

## **SOPGA Pace of Play Policy (Updated 2025)**

Rule 5.6b provides that a round of golf is meant to be played at a prompt pace. The pace of play for the event set by the committee will be located at the starting and scoring location. To encourage and enforce prompt play, the Southern Ohio PGA has adopted a Local Rule setting a Pace of Play Policy including penalties and fines.

### **Maximum Allowable Time**

The maximum allowable time is the maximum time considered necessary by the Committee for a group to complete its round. This is expressed in a per-hole and aggregate time format and includes all time associated with playing the game including time for rulings and time between holes.

### **Definition of "Out of Position"**

The first group to start will be considered "out of position" if, at any time during the round, the group's cumulative time exceeds the time allowed for the number of holes played.

All subsequent groups are out of position when it completes play of a hole (replaces the flagstick) later than the maximum allowable time given and:

- A. Reaches a par-3 hole that is clear of all play, and all players in the group ahead have played their strokes from the tee of the next hole.
- B. Reaches a par-4 or par-5 hole and all players in the group "out of position" have not played a stroke from the tee before the hole is open and clear of play.

If a ruling or some other legitimate delay occurs which causes the group in question to be out of position, that group is expected to regain its position within a reasonable time. If no such legitimate delay occurs, the group will be placed on the clock immediately.

### **Procedure When Player/Group is Out of Position**

When a Rules Rover determines that a group is out of position, all players (or a specified individual) in the group will be timed. A player(s) concerned about a non-responsive (slow) fellow competitor(s) in the group should request a Rules Rover to monitor the group in case it may become or is liable to penalty.

If a decision is made to time the players, each player in the group will be subject to individual timing and a Rules Rover will advise each player that they are "out of position" and are being timed.

The maximum time allocated per stroke is 40 seconds. (10 extra seconds are allowed for the first player to play: a) a tee shot; b) an approach shot to the green; and c) a chip or putt).

The timing will start when a player has had sufficient time to reach the ball, it is his or her turn to play and he or she is able to play without interference or distraction. Time taken to determine distance and select a club will count as time taken for the next stroke.

On the putting green, timing will start when the player has had a reasonable amount of time to mark, lift, clean and replace his or her ball, repair ball marks and remove loose impediments on his or her line of play. Time spent looking at the line of play from behind the hole or to the side of and/or behind the ball will count as part of the time taken for the next stroke.

Any player or group being timed who exceeds the maximum allowable time to play a stroke will be informed as soon as practicable by the Rules Rover of the penalty.

Until a player has been advised of a bad time, he or she cannot incur a further bad time.

**NOTE:** The committee reserves the right to time any group when the Committee deems it necessary. Furthermore, if an individual player is determined by the Rules Rover to be unreasonably slow, he or she may be timed at the Rules Rover discretion, regardless if their group is out of position.

### **Procedure When Again Out of Position During Same Round**

If a group is "out of position" more than once during a round, the above procedure will apply on each occasion. Any bad times will be considered an additional penalty on the chart below. A player will not be penalized if he or she has a second bad time before being advised of the earlier bad time.

### **Establishment for Slow Play based on Card Time**

In addition to on course penalties, the scoring table will record the time each group enters the scoring area upon completion of the round. Any group will be considered "Out of Position" if any of the following criteria are met regarding their time par.

- A. The first group is over time par, however, no subsequent group will be considered "out of position" due to being over the allotted time par unless,
- B. The subsequent group arrives at the scoring table **over 15 minutes later** than the previous group.

### **Penalties including Out of Position and Card Times**

If the player is either penalized for being out of position during the round or has a bad time based on card time at the end of their round, then the following penalty structure will apply.

**1st violation** - He or she is considered warned.

**2nd violation** - He or she has received their second warning.

**3rd violation** - He or she is fined \$50.

**4th violation** - He or she is fined \$100 and will be forced to play in the last group of the next stroke play competition. The fine must be paid before the player is allowed to compete again.

**5th violation** - He or she is fined \$200 and is suspended for the following SOPGA event and until the fine is paid.

**6th violation** - The penalty including fine and suspension will continue to double for each time added after the 5th offense.

**Note: Violations accumulate yearly.**

Note: Any fines that carry over to the next season must be paid before the player becomes eligible to compete again.

**The Tournament Director will keep a list of players names and number of penalties to be updated weekly. This list will be shared and posted.**

Any appeal of a penalty must be referred to the Tournament Director within 24 hours of the competition. The Tournament Director's decision shall be final.

In the administration of this Pace of Play Policy, a member of the Rules Committee shall not tolerate abuse, oral or otherwise, by a player. Such abuse may constitute conduct unbecoming.