ball** — Model Local Rule E-13 is in effect.

**Relief from Seams of Cut Turf** — Model Local Rule F-7 is in effect.

**Immovable Obstructions** — Include plastic bumpers on roads and paths, and mats secured to the ground with spikes when the bumpers or mats cover cables.

**White-Lined Areas Tying Into Artificially Surfaced Roads and Paths** — White-lined areas of ground under repair and the 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.

**Wood Chips and Mulch** — Are loose impediments.

**Integral Objects** — Include objects when closely attached to trees and boundary objects, and artificial walls and pilings when located in penalty areas or in or adjacent to bunkers, and bunker liners.

An exposed bunker liner may be treated as ground under repair, but interference does not exist if the liner interferes only with the player's stance.

**Temporary Power Lines and Cables** — Model Local Rule F-22 is in effect. Cables located within grass-covered trenches are movable obstructions.

**Temporary Immovable Obstructions** — Model Local Rule F-23 is in effect.

**List of Conforming Driver Heads** — Model Local Rule G-1 is in effect.

**Groove and Punch Mark Specifications** — Model Local Rule G-2 is in effect, except as modified by the applicable championship entry application.

**List of Conforming Golf Balls** — Model Local Rule G-3 is in effect.

**Prohibiting Use of Motorized Transportation** — Model Local Rule G-6 is in effect and includes the exception that always authorizes riding when a player is operating under penalty of stroke and distance.

**Missing Player or Marker Certification** — Model Local Rule L-1 is in effect.

**Pace of Play** — See separate memorandum to players for pace of play policy, when applicable.

**Stopping and Resuming Play** — Model Local Rule J-1 is in effect.

All practice areas are closed during an immediate suspension for a dangerous situation until the Committee has declared them open. Players who practice on closed practice areas will be asked to stop practicing; failure to stop practicing might result in disqualification.

An immediate suspension will be signaled by one prolonged airhorn note. All other types of suspension will be signaled by three consecutive airhorn notes. Resumption of play will be signaled by two short airhorn notes.

**Practice** — Prior to and after a round in stroke play, a player may practice on the designated practice areas. Rule 5.2b covering practice in stroke play is modified in this way: A player may not practice on the competition course before or between rounds. Penalty for breach of Local Rule, see Rule 5.2.

**When Competition Is Final** — The competition is final when the trophy has been presented to the winner or, in the absence of a prize ceremony, when all scores have been approved by the Committee.