



PGA

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On behalf of the Board of Directors and our 800 members at the Metropolitan PGA Section, we are reaching out regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. The coronavirus is affecting the lives of all of us who live in the Tri-state area in ways we could not have imagined a few weeks ago. Most importantly, we hope you and all those at your facility are healthy and staying safe.

We believe it is important for us to alert you to the fact that we are receiving significant email correspondence and phone calls from PGA Professionals in our section who are concerned about going to work and interacting with customers and members during these trying times. While we, more than any other organization, understand the value of golf as a safe haven to get exercise and take a break from the uncertainty and anxiety many of us are feeling, we no longer believe that "staying open" in any traditional way is prudent or safe for your employees or those you serve.

The golf season typically does not start until mid to late April in our area. While we empathize and respect the pressure golf clubs are under from their members to open their facilities during this mild spring weather, we believe this could have a measurable negative effect on the business for the rest of the season. The Metropolitan NY Area is now in the epicenter of the Corona Virus. Infection rates are soaring and our hospitals are approaching dangerous over capacity issues.

Governor Cuomo has initiated a policy by which 100% of the workforce must stay home, excluding essential services. All non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason are temporarily banned. The NY State Department of Health has advised all non-essential businesses to close. Health officials are pleading with the public to stay-at-home and to flatten the curve. The Federal Government has asked anyone who has been to New York City in the past month to self-isolate for 2 weeks. Clearly the Metropolitan NY area needs to operate differently than our neighbors in upstate NY, CT and other rural areas around the country.

As such, we are asking that all facilities in our section close until such time as the shelter-at-home mandates are lifted in our area. While maintenance and security of your facility are obviously essential, we recommend eliminating contact between employees and customers to the greatest extent possible. If your facility has the option to keep its outdoor parkland space accessible for play in a safe and responsible way without staff, we understand, respect and encourage that approach. We do not believe it is possible for our golf professionals to safely provide golf carts, manage the first tee and groups, accept payment for tee times, and handle members/guests golf bags and other equipment.

We ask that clubs rethink their decisions to open their club with any services - requiring staff to interact with members and guests. And to consider the risks they are taking in the lives of those who work at their clubs. As leaders in the golf community, we encourage everyone to consider the long-term implications of exposing more people to this deadly virus which we still know very little about.

Please know that all PGA Professionals passionately stand ready to get people back into our game as soon as it is once again safe for human interaction. Golf has the unique opportunity to be one of the first activities to come back to life as a safe refuge on the other side of this pandemic. Our members, section and association will be first in line to help reinvigorate our great game.

Warm regards,

The Metropolitan PGA Board of Directors