

Joint Statement on the COVID-19 Pandemic

March 27, 2020

As we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, our first priority remains the health and safety of all of our friends, family, co-workers and all of the golfers in New York State.

In recent days, there have been many statements and speculation as to what the current Executive Order in New York means as it pertains to golf. Unfortunately, many of these statements have been based on rumors, alleged conversations with government authorities, and other unsubstantiated guidance from questionable sources. At this moment it is impossible to substantiate any alleged guidance on the Executive Order and how it pertains to golf in New York. The only definitive legal authority we are aware of is the Executive Order signed by Governor Cuomo on March 20, 2020 closing all non-essential businesses.

In an effort to address the situation, clarification has been requested to Governor Cuomo asking for authoritative answers to the essential questions around playing golf in New York, specifically asking the question: are golf courses being considered by New York State as essential businesses and intended to be available for use as outdoor exercise and recreation, and if so, does this allow for employees to continue maintaining their daily duties (cash register, starter, cart operator, etc.)?

In the meantime, the Metropolitan PGA, the Metropolitan Chapter of CMAA, the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Metropolitan Golf Association are jointly offering the following professional interpretations of the Executive Order, based on our collective work with counsel:

- Golf courses can be "open" for play, but access to other facilities is prohibited.
- Golf operations staff, including pro shop employees, are not deemed "essential" based on this EO, and therefore they should not be working. If clubs don't feel comfortable having players on the course without staff available, the "lock the gates" option should be considered.
- Golf course maintenance crews can continue to work and maintain golf courses.
- Clubs can continue to offer take-out meals.

If further definitive guidance is issued, information will be shared as promptly as possible.

Jeff Voorheis, Executive Director, Met PGA
Heather Apgar, Managing Director, MetCMAA
Mike McCall, Executive Director, MetGCSA
Brian R. Mahoney, Executive Director, MGA