



## **Frequently Asked Questions in relation to the Protocol for the safe re-introduction of golf in the Republic of Ireland.**

Last updated May 17, 2021

*Please note that Golf Ireland continue to engage with all relevant government departments with the priority being the full reopening of all golf activities as soon as the public health situation allows.*

### **Q. How far can I travel to play golf?**

A. From May 10 there are no domestic travel restrictions within Ireland therefore you can travel to any golf club within the country.

### **Q. How many people can I play golf with?**

A. From May 10, you can play in groups of 4 with no household restrictions

### **Q. Can I pay a green fee to play at my local course?**

A. Visitors and Member guests are permitted from May 1

### **Q: Can our club run internal competitions?**

Ahead of the reopening of golf on 26th April, the Expert Group on the Return to Sport stipulated that no formal, organised competitions were to take place in any sports in the initial phase of reopening.

Since then, Golf Ireland has been engaging intensively with Sport Ireland and the Expert Group seeking clarification on the position regarding internal club competitions which we contend are low-risk activities.

While the return to formal, organised competition across all sports will commence from 7th June in line with the Irish Government's 'Path Ahead', we can now confirm that golf clubs can organise internal club competitions for members from 10th May onwards, with all other competition activities then permitted from 7th June, subject to the public health situation at the time. This is on the basis that internal club competitions for members are not deemed to be 'formal, organised competitions' which are not permitted until June.

### **Q. Can clubs organise their Inter-Club matches?**

A. No 'Major', Open or Inter Club Competitions should be held before 7th June.

### **Q. Can driving ranges open?**

A. Outdoor practice facilities and driving ranges can reopen on the 26<sup>th</sup> April. Sport Ireland and the Expert Group on Sport have defined outdoor as:

- Unenclosed / unroofed ranges and practice areas  
Covered ranges, no more than 50 per cent of which are enclosed.
- Any activity that takes place in driving ranges must be socially distanced and in line with the restrictions currently in place.

**Q. Can the pro shop open?**

A. From May 10th, retail stores can offer click and collect services. From May 17<sup>th</sup> all retail stores can open.

**Q. When will any reviews of the current protocols take place?**

A. At this stage we have visibility on easing of restrictions to June 7<sup>th</sup>. Any changes to protocol will be communicated to clubs as soon as they are known.

**Q. I have received both doses of my vaccine, are the rules different for me?**

A. No, the protocols for participation in golf activities are the same for those who vaccinated and those who are not. If the restrictions for those who have received both doses of their vaccine change, and it is possible for these to be adopted into the return to Golf protocol this will be communicated to clubs.

**Q. Is Golf Ireland recommending these restrictions?**

A. The protocol will set out the basis on which golf has been permitted as an activity can be played in accordance with the measures announced by the Government and set out in detail on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie). Golf Ireland commends clubs for having shown a high level of compliance thus far and encourages all golfers and clubs to continue to follow protocols issued in accordance with these measures.

**Q. Are golfers exempt from the national restrictions and public health measures that have been put in place by the Government?**

A. No, golfers are expected to observe the underlying public health guidance set out at: [www.hse.ie/coronavirus](http://www.hse.ie/coronavirus) and [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) including any restrictions which apply on travel from home.

**Q. Whose role is it to monitor members coming to our club?**

A. It is the responsibility of individuals to observe society-wide public health guidelines. Whilst golf clubs must ensure that the game is played safely, it is not the responsibility of golf clubs to ensure that members adhere to the laws of the land.

**Q. Can we advertise membership at this time?**

A. Yes. Clubs should be mindful not to undermine their existing membership and be conscious that existing members may want to avail of any discounted package that would be available to new members. In the coming weeks Golf Ireland will run a promotion campaign to enhance public awareness of golf club membership opportunities. In addition,



Golf Ireland Development & Club Support Officers will be delivering webinars to clubs on engaging with new and existing members.

**Q. Can a Golf Club issue temporary membership to golfers?**

A. A club is entitled to offer memberships to individuals in line with its own constitution/byelaws. As above clubs need to be mindful of the value of each category of membership and ensure members do not switch to a cheaper membership category that is perceived as better value.

**Q. What should our club do for employees coming back to work?**

A. The Work Safely Protocol is a revision of the Return to Work Safely Protocol published in May 2020. The revised Protocol incorporates the current advice on the Public Health measures needed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community and workplaces as issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE), the Department of Health and Government.

The Protocol is a general document applicable to all sectors. It sets out the minimum measures required in every place of work to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to facilitate the re-opening of workplaces following temporary closures and the ongoing safe operation of those workplace.

The revision of the Protocol was necessary to reflect the Government's Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 Plan for Living with COVID-19, which was published in September.

The protocol can be accessed here: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/Publications/Work-Safely-Protocol.html>

Golf Clubs with employees should ensure that they have the necessary policies and practices in place relating to Covid-19. An overview of the key areas that employers (Golf Clubs) must assess to ensure compliance and to minimise risk to employees can be found on the following website [HSA Website](#)

**Q. I work at a golf club as an administrator/sales assistant/manager but live 21km away and in another county. Can I travel to work now that the golf club is open?**

A. Yes. Your employer should provide you with a letter stating you are required to attend work at a golf club facility.

After May 10, there are no domestic travel restrictions therefore you will not require this letter.

**Q. Can a Professional Golfer give a lesson to an adult member?**

A. Sport Ireland and the Expert Group on Sport have stipulated that adult 1:1 coaching is prohibited in the first phase of reopening from April 26 to May 9.

From May 10, outdoor adult coaching is permitted in groups of up to 15.



**Q. Are juniors allowed to play on the course?**

A. Yes, as outlined in the protocol document juniors are encouraged to return to golf.

**Q. Can junior group activity resume?**

A. Yes, Underage non-contact outdoor training in pods of 15 can recommence from April 26. Guidance for clubs will be available [here](#).

**Q. Can members of the same household share a buggy?**

A. Where a golf buggy is being used, it must be thoroughly sanitized after each use. Buggies that are open (without doors) can be shared, however where a 2 metre social distance cannot be maintained, players should wear a face covering when seated in the buggy. Similarly, where a player, because of the nature of a disability, requires another individual to drive a golf buggy for them, the player and driver should wear face coverings when seated in the buggy. Every effort must be made to avoid handling of communal surfaces and regular hand-washing must be observed by both individuals

**Q. Where can we get the signage mentioned in the protocol document?**

Posters and resources can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>