



Golf at Alert Level 2

At Alert Level Two, playing of golf can be undertaken however there are firm measures in place to ensure the health and safety of all in the golf sector and the community.

It will take some time before sporting life in Aotearoa returns to normal and it's important we all play by the rules to prevent another wave of COVID-19 cases.

The new Government guidelines for sport at Alert Level 2 have now been published.

Please take time to reflect on the new guidelines.

Exercise and recreation is an important part of maintaining our health and wellbeing however we must continue to be aware the playing of golf presents a risk of transmission.

There will be a natural desire to get back to business quickly, however we strongly encourage all clubs and facilities to thoroughly understand the guidelines and create detailed and robust plans before restarting operations. This new information should support you in forward planning, noting that your club or facility will need to make your own decisions, and take responsibility for understanding any restrictions and requirements. We are happy to provide advice however we cannot confirm or endorse operational plans.

The most important principle is to 'play it safe' and remain physically distant from others. The health, safety and wellbeing of your staff, members, golf participants and the wider community is of paramount importance.

If your club opens its facility for play at Alert Level 2, it must do so under the following guidelines:

General Guidance

1. The golf course, clubhouse, pro shop, changing room and any other facility at the golf club can open at Alert Level 2.
2. All staff, players, visitors must adhere to general government advice; particularly all recommended hygiene measures.
3. For golf clubs, strict hygiene and sanitisation practices must be maintained throughout the facility including all common touch points and surfaces. Facilities must have a written plan for safe operation in place .
4. A system to record and retain the contact details of all staff, players and visitors must be in place to enable contact tracing should it be required.
5. Physical distancing (2 metres encouraged) between all staff, players and visitors should be maintained. Distancing should be maintained on the golf course and throughout all club facilities.
6. All indoor facilities at a club need to restrict entry to a maximum of 100 people. Operations across any indoor facilities must follow government guidelines
7. Groups of guests in the clubhouse must be limited to 10 people per group. All groups should be seated, have separation from other groups, and be served by a single server if possible. Golfers should only sit with the group they played golf with and in any event, as part of a group that is strictly no more than 10 people in size.*

8. Between Thursday 14 May and Friday 22 May, hospitality venues (including golf clubhouses) can only serve customers if they are there to dine i.e customers in the clubhouse must purchase food.*

9. Any staff who are on site should be provided with any appropriate personal protection equipment to ensure they can remain healthy and safe.

General Golf Operations Guidance:

10. All players should wash and dry their hands before and after play.

11. Shotgun or multiple tee starts should only be held if they can be managed in a manner that does not see groups of golfers congregating. A minimum interval of 10 minutes is suggested for four ball groups.

12. Groups of golfers should maintain a minimum distance of 2 metres between themselves and other groups on the course.

13. Club events and competitions can be held so long as there is strict adherence to hygiene, distancing and gatherings regulations.

14. While the national handicap system will be operational, physical scorecards should be avoided if possible. If scorecards are used, exchanging of cards should not occur.

15. All pins should be removed from practice putting greens.

16. Pins / flagsticks can be on the course however they should be left in the hole and should not be touched or removed by any player.

17. Bunker rakes can be on the course however a local rule will be provided by New Zealand Golf for bunker play should clubs not want to have bunker rakes on the course.

18. All drinking fountains, ball washers, and shared sunscreen stations should be closed.

19. Any shared club equipment must be cleaned and sterilised after each use.

20. Coaching can be undertaken on a contactless basis and with strict 2 metre distancing being observed.

*Between Thursday 14 May and Friday 22 May, golf clubs should manage the serving of food in a similar manner to how they are required to trade at Easter. While liquor licences normally dictate that food must be available for purchase, until 22 May customers must purchase food. With regard to customers entering/exiting the clubhouse and paying, clubs should manage these processes in line with the distancing and serving protocols in place.

Note: this guidance is provided to assist your planning and preparation for golf at Alert Level 2. We will update this guidance as we move closer towards Alert Level 2. Please be in touch with New Zealand Golf if you have any queries.

COVID-19 Related Guidance on the Rules of Golf

New Zealand Golf has received a large number of enquiries from our golf clubs regarding the Rules of Golf and the continued playing of golf during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we move into Alert Level 2, thankfully the playing of golf starts to return to some form of normality.

The key difference between Alert Level 3 and Alert Level 2 is that under Alert Level 2 the New Zealand Golf Handicapping System is live again and golf can be played outside your bubble.

New Zealand Golf has developed COVID-19 related guidance on the rules of golf that specific covers matters such as Scoring in Stroke Play, Flagsticks and Hoing Out and Bunkers.