

IHSA Golf – Local Rule Adoptions for 2022

This guide features the most common situations a player will face on the golf course. It includes a simplified explanation for interpreting rules that can be confusing or difficult when a player is on the golf course. Keep a copy of this quick reference in golf bag.

Areas of the Course

There are five areas of the course. Important to know where you are to get the correct ruling:

1. The teeing area (this is specific to the two-club length rectangular area from the tee markers in which you are playing from to start the hole)
2. Bunkers
3. Penalty Areas
4. Putting Green
5. The general area (covers the entire area of the course except the areas listed above)

DIAGRAM 2.2: DEFINED AREAS OF THE COURSE



Penalty Areas (Yellow or Red)

If a player's ball is in a penalty area, including when it is known or virtually certain to be in a penalty area even though not found, the player has these options.

- **Play the ball as it lies.** The player may choose to play the ball as it lies. The player may ground his/her club, take practice swings, and remove loose impediments in the penalty area – **NO PENALTY**
- (1) **Stroke-and-Distance Relief.** The player may play the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made – **STROKE AND DISTANCE**
- (2) **Back-On-the-Line Relief.** The player may drop the original ball or another ball in a relief area that is based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through the estimated point where the original ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area - **ADD 1 STROKE PENALTY**
- (3) **Lateral Relief (Only for Red Penalty Area).** When the ball last crossed the edge of a red penalty area, the player may drop the original ball or another ball in this lateral relief area - **ADD 1 STROKE PENALTY**

DIAGRAM #1 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN YELLOW PENALTY AREA

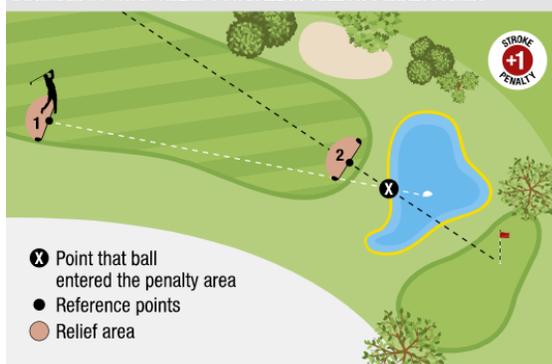
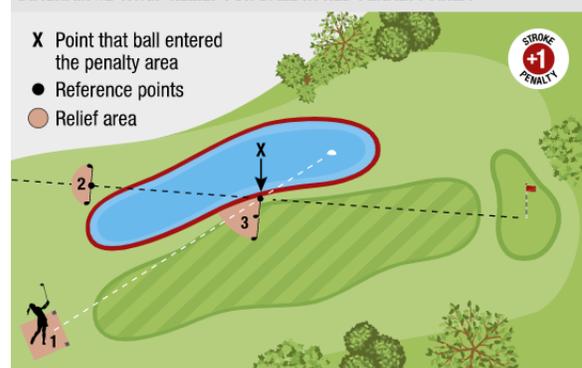


DIAGRAM #2 17.1d: RELIEF FOR BALL IN RED PENALTY AREA



Lost Ball / Out of Bounds / Provisional Ball

Lost Ball (Stroke and distance penalty)

- A player has **3 minutes** to search for a Lost Ball. If not found within **3 minutes**
- Return and play another ball from the spot where the previous stroke was played... **STROKE AND DISTANCE.**

Out of Bounds (Stroke and distance penalty)

- Return and play another ball from the spot where the previous stroke was played... **STROKE AND DISTANCE.**

Provisional Ball (Stroke and distance penalty)

- May only be played if the player believes the original ball is lost or out of bounds.
- The player must announce a provisional is being played.
- If the original ball is found or is determined it is in a penalty area, the player **MUST** abandon the provisional ball and proceed under penalty area options.

Unplayable Ball

A player is the only person who may decide to treat his or her ball as unplayable by taking relief. Unplayable ball relief is allowed anywhere on the course, except in a penalty area. A player may take unplayable ball relief using options 1, 2 or 3. There is one additional option when taking unplayable ball relief in a bunker.

- (1) **Stroke-and-Distance Relief.** The player may play the original ball or another ball from where the previous stroke was made – **STROKE AND DISTANCE**
- (2) **Back-On-the-Line Relief.** The player may drop the original ball or another ball in a relief area that is based on a reference line going straight back from the hole through the spot of the original ball - **ADD 1 STROKE PENALTY**
- (3) **Lateral Relief.** A player may drop a ball in a designated two club relief area from the spot of the original ball - **ADD 1 STROKE PENALTY**
- (4) **Bunker Only –** The Player may take back-on-the-line relief outside the bunker based on the reference link going straight back from the hole through the spot of the original ball - **ADD 2 STROKE PENALTY**

DIAGRAM 19.2: RELIEF OPTIONS FOR BALL UNPLAYABLE IN GENERAL AREA

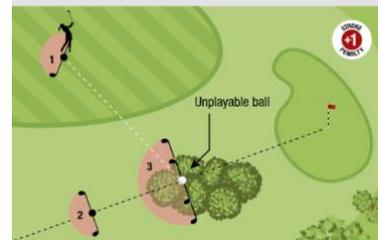
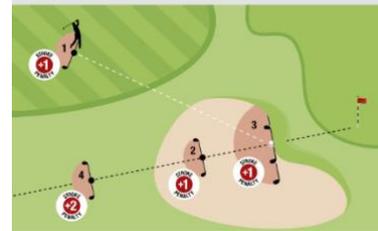


DIAGRAM 19.3: RELIEF OPTIONS FOR BALL UNPLAYABLE IN BUNKER



OTHER SITUATIONS

Dropping the ball

- When dropping the ball, a player must drop the ball at knee height.
- If dropped incorrectly and before playing the next stroke, a player may re-drop (to drop in the right way) with no penalty.

Free Relief Situations A golfer is allowed a free drop, within the designated relief area:

- The ball comes to rest on or in an abnormal course condition or the player is standing on or in an abnormal course condition or the abnormal course condition interferes with the player's area of intended swing. (**Examples include: cart paths, any immovable obstruction, temporary water, or GUR**)
- A staked tree interferes with the lie of the ball, player's stance, or area of intended swing.
- The ball becomes embedded in its own pitch-mark anywhere within the general area. A ball must be dropped in a designated relief area right behind where the ball is embedded. (The General Area includes fairways and rough)
- The ball comes to rest on the wrong putting green.
- A golfer is in any kind of life-threatening situation (i.e. snakes, alligators, wild dogs...)

No Relief Situations The golfer must play the ball as it lies ...or take a penalty stroke for an unplayable lie when:

- The ball lies next to a fence, wall or stake that defines the out-of-bounds area.
- The ball lies next to trees or bushes that inhibit golfer's swing.

Other Situations

- A golfer knocks ball off tee at address...**NO PENALTY** (ball not in play).
- A golfer is allowed to remove a **RED** or **YELLOW** stake that impairs the swing or stance, provided the golfer does not move the ball.
- If the ball lands on an opposite tee box, a player **MUST** play the ball as it lies...**NO PENALTY**.
- When the ball is overhanging the hole, a player is allowed reasonable time to reach the hole and then up to 10 seconds to determine if the ball is at rest before marking the ball or tapping in.
- If a ball lands on a divot or in a divot hole, the player must play the ball as it lies.
- If a player hits the ball of another golfer (the wrong ball), that player must correct his mistake by going back and playing his ball from the correct location, adding a **2 STROKE PENALTY**.

Player's Responsibilities for an IHSA State Series Tournament

1. Know the USGA Rules of Golf and proper etiquette. Keep a current USGA Rule Book in your golf bag. Players should also be familiar with the local rules of the regional, sectional or state final course.
2. Players should check in with the starter approximately 15 minutes early and appear promptly when announced, ready to play.
3. Players should check their scorecard for hole by hole accuracy before attesting and signing. In accordance with USGA Rule 3.3b, a player is only responsible for his/her hole by hole score.
4. Players are responsible to make sure that a fully completed, attested scorecard is given to the scorekeeper as soon as possible.
5. Players should play as quickly as possible and without undue delay between shots, green and tees.
6. Players should keep up with the group ahead of them.
7. Players should play only if they are prepared to play the game and series to its full conclusions.
8. Players should know and abide by the IHSA Player Code of Conduct.