

MURRAY DISTRICT GOLF ASSOCIATION LTD CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES



Condensed Version

Note

The Condensed Version of the Murray District Golf Association Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures contains key extracts from the complete version. The Condensed Version should only be used as a useful summary of the complete version. To avoid doubt, it is the complete version that will apply in the event of any conflict between this version and the complete version.

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. A 'PARTICIPANT' at an event is any of the following: a competitor, a caddie (as defined in the Rules of Golf), a family member, friend, support or associate of a competitor or caddie, a non-playing captain or manager, a team official or support official, a spectator, a person who comments digitally or otherwise on a public domain on an event or on another participant, and anyone else considered by the Murray District Golf Association (MDGA) to be a participant.
2. A participant bound by the code acts in a manner to be potentially classified as a breach of the code.
3. The incident is brought to the attention of the MDGA. The MDGA will promptly determine whether an investigation is required but is under no obligation to investigate.
4. If an investigation is conducted, it will be performed by duly authorised MDGA Investigation Officer. The investigation may involve brief verbal witness reports. There may be no need for the person named (the respondent) in the incident to be consulted. They (the respondent) will be given an opportunity to respond if necessary once the initial investigation is concluded.
5. The investigation will be provided to the MDGA Conduct Officers who will promptly consider and discuss the results of the investigation.
6. If the Conduct Officers believe that a Breach has been committed they will classify the Breach in accordance with the MDGA Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures and decide a penalty with reference to these procedures.
7. A copy of the decision of the Conduct Officers will be promptly provided in writing to the respondent and will include a description of the respondent's options and potential penalties. A copy will be also provided to any club of which the respondent is a member.
 - The respondent may accept the decision of the Conduct Officers which would see the penalty reduced; or
 - The respondent may decide to contest the decision at a hearing of the MDGA Executive. If initial decision is upheld there will be no reduction in the penalty. Once the matter has been heard and concluded there will be no right of appeal.

Addendum 1: In some cases the Conduct Officers may decide that the best course of action is to refer the matter immediately to the MDGA Executive.

BREACH OF CODE CATEGORIES

The three levels of breach are as follows:

1. Nominal Breach – A breach of the code that does not require any further penalty than that which has already been imposed under the Rules of Golf, Local Rules or Competition Conditions of Play.

2. Minor Breach
 - i. Best efforts: playing in a way in which: upsets or distracts other competitors; creates negative exposure for the MDGA or the event.
 - ii. Etiquette: eg failing to rake bunkers, dropping litter on the course, no verbal warning when hitting a ball close to spectators.
 - iii. General Misbehaviour: abuse of an event, course or golf equipment, using audible obscenities, incident resulting from drunken or other socially unacceptable behaviour. Displaying clear but minor abusive behaviour or disrespect towards another player, event official, spectator or others as deemed appropriate by the association.
 - iv. Harmful Conduct: actions or comments that may discredit officials, fellow players, sponsors, promoters, volunteers, MDGA, venue/club or the event generally but which do not create significant or long-term damage.
 - v. Failing to Report a Breach: a failure to report a breach of the code by a fellow participant or to assist in an enquiry regarding a breach.

3. Serious Breach
 - i. Best efforts: failing to give best efforts to contrive a result.
 - ii. Etiquette: eg dangerous play which could have led to material or third-party injury.
 - iii. Significant Misbehaviour: serious abuse of event, course or golf equipment. Significant and continuous use of audible obscenities. Significant abusive behaviour towards another player, event official, spectator or others as deemed appropriate by the association.
 - iv. Harmful Conduct: actions or comments that may harm or discredit officials, fellow players, sponsors, promoters, volunteers, MDGA, venue/club or the event generally, which causes significant or long-term damage.
 - v. Rules of Golf: a deliberate breach of the Rules of Golf where the participant's actions or omissions are reckless to an extent that they should have known that a breach of the Rules of Golf would occur.

The above categories are only a guide and do not prevent the MDGA from determining the seriousness of an alleged breach of the code on a case by case basis.

POSSIBLE SANCTIONS

1. Extension of Sanctions due to prior breach/es – sanctions (as set out below) are extended when a respondent has the same or similar prior breach during the previous 12 months.

2. Sanction Periods (during a suspension period a player is ineligible for competition AND a request to suspend their GA handicap may apply)
 - i. Nominal Breach – the matter is concluded no further action required
 - ii. Minor Breach – There are two options: the respondent can contest the allegation and have the matter resolved in a hearing or they can accept the charge, which would then ensure the sanction is reduced.

Number of Prior Breaches not including the current breach	Allegation contested by respondent and then up held at hearing	Reduced sanction when charge accepted by respondent
0	7 days	Warning only
1	14 days	7 days
2	30 days	20 days
3	60 days	40 days
4	120 days	80 days
5	240 days	160 days

- iii. Serious Breach – The respondent has two options. Contest the charge or accept the charge.

Number of Prior Breaches not including the current breach	Allegation contested by respondent and then up held at hearing	Reduced sanction when charge accepted by respondent
0	30 days	15 days
1	60 days	40 days
2	125 days	85 days
3	255 days	170 days
4	505 days	80 days
5	1010 days	160 days

Note: if the Conduct Officers (or the MDGA Executive if the matter has been referred) considers such action to be warranted, they may choose to either extend the time period for the sanction or to have the sanction served during an upcoming event/s.