

Laguna Woods Village | Temporary Reopening of Golf Courses and Driving Range

Effective: May 11, 2020 | Revised: September 10, 2020 | Expiration Date: TBD

BACKGROUND

On March 4, 2020, the Governor of the State of California declared a State of Emergency as a result of the threat of COVID-19. Subsequently, on March 19, 2020, the governor issued Executive Order N-33-20, which ordered all state residents to stay in place and identified certain essential functions that could remain operational. Additionally, the order stated that individuals must adhere to strict social distancing guidance.

On April 21, 2020, the Orange County Board of Supervisors offered guidance for golf courses, including those in Laguna Woods Village, that have the ability to provide limited recreational opportunities on the courses by utilizing industry best practices to remain in compliance with the governor's executive order.

PURPOSE

Safeguarding our community is of utmost importance. It is imperative that our community self-enforce and strictly adhere to the restrictions mandated by the governor, guidance on golf courses provided by Orange County and other applicable rules and regulations.

This procedure is intended to reduce risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus, but is not a guarantee of your safety. Residents should use their own good judgment in determining the amount of risk of exposure in using any shared facilities or amenities. Risk of exposure involves many factors out of the control of the Village corporations and management, including the compliance (or noncompliance) and safe/unsafe behavior of others using the same facilities or amenities.

SCOPE

This procedure establishes formal guidelines for the temporary reopening of Laguna Woods Village golf courses effective May 11, 2020 (for residents only), and a procedure for operating the courses during the COVID-19 crisis in compliance with the governor's executive order, county guidance, and other applicable rules and regulations.

The procedure reflects Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advice that older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on what we know now, those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 include people 65 years and older.

The golf operations manager, with support from the recreation and special events director, are responsible for these activities.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Applicability

Golf courses and the driving range will reopen to Laguna Woods Village residents only. No guests are permitted on golf courses or the driving range.

2. Hours

The golf courses and the driving range are open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

3. Facilities

Golf operations will remain closed (golf course: clubhouse; par-three course: drop-in lounge and patio; driving range: patio and vending machines). Management will adhere to industry best practices for implementation that will allow for limited recreational access only to remain in compliance with state, county and other applicable safety requirements. Golf pro shop is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; occupancy is limited to two residents at a time.

4. Rental Equipment

Rental golf clubs are not available. Pull carts are available and sanitized by golf course staff between uses.

5. Safety Requirements

a. Touch points

All touch points will be eliminated.

b. Social distancing

Individuals must strictly adhere to the 6-foot social distancing requirement in all areas at all times. This will be enforced by golf course employees and course marshals.

c. Face coverings

Face coverings must be worn in all areas until teeing off on the course and on the mat at the driving range. Face coverings also must be worn when finishing.

d. Hand washing

Individuals should wash hands frequently with soap and water.

e. Touching

Individuals should avoid touching their faces and refrain from shaking hands. Tip your cap for now.

f. Health

Individuals who are not feeling well should stay home.

6. Completion of Golf Round and/or Bucket of Balls

Upon completing the round and/or bucket of balls, individuals must proceed directly to their car/cart and drive away from the immediate area to avoid congregating in the parking lot.

GOLF COURSES PROVISIONS

1. Scheduling

Strategic scheduling of tee times will occur to ensure there are no congregations of individuals waiting to start as well as to maintain social distancing on the courses. Initially, every third tee time will be held vacant. Scheduling may be adjusted by course management as needed to satisfy safety requirements.

2. Group size

Groups will be limited in size to no more than four golfers who must maintain social distancing in the group throughout the course.

3. Distance Between Groups

Groups are required to maintain at least 30 feet in distance between their group and the group in front.

4. Tee Times

a. Advance tee times

Advance tee times required. No walk-ons permitted. No "going on rail" permitted.

b. Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday tee times

Can be scheduled seven days in advance beginning at 6:15 a.m. by calling 949-597-4336.

c. Tuesday and Wednesday tee times

Can be made on Saturday prior after 10 a.m. by calling 949-597-4336.

d. One tee time can be scheduled per telephone call.

e. Resident identification number

Each resident must have his or her resident identification number available when calling to schedule tee time.

f. Communication with group members

The resident scheduling the tee time is responsible for informing players in his or her group of the accurate name and time on the reservation so they can check in properly. Golfers unable to check in with proper information may lose tee time.

5. Payment

To eliminate touch points, payment must be made using the “no-touch” point-of-sale system at the starters’ window. Residents are encouraged to place a credit card on file and/or purchase a gift card to make payment when scheduling tee time.

6. Course Check-in

All players in the group will be asked to show resident identification cards at check-in and again on the tee they are starting on.

7. On the Course

a. Social distancing within group

Golfers must adhere to 6-foot social distancing requirement within group throughout course.

b. Distance between groups

Groups must maintain at least 30 feet between their group and the group in front.

c. Walking

County guidance encourages walking with strict adherence to social distancing.

d. Carts

Golfers must ride in carts alone or with living partner only. Cart rule is waived, but all carts must adhere to the 90-degree rule throughout the round. Cart fleet is limited and will be rented on a first-come first-served basis.

e. Touch points eliminated

All touch points associated with the recreational aspect of golf must be eliminated.

i. Flagstick

Do not touch flagstick.

ii. Cup

Cup will have a foam disk inside the hole to keep the ball from going to the bottom and making it safe to reach in and retrieve the ball.

iii. Bunkers

Bunker rakes will be removed. Golfers must smooth sand with foot as best as possible. If ball comes to rest in a footprint or divot, golfer may place it on clean lie in same bunker.

iv. Drinking coolers

Drinking water coolers will be removed from course. Golfers should bring own water to the course.

v. Other equipment

Ball washers and benches will be removed from course.

f. Other golfers' equipment

Golfers should not handle other golfers' balls, golf clubs, carts or other equipment.

g. Restrooms

Golfers must wash hands with soap and water when entering and exiting facility. Adherence to six-foot social distance protocol required.

8. End of Round

Golfers must proceed directly to their car/cart and drive out of the immediate area to avoid congregation in the parking lot.

PAR-THREE GOLF COURSE PROVISIONS

1. Scheduling

Golfers will tee off in 10-minute intervals.

2. Group size

Groups will be limited in size to no more than four golfers who must maintain social distancing within group throughout the course.

3. Check-In

Golfers must check in one at a time at the starter shack. Golfers must wait their turn in designated lines in front of starter shack, adhering to 6-foot social distancing requirement at all times.

4. Payment

To eliminate touch points, payment must be made using the "no-touch" point-of-sale system at the starter shack. Residents are encouraged to place a credit card on file and/or purchase a gift card to complete all purchases.

5. Queuing

Groups waiting to play must stand away from teeing ground and clubhouse while adhering to 6-foot social distancing requirement. Groups must take tee when starter calls group.

6. Practice Areas

Practice areas, including hitting cages, are not available.

7. On the course

a. Social distancing within group

Golfers must adhere to 6-foot social distancing requirement within group throughout course.

b. Distance between groups

Groups are required to maintain one hole between their group and the group in front.

c. Touch points eliminated

All touch points associated with the recreational aspect of golf must be eliminated.

i. Flagstick

Do not touch flagstick.

ii. Cup

Cup will have a foam disk inside the hole to keep the ball from going to the bottom and making it safe to reach in and retrieve the ball.

iii. Other

Bag racks, water fountains and ball washers will not be available. Benches will be available and sanitized by golf course staff twice a day.

d. Other golfers' equipment

Golfers should not handle other golfers' balls, golf clubs, carts or other equipment.

e. Restrooms

Occupancy is restricted to one person at a time. Wait in designated spot until restroom is vacant. Golfers must wash hands with soap and water when entering and exiting facility. Adherence to 6-foot social distance protocol required.

8. End of Round

Golfers must proceed directly home and avoid congregating.

GOLF DRIVING RANGE PROVISIONS

1. Access

Access to driving range is available by golf cart only through Gate 16 and the golf path to the south. For security purposes, Gate 16 is closed to vehicular traffic during the COVID-19 crisis.

2. Limited Use

For adherence to 6-foot social distancing requirement, every other mat has been removed from range. Eight stalls will be available. No other patrons will be allowed in the area and people waiting must remain in their golf cart or car until a spot opens up.

4. Payment

To eliminate touch points, payment must be made using range cards, gift cards and on-file credit cards. No cash or regular credit card transactions will be possible. Please follow staff direction when making payment.

5. Practice Duration

Golfers must practice in timely manner. Range staff has authority to ask range patrons to finish session.

6. On the Range

a. Social distancing

Golfers must adhere to 6-foot social distancing requirement at all times.

b. Touch points eliminated

All touch points associated with the recreational aspect of golf must be eliminated.

i. Other equipment

Ball washers, bag racks and benches will be removed from range area.

ii. Other golfers' equipment

Golfers should not handle other golfers' golf clubs, carts or other equipment.

7. Sanitation

Buckets will be sterilized after each use.

8. Nongolfers Prohibited

To comply with state, county and other applicable regulations, nongolfers are not allowed at the driving range.

10. End of Practice

Golfers must proceed directly to their cart and drive out of the immediate area to avoid congregation in the parking lot.

11. Lessons

Golf lessons are available with restrictions. Call the golf shop at 949-597-4336 for information.