

# COVID-19 Youth Caddie Program Guidelines

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**Developed by the**  
Western Golf Association & Evans Scholars Foundation

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# Goals & Overview



The safety of our golfers and caddies is the top priority in the wake of COVID-19. When golf restrictions are lifted in your area, we hope that caddies are welcomed back at the appropriate time, as well. We believe youth caddies can return to the golf course when it's allowed by the golf course and caddies have completed their academic requirements.

Our team will help ensure that youth caddies are not forgotten and caddie programs can be restarted as quickly and safely as possible when restrictions are lifted.

We want to encourage players to continue walking and using a caddie. This practice is good for their health, for the game and for the development of these young people. While the efforts of WGA ESF focus on youth caddies, we believe that these guidelines would apply to both youth and adult caddies.

**Caddying helps young people build character. Let's not eliminate that opportunity.**



# Breakdown of Safety Measures



Our focus is to provide tools to prepare for the 2020 caddie season. We have compiled tips to share with your members and guests; these safety measures will provide guidance on how to play golf safely while using a caddie.

All proposed safety measures should be communicated to everyone on property. Make sure all caddies are aware of, and adhere to, all new safety measures implemented at your club.



# General Safety Measures



- Depending on CDC recommendations, cloth facial coverings may be required or encouraged for all staff and caddies to reduce exposure.
- All courses should mandate that individuals who feel sick stay at home until symptoms have resolved – and they are fever-free for 48 hours.
- Frequent washing of hands is effective in limiting exposure to this virus. Clubs should make hand sanitizer available at multiple areas on the course. Each caddie should be issued a bottle of hand sanitizer.
- To maintain adequate hydration, properly sanitized bottled water should be made available. Public water fountain use should be discontinued.
- Take proper measures for any caddie restrooms and follow local enhanced disinfection protocols.
- Individual packed caddie meals can be made available in advance.





- **Caddies and golfers should follow recommended social distancing guidelines – 6 feet.**
  - This will need to be monitored by staff, golfers/members and experienced caddies. Minimize clusters of golfers and caddies, and maintain proper spacing. Focus on the tees and green, where most congregating occurs.
  - On tee boxes, outline areas to assure a 6-foot distance is achieved.
  - Consider sending caddies ahead to forecaddie. In addition to encouraging proper social distancing, this will make it easier for caddies to locate and mark golf balls and improve pace of play.
  - If carrying a golf bag, a caddie should always walk a distance greater than 10 feet from his or her golfer.
  - When placing the bag down, the bag should be a minimum of 10 feet from the ball. The caddie should then back away 6 feet until the club is selected.
  - Whether carrying or forecaddying, caddies and golfers need to focus on keeping their distance and not getting close for any reason.
- **No handshaking or other form of physical contact (high-fives, “knuckles,” hug, etc.).**
  - Introductions may be made verbally from a safe distance.
- **Caddies should NOT touch a rake or flagstick for any reason.**
  - In a bunker, caddies can either leave the footprints alone, let the golfer attend to them or smooth out the bunker with their feet.
  - A dedicated staff person can periodically rake high-traffic areas on the golf course. This can be grounds, golf staff or others.



- **Club transfer from caddie to player should be done with great discipline.**
  - Whenever possible, the golfer should grab their own club and put it back into the golf bag themselves. This method eliminates many of the potential concerns surrounding club exchange/transfer.
  - When transferring a club to and from a player, the caddie should always hand and receive the club from the head of the club. This transaction should be done with both the player and the caddie with arms outstretched, assuring a distance greater than 6 feet. This will allow the caddie to clean and replace the club without touching the grip.
  - Minimize other touching of the golfer's equipment. Bag rooms should have a process to clean the outside of each bag upon completion of play.
- **Caddies should social distance on the greens. Balls that are washed should be thrown back to a player.**
  - Caddies should hold out their towel to clean golf balls when requested. No direct contact needs to be made with the golf ball – only through their towel. This will allow for minimizing exposures from one player to one caddie.
  - This would only be to clean golf balls. Caddies will fix ball marks and make sure all clubs are accounted for each hole.

# Scheduling Loops



- **If possible, your club should arrange for advance scheduling of all loops.**
  - This will minimize instances of caddies congregating. Caddie shacks should be monitored for adherence to social distancing.
  - Caddies should show up for their scheduled loop at a designated time and leave the premises immediately after the round – no “hanging around.” This includes the caddie shack.
  - Caddies should arrive 15-30 minutes prior to their scheduled loop.
  - The WGA will share tools they have designed that may fit your club’s needs. This will include the use of social media, scheduling software and a simple sharable Excel sheet.
  - Not all play will be scheduled, so everyone should consider how pre-round social distancing can be achieved if caddies have to wait for a loop to become available.
  - Consider having golfers indicate prior to their round if they would like a caddie, or simply assigning 1+ caddie for each tee time.



*Take steps to limit the need for caddies to congregate before their loop.*

# Payment & Feedback Options



- **Caddie payment and golfer feedback will be done electronically.**
  - Do not use caddie cards unless absolutely necessary. Instead, set up a secure email address where the player can give feedback to advance the skill of the caddie. Daily feedback is key to the advancement of all caddies.
  - Suggested caddie rates and fees can be posted in the golf shop, locker room, on the first tee and emailed to golfers.
  - Cash should be discouraged. If you do not currently use electronic payments, consider using Venmo, PayPal, Chase QuickPay, Zelle or other electronic forms of payment when possible.
  - Caddies appreciate guest tipping. A guest information sheet should be given to each player that includes a brief bio of their caddie as well as their electronic information for a tip, if appropriate.
  - Golf staff can assist in electronic payment and facilitate member charges for caddie fees while reducing the handling of cash between golfer and caddie.
- **Any comments, positive or negative, will be emailed to the Caddie Manager or Professional Staff.**
  - This allows for easy tracking of all caddie loops in a safe manner.

# Additional Issues to Address



- **Clearly define which days and times caddies are available and/or required.**
  - Create a caddie schedule to improve member satisfaction and efficiency for the Caddie Manager and Professional Staff.
- **Educate members and guests.**
  - All golfers need to understand what caddies can – and more importantly CAN'T – do on the golf course. The Caddie Manager or Professional Staff should make sure both caddies and golfers understand the restrictions in place prior to their round.
  - Please make the WGA caddie video available on your website. Require that the video is watched by all members and shared with any guests.
  - For everyone's safety, any guests on the property need to be educated and monitored by their sponsoring member, along with staff.
- **Consider how the social situations for many caddies may require different travel accommodations.**
  - The responsibility of club management should be to eliminate the congregating of caddies.
  - A drop-off and pick-up system may not be possible for some caddies. Care should be taken to make sure caddies who are on site for extended periods of time understand social distancing requirements.
- **Make it clear that those who do not follow those requirements will not be allowed to work.**
  - Caddies traveling further or reliant upon family and friends for a ride may need additional consideration.
  - Some caddies take public transportation, and schedules may be altered or not an option.
- **Re-align expectations for caddies and golfers during this time.**
  - Emphasize patience to all parties involved as we work together to enjoy the game we love so much.

# Thank You



We strongly believe that caddying is the best summer job for a young person. Even with these suggested changes, golfers still have the ability to positively impact the life of a young caddie. Caddies still learn responsibility, how to work well with others and spend time around successful adults.

**Thank you for your support.**

