

# **The Clubs at Houston Oaks**

## **2023 GOLF RULES**

### **1. REGISTRATION**

- All golfers must register with Golf Shop staff and pay all applicable golf fees, guest fees and cart fees before beginning play. Members are responsible for the payment of fees incurred on their account by family members and guests; non-members authorized to play golf may pay by credit card. To ensure arriving guests are expected upon arrival, and to assist the Club in providing personalized services to all, the Club requires that all guest names shall be provided to the Golf Shop no later than 48 hours before play.

### **2. RESERVATIONS**

- The hours of golf course play, practice range hours and Golf Shop hours will be posted on the Club website and may be subject to change, at the discretion of the Club and depending upon golf course and weather conditions. Double starting times with shotgun starts may be placed into effect on busy days. The Director of Agronomy/Golf Course Superintendent, in consultation with the Head Golf Professional (or their assigns), shall determine when the golf course is playable and such decision shall be final and binding on all Persons using the golf course. No golf course play shall be permitted during any period when the course is closed.
- The Club and golf courses are generally closed on Tuesdays unless there is a tournament or golf outing scheduled. On non-outing Tuesdays, Houston Oaks homeowners may be permitted limited afternoon access (after 2 pm) to the course when maintenance practices allow. Please inquire with the Professional Staff to ensure the golf course is available on a given date. Otherwise, there shall be no golf or practice range play, nor carts provided, on Tuesdays.
- Members may reserve starting times in advance by calling the Club during Golf Shop hours or through the online reservation system or Club App, in accordance with the current starting time reservation policy for a particular Member's membership category:
  - Legacy Members may make tee time reservations up to fourteen (14) days in advance.
  - Full Golf Members may make tee time reservations up to ten (10) days in advance.
  - Members in all other classifications may make starting time reservations up to five days in advance.
- Members and guests with confirmed lodging reservations may request a golf starting time in advance (at the time of their lodging booking or thereafter), beginning with the date of lodging arrival and through the date of departure, so long as there are no conflicts with previously scheduled Club events. Standard guest policies and privileges apply. Cancelled lodging reservations may result in the cancellation of related advance tee times.
- The Club requires the names of all players to reserve starting times. All starting times shall be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. All guest names are required 48 hours in advance; non-registered or unexpected guests may be delayed or refused entry to the Club without proper authorization.
- The Member reserving a tee time must be present for said tee time. Only Legacy Members may reserve a tee time for unaccompanied guest play, subject to published guidelines and restrictions. Advance booking privileges may be restricted if a Member was found to reserve unauthorized times on behalf of other Members.
- Failure to check-in and register at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to a reserved starting time may result in the loss of the starting time. To ensure maximum enjoyment of the golf course by all players, Members may be charged for missed starting times if not cancelled at least two (2) hours in advance. Players late for their starting time will lose their right to the starting time and shall begin play only at the discretion of the Golf Professional on duty.
- Golfers with reserved tee times are requested to notify the Golf Shop of any cancellations as promptly as possible. As a courtesy, at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice is requested.

- The Club requires that every golf group be comprised of four (4) Persons or fewer, up until 1:00 pm on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays. Groups of five Persons (5-balls) or more may be permitted to play after 1:00 pm on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays, and on Mondays and Thursdays. The starting time must be on the tee sheet at 1:00 pm or later; groups with a starting time before 1:00 pm may be asked to have additional players wait until the back nine to join the group. 5-ball or larger groups must adhere to pace of play guidelines, or they will be asked to split into two groups. In all instances, 5-ball or larger groups require advance permission from the Head Golf Professional or his/her designee.
- During high volume times and days of the week, single players and groups of two may be paired with other players, if available and as necessary, at starting times determined by the golf staff. Single players and groups of two players must maintain their position on the course at all times - and be content to remain in the tee position and order in which they started the round - unless the group in front of them invites them to play through as a courtesy. The lead group has no requirement nor obligation to extend such invitation, although common courtesy would suggest same.
- Any golfer under the age of 18 may require the permission of the Golf Professional to play during peak times.
- Importantly, any on-course disputes or disagreements that may arise due to violations of rules or etiquette, inappropriate cart use, pace of play concerns, etc., shall be communicated to the Golf Shop immediately so that a staff member can be deployed to resolve the matter in a fair and amicable manner.

### **3. TOURNAMENTS AND CLINICS**

- The Club reserves the right to make the golf course and practice range available for tournaments and clinics, at which time use by non-participants may be restricted. The Club will use best efforts to limit private tournaments and encourage outside groups to book tournaments on Mondays or Tuesdays throughout the year, but the Club is under no formal requirement to do so.
- Except during special events, only Members of the Houston Oaks golf staff are permitted to render golf instruction at the Club; private instructors are not permitted to provide lessons at Houston Oaks. Lessons should be scheduled through the Golf Shop. Lessons not canceled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance may be subject to charge.
- No golf tournaments of any kind shall be permitted at the Club unless approved in advance by the Club.

### **4. GOLF COURSE PLAY**

- All golf play shall start at the number one tee (#1 tee) unless permission to start elsewhere is obtained in advance from the golf staff. All players must check in with the starter/pro on duty. Under no circumstances shall players start play from any residential entrances to the golf courses.
- Golfers, golf staff and golf activities have priority on both golf courses during daylight hours. Non-golf activities, including fishing, are prohibited on the championship golf course, cart paths and main driving range at the clubhouse during tee time hours.
- Children under 12 years of age are not permitted on the championship golf course or practice areas prior to 12 noon on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holiday Mondays. Children under 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult and/or a member of the Golf Professional staff at all times when they are on the golf course.
- Fishing from the golf course or adjacent areas may be permitted with caution and must not create a safety concern nor interrupt golf play on the course. Those fishing must do so with personal safety at the forefront.
- Wading into penalty areas is not permitted. Balls may be retrieved only from the banks of penalty areas. No “rake-type” ball retrievers are permitted.
- All players shall repair ball marks on greens, replace divots, and smooth sand traps before moving to the next tee.

- All players shall maintain a reasonable pace of play. The Club encourages a pace of play by all golfers so that, under normal circumstances, a round of golf is completed in four (4) hours and fifteen (15) minutes or less, including any time stopping between nines. If a group of players fails to keep their place on the golf course, the group may be asked to skip one or more holes, and/or be asked to let the group behind them play through.
- If a foursome or other group is searching for a lost ball and there is a group waiting to play, the lead group should allow the following group to play through. No more than three (3) minutes may be used to search for lost balls. The Club may monitor the pace of play through the efforts of the golf staff during the hours of play.
- Players with a history of slow play, whether they are Members, family members or guests, may be restricted from playing during Prime Times, at the sole discretion of the Club.
- When play of a hole is completed, Members shall leave the green promptly and proceed to the next tee without delay. Scoring for the completed hole shall be done between holes and/or while the others in the group are playing from the next tee.
- Practice is not permitted on the golf course. The Club's practice facilities should be used for all practice activities.
- The Club reserves the right to require instruction for Members, family members and guests who are new golfers or inexperienced players, prior to allowing them to use the golf courses. The intent of the Club is to assist golfers in obtaining a level of skill, knowledge and course etiquette that will enhance the enjoyment of the game for them, as well as the other Members.
- "Course closed," "hole closed" and "carts on paths only" signs are to be adhered to without exception.
- Players shall observe The Rules of Golf and Standards of Player Conduct as established by the USGA and the R&A. Local course rules are noted on the printed Houston Oaks score card. Appropriate golf etiquette is expected of all players.
- All players play at their own risk and are solely responsible for their own safety during hazardous weather conditions. A weather station and lightning prediction system may be in place to provide an audible warning that lightning may be in the area; the course shall be cleared when the horn sounds. Players who elect to continue to play during hazardous weather conditions do so at their sole discretion and at their own risk, and agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Owner Parties and the Club from and against any liabilities, losses, costs, claims, injuries or damages, including attorneys' fees, as a result of their continued play. Under no circumstances shall the Owner Parties be held liable for failing to warn players of hazardous weather conditions or the need to cease play.
- Animals and pets are not permitted on the championship golf course or main driving range at the clubhouse.

## **5. GUEST PLAYING PRIVILEGES**

- Members with golf privileges are welcome to host from one (1) to seven (7) persons to play as accompanied guests at the same time, for a total of eight (8) golfers. No more than seven guests may accompany a Member for golf during a single visit; groups larger than eight constitute an 'outing' and are subject to additional guidelines, fees and scheduling restrictions (contact Head Golf Professional for details). The hosting Member must play in the trailing foursome, if applicable, to ensure both groups maintain an acceptable pace of play. Guest golfers playing in a lead foursome – and/or any group of golfers without a Member in the group – are required to hire a forecaddie to assist each foursome at standard Club rates as posted.
- All guests shall check-in at the Golf Shop prior to play. Guests are to be accompanied by a Member when playing the golf course, with the exception of pre-authorized guests of Legacy Members who may play as unaccompanied guests on a limited basis with advance reservations, up to a maximum of eight (8) guests. All reservations must be made by the Member or an authorized representative of said Member, with the names of all guests provided in advance. If guest fees are not being applied to a hosting Member's account, this shall be made known to the Club when tee times are reserved.

- The Club limits the number of rounds of golf a guest may play at the Club during a calendar year. Guests may be prohibited from playing golf at certain peak playing times. In the absence of any other Owner rule, no guest may use the Club more than six (6) times per calendar year (regardless of Member-host), including no more than three (3) times per year as an unaccompanied guest of any Legacy Member(s).
- Guest play will be subject to advance approval of the Club. No Person who has been expelled from membership in the Club, and no Members, family members or guests whose playing privileges have been suspended by the Club shall be permitted to play as the guest of a Member. Guests who play more than six (6) times per year will have their guest privileges suspended.
- All guest names must be provided 48 hours in advance of their arrival at the Club. Failure to provide advance notice of a guest coming onto property may result in a delay or refusal of said guest to enter onto Club property.
- All “no shows” or cancellations not received within twenty-four (24) hours of play may be subject to a charge on the sponsoring Member’s club account equal to the fees charged for guest play and golf cart use.

## **6. GOLF EQUIPMENT AND ATTIRE**

- Every player must have a set of golf clubs and a golf bag. No sharing of golf clubs shall be permitted. The number of clubs carried in the golf bag shall not exceed fourteen (14) clubs during tournament play.
- Appropriate golf attire is required for all players in and around the golf areas of the Clubhouse, to include the main driving range and championship golf course.
  - For men, golf shirts with collars and sleeves, turtlenecks and mock turtlenecks, slacks and/or golf shorts are considered proper attire.
  - For women, golf tops with a collar or sleeves, golf dresses, slacks, leggings, skirts, skorts and golf shorts are considered proper attire.
  - Appropriate soft-soled shoes are required. Tee shirts, tank tops, halter tops, jeans, cutoffs, sweatpants, tennis or other athletic-style shorts, bathing suits and non-golf shoes are not permitted.
  - Golf caps and hats shall be worn in a traditional manner; billed caps worn with the bill to the front. Gentlemen are requested to remove their caps inside the clubhouse, except for inside the locker rooms.
- Attire on the Scrambler 9-hole course and Scrambler Practice Facility is more relaxed and is requested to be in good taste.
- Only soft spike or spikeless soft-soled golf shoes shall be worn on the golf course and practice areas. No metal spikes, wedges, heels, or boots may be worn on the course at any time. Any shoes other than golf shoes must be approved by the golf staff.
- The Club is not responsible for lost or stolen property, including personal articles left in, on or around a golf cart, golf bag or Club facility. A “lost and found” is maintained in the Golf Shop for any lost articles found by golf staff.
- Personal coolers and outside food and beverages are not permitted; all food and beverages must be purchased from the Club.

## **7. GOLF CART USE**

- All carts shall be assigned by the Golf staff at the time of registration and Members or guests shall be charged applicable fees. Cart use may be required at peak times. Operators of all golf carts are reminded to use extreme care in the operation of the cart around the Club property.
- Players may be allowed to walk and carry their clubs, or use a pull/push cart, at certain times at the discretion of the Club. Walkers shall carry sanders to enable them to fill their divots on the golf course.

- Golf cart keys must be obtained from the Golf staff upon check in. No cart keys are to be removed from the property.
- No vehicles other than golf course maintenance vehicles, golf carts provided by the Club or privately-owned carts pre-approved by the Club shall be permitted on the golf course.
- Privately-owned carts must be two- or four-seat carts, matching the same body style and color as the Club fleet, and equipped with proper golf bag racks and sand dispensers if intended for use on the golf courses.
- Golf carts owned by the Club are intended solely for use in the golf operation. These carts shall not be removed from the golf course or used within any residential area at any time.
- Club-owned carts will be rented exclusively to adults age 16 or older who possess a valid driver's license.
- Golf carts are intended to be driven by individuals age 16 or older who possess a driver's license. Under no circumstance shall a club-owned cart be driven by anyone under 16 years of age. In all instances, the Member who rents the cart is responsible for any other driver of that cart during the rental period.
- No more than two (2) Persons and two (2) sets of golf clubs are permitted on two-seat golf carts; four (4) Persons and four (4) sets of golf clubs are permitted on properly-equipped four-seat carts. Touring carts for four (4) or six (6) passengers are not authorized for use on the golf course.
- There shall be no standing on a moving cart at any time. This is dangerous and strictly forbidden.
- Carts are requested to remain on the cart paths, except when entering the fairway. Operators are requested to observe the 90-degree rule and return directly to the cart path. The Club reserves the right to implement additional restrictions on the use of golf carts on the golf course from time to time. When the "cart path only" sign or any other golf cart directional signs are posted, they must be strictly followed.
- Except when on the golf cart paths, a golf cart is not to be operated within thirty (50) feet of a green, tee or bunker, and shall never be driven through a penalty area, bunker or hazard. To preserve top-quality turfgrass, all four cart tires shall remain on the cart paths around greens and tee complexes.
- Soft, excessively worn and/or visibly wet areas on fairways should be avoided, especially after rains. Golfers are encouraged to use the golf cart paths or the rough whenever possible.
- All golf carts are operated at the risk of the operator. Cost of repairs to a golf cart which is damaged by a Member, family members or guests, shall be charged to the Member. Members using a Club-owned golf cart shall be held fully responsible for all damages, including damages to the golf cart or injuries to the occupants, that are caused by the misuse of the golf cart by the Member, family members or guests, and the Member shall reimburse the Club for any and all damages the Club may sustain by reason of accident or misuse.
- Golf carts are to be returned to the staging area directly upon completion of their round. Players desiring to play more golf will be permitted to do so if enough carts are available to satisfy the needs of those playing their first round of the day. Golfers must check-in with the golf staff prior to starting another round.
- Violation of these golf cart rules may result in loss of golf cart privileges and/or playing privileges.
- Persons with temporary or permanent disabilities should inquire in the Golf Shop for policies and specific accommodations.
- A Member using a golf cart (whether Club-owned or privately-owned) accepts and assumes all responsibility connected with the operation of the golf cart. Each Member also expressly agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold

harmless the Owner Parties from and against all damages, whether direct or consequential, liabilities, losses, costs, claims, injuries, or damages, including attorneys' fees, arising from or related to the use and operation of a golf cart by the Member or their respective Family members or guests. All areas of water, including those caused by flooding, must be always avoided. Those driving through flooded areas, to include the Club tunnels, are responsible for any resulting damage to a golf cart.

#### **8. MEMBER-OWNED GOLF CART POLICY**

- It is the intent of the Club and its ownership that privately-owned golf carts seek to complement, preserve, and maintain the overall ambience, beauty and visual continuity of the architectural features and décor of the Club and grounds.
- Members residing within The Estates at Houston Oaks are permitted to own and operate their own carts, subject to the following basic requirements for privately-owned carts as established by the Club:
  - A Private Cart Agreement has been completed and placed on file with the Club.
  - Carts must be registered and approved by the Club, with a windshield decal affixed annually.
  - Carts must match the Club's fleet in general style and color (metallic mocha/brown with black roof). Please consult the Golf Professional for assistance prior to purchasing a private cart.
  - Carts shall be clean and maintained in good working order while driven on Club property.
  - Cart must display the last name of the Owner/Member for identification purposes.
- Privately-owned carts intended for use on the golf courses are subject to the following requirements:
  - Shall be electric-powered, with two or four seats (larger carts not permitted on golf courses).
  - Shall have smooth rubber tires designed for turfgrass (no knobby or off-road tires).
  - Shall be equipped with proper golf bag racks and sand bottle receptacles.
  - Shall be subject to an Annual Trail Fee.
- Members owning private carts must comply with all rules for golf cart use as set forth above. Violations of golf cart policies and procedures may result in privileges being suspended or revoked and trail fees forfeited.
- When in use, each golf cart shall be in the immediate possession and control of the registered golf cart owner. The cart owner is responsible for any damage and loss that may result from their cart being used around the Club. Members assume full and unconditional responsibility for the actions of any driver of their golf cart(s).
- Each golf cart owner shall obtain and maintain insurance on the golf cart with minimum coverages for public liability and for property damage as determined by Owner. Proof of current coverage must be on file with the Club prior to receiving golf cart registration and decals, and updated documentation must be provided to the Club upon request.
- The Club requires that a valid decal shall be displayed on the Member's golf cart as proof of registration. The Club will supply and affix the decal.
- Members owning private carts must comply with all rules for golf cart use set forth in Section 6 above. Violation of any golf cart policies and procedures may result in privileges being suspended or revoked and trail fees being forfeited.

#### **9. PULL / PUSH CARTS**

- Club-owned and privately-owned pull/push carts are permitted on the golf course. Each cart shall carry a sand bottle to enable the filling of divots on the golf course.
- Pull/push carts should never be placed on a green, on a collar around the green, in a bunker or directly on the teeing surface. Use caution when the course is wet and while walking on the fairway and rough, as pull carts can make deep tracks. As necessary, golfers should leave the cart in the rough and walk to their ball carrying several clubs.

#### ***10. PRACTICE RANGE***

- Range balls are for use on the driving range only and are not permitted to be used on the golf course.
- If using your own golf balls at the Scrambler Practice Facility, they must be self-picked upon completion of practice.
- Balls must be hit from designated areas only. No hitting is permitted from the rough or sides of the driving range.
- Pets are not permitted on the main driving range at the Clubhouse.
- Proper golf attire is always required on the main driving range.
- When practicing, golfers are to use the driving range or the Scrambler practice facility only. Under no circumstances are the regular tees, greens or fairways to be used as practice areas.
- All practice facilities will close 30 minutes before sunset.

#### ***11. HANDICAPS***

- Handicaps are computed under the supervision of a handicap committee, in accordance with the World Handicap System (WHS). The WHS was implemented in January 2020 with the vision to unify the six different handicap systems previously in use around the world into a single World Handicap System.

#### ***12. RAIN / SEVERE WEATHER POLICY***

- If rain, lightning or another severe weather event causes termination of play prior to the completion of six (6) holes, charges for that day's golf/guest fees and cart fees may qualify for a partial credit or refund. See the Golf Professional on duty for details.
- Credits/refunds are issued only on the day of the weather event. It is the responsibility of the Member or Guest to inquire about same.

All Members and Guests are encouraged to Respect the Game of Golf  
and care for the golf course and club property.

We appreciate your adherence to the Golf Rules  
at The Clubs at Houston Oaks.