

SPECTATOR POLICY

Spectators, including parents and coaches, are an integral part of Golf Ontario tournaments. Our Golf Ontario tournament staff and volunteers work to ensure the best possible experience for players and spectators at all Golf Ontario Tournaments. While our goal is to maximize the spectator experience, we must also ensure that the integrity of the competition is preserved at all times. The following spectator guidelines have been developed to protect the safety of all patrons and maintain our championships' authenticity and integrity. At all times, spectators should not take any action deemed detrimental to the athlete's environment and/or experience.

The Spectator Policy applies to qualifying rounds and championships, including practice rounds. A breach of this policy may be subject to the sanctions outlined below.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM GOLF ONTARIO

1. Professionally run tournaments
2. Friendly, courteous staff and volunteers
3. Certified Referees at all Qualifying Rounds and Championships
4. Strict enforcement of Group Pace of Play & Code of Conduct and Ethics Policies
5. Positive competitive experience

MINIMUM DISTANCES AND PROHIBITED AREAS: A minimum distance of 30 yards must be maintained between the player and spectators in ALL circumstances, with the following exceptions:

- Once all players have reached the putting green, spectators may approach to within 10 yards of the putting green.
- Once all players are on the teeing area, spectators may remain 10 yards from the teeing area and on the cart path (if one is present).

When cart paths are provided, spectators **MUST** remain on those paths. When no cart paths are available, spectators must stay in the rough on the side of the hole/course. Spectators are prohibited from the following areas:

- Teeing Areas, Fairways, Putting Greens;
- Scoring and Starting areas; and,
- Rules Situations – Areas where Rulings are being provided

ADVICE & COMMUNICATION: No advice is to be given to any player during a round. Advice is defined as any verbal comment or action that is intended to influence a player in choosing a club, making a stroke, or deciding how to play a hole during a round. All spectators are advised to avoid all communication, verbal and nonverbal, that may be construed by others (players, parents, and Referees) as advice.

Exceptions:

- Asking or giving the player food, drink, umbrella or the like;
- Needing to deal with a medical situation

LOST GOLF BALLS: Spectators can help pace of play by observing when and where golf balls stray. Searching for stray balls should only start when the player reaches the area of the stray ball and indicates help is required. It should be noted that players may not want to find their original ball in all circumstances.

DRESS CODE: Each host course has its own particular dress code policy. Spectators who do not meet the standard established by the host club may be refused admittance to the golf course and/or clubhouse.

CELL PHONES/SMARTPHONES/CAMERAS: All mobile devices must be set to the “vibrate” only or “silent” mode or turned off. Many golf clubs have policies prohibiting mobile phone use on the golf course and/or in the clubhouse. It is the spectator's responsibility to follow the host facility's policy. Pictures and videos should be taken before or after each round, not during play.

GOLF CARTS: The use of golf carts by spectators is not permitted during Golf Ontario Qualifying Rounds and Championships (including practice rounds). Accessibility requests must be submitted in advance for use of golf carts, subject to cart availability and course rules. Click [HERE](#) to access and submit the Accessibility Request Form.

SANCTIONS: Golf Ontario Spectator Policy violations should be reported to a Golf Ontario Referee, who will inform the Golf Ontario Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will investigate the details of the incident.

Any spectator whose conduct is deemed to be disruptive or not conducive to the well-being of the game may be banned from the course, host facility or future Golf Ontario competitions. Golf Ontario shall be the sole judge in determining unbecoming conduct and will handle all situations on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity and frequency of the violation(s). All instances of abuse, bullying, harassment or discrimination should be submitted to Golf Ontario through an [incident report](#). The GO Discipline and Complaints Committee will review all incident reports.

An individual who violates this Policy may be subject to sanctions pursuant to Golf Ontario's Discipline and Complaints Policy and may be subject to any or all of the following sanctions as determined by the Tournament Director in consultation with the Tournament Rules Chair and or Referees:

- Verbal warning to the spectator.
- Spectator banned from the golf course and or property for the round or tournament.
- Spectator banned from future Golf Ontario events.

RIGHT TO APPEAL: Any Golf Ontario disciplinary decision imposed as a result of a breach of this Policy may be appealed in accordance with Golf Ontario's Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy.