



## Code of Conduct 2020

URVGC is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation for members, employees and guests.

Members, guests and visitors are all reminded that an acceptable standard of behaviour is expected in all areas of the Club and course, at all times and that upon payment of membership or green fees, all members, guests and visitors have given their consent to be bound by both the restrictions and penalties which may be imposed for any breach of the club's standards or serious misconduct in failing to meet the standards set in this Code of Conduct.

Members will be liable for any breach committed whether by themselves or their guests.

R&A Rule 1.2 – Standards of Player Conduct:

All players are expected to play in The Spirit of the Game

R&A Rule 1.2b – Code of Conduct

URVGC has adopted the following Code of Conduct as a Local Rule

### **On the course:**

All golfers must:

- Avoid slow play, apply Ready Golf principles and allow other golfers to play through as appropriate, waving the following group through when searching for lost balls and maintaining the speed of play by keeping up with the group in front
- Adhere to the dress code and R&A and local rules of the course
- Demonstrate fair play both on and off the course
- Always follow established golf etiquette respecting the course, such as:

- Repairing pitch marks, replacing divots, raking bunkers
- Showing the necessary respect to fellow golfers at all times, which incorporates; no shouting on the course, no misuse of equipment (i.e. throwing clubs in frustration etc.), no aggressive behaviour, or the taking of performance enhancing drugs.
- Conduct yourself in a sportsmanlike manner and do not knowingly cheat, disrespect employees. Officials or fellow players.
- Mobile phones must be switched to silent on the golf course

### **In the clubhouse:**

Members, guests and visitors are reminded that:

- Any form of discrimination, harassment or intimidation is regarded as unacceptable behaviour.
- Consumption of excessive quantities of alcohol is not permitted by law. Please do not be offended if service is
- The use of foul or abusive language such as swearing has no place in the clubhouse and any member heard using unacceptable or offensive language will be asked to either stop or leave the premises. Where someone is noticed to be consistently using bad language after being warned then their continued membership will be reviewed accordingly
- Smoking or the use of e-cigarettes is not permitted within any of the club buildings
- The taking of illegal substances will incur immediate suspension and loss of membership.
- The smoking of cigarettes or e-cigarettes is not permitted in the clubhouse
- Be considerate towards others when using your Mobile phone in the clubhouse

Whilst fully acknowledging that adult “banter” contributes to creating a healthy atmosphere among members, these rules are designed to safeguard others who find such banter offensive or intimidating. This Code of Conduct is not intended to create a bureaucratic, regulatory environment, but rather to promote and enhance our Club’s values.

A person engaging in any behaviour that may be detrimental to the game of golf or URVGC is in breach of the code of conduct and should be reported to the Club Captain.

It is in the best interests of the game that such behaviour is reported, and all players, members and members of the public are encouraged and have a duty to report such behaviour.

### **Disciplinary Committee**

URVGC will appoint a Disciplinary Committee to oversee the complaints procedure set out in Section 4 and to conduct investigation, hearings and impose penalties within the guidelines in Section 7 as may be deemed necessary.

The Committee will be made up of:

- Men's, Women's and Seniors' Club Vice Captains
- The Club Secretary

The Disciplinary Committee will be responsible for implementing this policy in a fair and impartial manner. The Club Captain will act as Convenor.

### **Complaints and Protests:**

Complaints may be made by any person including a competitor, member, visiting guests, other associated golf club members, and members of the public.

Complaints must be made in the first instance to either the club secretary or the Club Captain of URVGC within 3 working days of the matter occurring. These must be then followed up in writing in an acceptable time-frame.

Once received the Club Captain will determine the offence, and grade it in accordance with Section Grading of Complaints below. The Club Captain will then take the following actions;

1. If the matter is Grade 1, of a minor nature, the Club Captain will discuss the complaint with the person(s) involved and deal with the complaint by either dismissing the complaint or deal with it by way of the first step in Appendix 2 whereupon the matter will be closed;
2. If the matter is Grade 1, but the person involved has already had step one of Appendix 2, then the Club Captain will discuss the complaint with the person(s) involved and either dismiss the complaint or deal with it by way of the second step in Appendix 2;
3. If the matter is a Grade 2 or 3 offences, or involves a Grade 1 suspension or expulsion, the Club Captain will carry out a preliminary investigation and gather all the facts of the complaint as is reasonably available within seven days from the receipt of the Complaint notice. This may include speaking to the accused person and getting a written report from that person. The matter will then be referred to The Disciplinary Committee in accordance with paragraph 6.

The Club secretary will be responsible for keeping all parties involved informed about the complaints process.

### **Grading of Complaints**

All complaints and charges are to be graded 1 to 3 with 1 being the lightest grading and 3 the most serious. This is done by reference to Appendix 1 and the following notes.

The Club Captain is required to determine the grading of the offence. The grading allocated will determine the action to be taken and the potential penalty a player may receive. Therefore, consistency of grading across offences is important and it is a requirement that records are kept supporting the grading process.

On some occasions, the Club Captain may not recommend a grading because of the seriousness of an incident and may automatically refer the charge to the Disciplinary Committee.

### **Penalties:**

There is no penalty under the Rules of Golf for failing to act in this way, except that the Committee may disqualify a player for acting contrary to the spirit of the game if it finds that the player has committed a serious misconduct.

However, in adopting this Code of Conduct as a Local Rule URVGC may impose the following penalties for player misconduct

If a complaint is upheld by the Disciplinary Committee, it shall give its decision in writing, within 5 days, with reasons for the decision and any penalty imposed.

It would be expected that the Disciplinary Committee will deal severely with proven cases of serious misconduct and in some cases the conduct may constitute a criminal offence in which case the matter should be referred to the Police.

## **Appendix 1**

General examples of grading of complaints of conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute (not an exhaustive list)

### **Grade 1 Offences**

- Bad language
- Improper treatment of equipment, including throwing of clubs
- Use of club other than within the intentions of the game e.g. damaging trees with clubs etc
- Ill-mannered behaviour
- Failure to complete a round when representing the club in any sanctioned tournament/inter-club match
- Failure to notify of non-participation in a club event

### **Grade 2 Offences**

- Behaviour bringing the club into disrepute
- Theft of minor items
- Excessive or offensive bad language
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour to another player
- Breaking clubs

## **Grade 3 Offences**

- Any serious misuse of alcohol or drugs on the course or club premises
- Serious theft
- Assault of a player, official, member, guest or member of the public
- Sexual or verbal harassment

## **Appendix 2**

### **Grade 1 Offence**

If no previous offences any one of the following process will be adopted:

1. Verbal warning with notice on file;
2. Written warning issued to member;
3. Penalty of suspension imposed by Disciplinary Committee;

If the next incident is a Grade 2 offence, then that process will override the above.

### **Grade 2 Offence**

If no previous offences any one of the following process will be adopted depending on the seriousness of the offence:

1. Written warning issued to member;
2. Penalty of suspension imposed by Disciplinary Committee;
3. Penalty of expulsion as determined by the Disciplinary Committee

If the offence is considered serious, or there are other recent offences, then a step can be passed at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

### **Grade 3 Offence**

Depending on the seriousness of the offence any one of the following actions may be adopted;

1. Written warning issued to member;
2. Penalty of suspension imposed by Disciplinary Committee;
3. Penalty of expulsion as determined by the Disciplinary Committee

Step 1 will only be taken if the offence is of a lesser scale otherwise a penalty of suspension will usually be imposed.

A clean slate policy will apply to any offence after a twelve-month period from date of last penalty.

## **Disciplinary Committee Functions**

The disciplinary committee will meet on an as required basis to perform the following functions:

- Review complaints information notices in relation to grade 1 offences and ensure consistency in application
- Consider all grade 2 and 3 complaints and appeals to a grade 1 penalty
- Where necessary hold investigations, including a hearing into the complaint or appeal

Notice of any hearing of the Disciplinary Committee shall be given, in the case of a complaint, to the person or persons the subject of the complaint and the complainant; and in the case of an appeal, to the persons affected by the appeal and the appellant.

The notice will specify the date time and place of any hearing and will be accompanied by copies of all material relevant to the complaint. The notice will also specify if the hearing is to be attended by written submissions or whether the parties are required to attend in person, with the opportunity to have representation attend also. Hearings will be in private with only the accused and his/her representative and the Disciplinary Committee.

No formal legal representative or counsel shall be entitled to attend, provided that the Disciplinary Committee may receive such legal advice as it deems necessary.

Any participant to the hearing will advise if a conflict of interest could be lodged by any party.

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