

MODEL LOCAL RULES

Hard Card 2021

MLR E-2

Cleaning The Ball

Purpose: When conditions such as wet ground conditions throughout parts of the course may cause mud to stick to the ball, the Committee can choose to allow the player to lift, clean and replace the ball in the general area. Such relief should be limited to those portions of the course where needed.

While the Local Rule for Preferred Lies (Model Local Rule E-3) is designed for use only in areas cut to fairway height or less in the general area, this Local Rule can be used throughout the general area or restricted to specific areas. The Committee could choose to use both Local Rules permitting preferred lies in the fairways and cleaning the ball elsewhere in the general area.

It is not advisable to implement this Local Rule once play has begun for a stroke-play round. Doing so would allow players who had more holes to play the advantage of using it for a longer period of time. The Local Rule could be implemented once a match has begun between the play of two holes as opponents have an equal benefit.

Model Local Rule E-2

“When a player’s ball lies in the general area, the ball may be lifted, cleaned, and replaced without penalty. The player must mark the spot before lifting the ball (see Rule 14.1) and the ball must be replaced on its original spot (see Rule 14.2). The ball is in play when it has been replaced.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.

MLR E-3

Preferred Lies

Purpose: When occasional local abnormal conditions might interfere with fair play, the affected parts of the course can be defined as ground under repair. But adverse conditions such as heavy snows, spring thaws, prolonged rains or extreme heat can sometimes damage the course or prevent use of heavy mowing equipment.

When such conditions are widespread on the course, the Committee can choose to adopt a Local Rule for “preferred lies” (also known as “winter rules”) to allow fair play or help protect the fairway. Such a Local Rule should be withdrawn as soon as conditions allow.

The use of this Local Rule outside the fairway in the general area is not recommended as it may result in a player receiving free relief from areas where a ball might otherwise be unplayable (such as in areas of bushes or trees).

It is not authorized to implement this Local Rule once play has begun for a stroke-play round. Doing so would allow players who have more holes to play the advantage of

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using it for a longer period of time. The Local Rule could be implemented once a match has begun between the play of two holes as opponents have an equal benefit.

For guidance on when and how this Local Rule may be used in order for scores to be submitted for handicapping purposes, consult the rules or recommendations contained within the Handicap System operating in the local jurisdiction.

Model Local Rule E-3

“When a player’s ball lies in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less, the player may take free relief once by placing the original ball or another ball in and playing it from this relief area:

- **Reference Point: Spot of the original ball.**
- **Size of Relief Area Measured from Reference Point: One club-length from the reference point, but with these limits:**
 - **Must not be nearer the hole than the reference point, and**
 - **Must be in the general area.**

In proceeding under this Local Rule, the player must choose a spot to place the ball and use the procedures for replacing a ball under Rules 14.2b(2) and 14.2e. The ball is in play when it has been replaced.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.

MLR E-4

Relief from Aeration Holes

Purpose: Aeration holes do not fall within the meaning of holes made by the maintenance staff. Therefore players are not permitted to repair them on the putting green (see [Rule 13.1c](#)) or take free relief from them in the general area, but such holes can interfere with the proper playing of the game. If the Committee declares aeration holes to be ground under repair, a player may find it impractical or impossible to obtain complete relief.

Therefore, when recent aeration holes may significantly interfere with the lie of the ball or area of intended swing, the Committee can choose to give relief as it would for ground under repair but exclude relief for interference to the player’s stance. This Local Rule should be withdrawn when the aeration holes have healed enough to avoid significant interference.

Model Local Rule E-4

“If a player’s ball lies in or touches an aeration hole:

- **Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b (Dropping in the relief area). If the ball comes to rest in another aeration hole the player may take relief again under this Local Rule.**

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- **Ball on Putting Green.** The player may take relief under Rule 16.1d (Placing the ball on the nearest point of relief).

But interference does not exist if the aeration hole only interferes with the player's stance or, on the *putting green*, on the player's *line of play*.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty* Under Rule 14.7a.

MLR E-5 Alternative to Stroke and Distance for Lost Ball or Ball Out of Bounds

When a player's ball has not been found or is *known or virtually certain* to be *out of bounds*, the player may proceed as follows rather than proceeding under *stroke and distance*. But the player may not use this option to take relief for the original ball when that ball is *known or virtually certain* to have come to rest in a *penalty area*, or the player has played another ball provisionally under penalty of *stroke and distance* (see Rule 18.3). A player may use this option to take relief for a provisional ball that has not been found or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds.

For **two penalty strokes**, the player may take relief by *dropping* the original ball or another ball in this *relief area* (see Rule 14.3):

Two Estimated Reference Points:

a. **Ball Reference Point:** The point where the original ball is estimated to have come to rest on the *course*, or last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary to go *out of bounds*.

b. **Fairway Reference Point:** The point of fairway of the hole being played that is nearest to the ball reference point but is not nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point. For purposes of this Local Rule, "fairway" means any area of grass in the *general area* that is cut to fairway height or less.

If a ball is estimated to be *lost* on the *course* or last crossed the edge of the *course* boundary short of the fairway, the fairway reference point may be a grass path or a teeing ground for the hole being played cut to fairway height or less.

Size of Relief Area Based on Reference Points:

Anywhere between a line from the *hole* through the ball reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the outside of that line), and a line from the *hole* through the fairway reference point (and within two *club-lengths* to the fairway side of that line). But with these limits:

- Must be in the *general area*, and
- Must not be nearer the *hole* than the ball reference point.

Once the player puts a ball *in play* under this Local Rule:

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- The original ball that was *lost* or *out of bounds* is no longer *in play* and must not be played.
- This is true even if the ball is found on the *course* before the end of the three-minute search time (see Rule 6.3b).

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.*

MLR E-12 Ball Played from Outside Relief Area When Taking Back-On-the-Line Relief

Purpose. A Committee may choose to introduce a Local Rule to provide for no penalty in specific circumstances when a ball is played from outside the relief area after taking back-on-the-line relief.

Under this Local Rule, a player will not be penalized for playing from a wrong place so long as the ball is dropped in the relief area and comes to rest within one club-length of where it first touched the ground.

For example, a ball rolls slightly forward of the reference point after having been dropped in the right way and in the relief area but is still within one club-length of where it first touched the ground when dropped. In such cases, the player can either proceed under Rule 14.3c(2) or the player can play the ball from where it came to rest.

This Local Rule is for use only in relation to the Back-On-the-Line relief procedure.

Model Local Rule E-12

“When taking Back-On-the-Line relief, there is no additional penalty if a player plays a ball that was *dropped* in the *relief area* required by the relevant Rule (Rule 16.1c(2), 17.1d(2), 19.2b or 19.3b) but came to rest outside the *relief area*, so long as the ball, when played, is within one *club-length* of where it first touched the ground when *dropped*.

This exemption from penalty applies even if the ball is played from nearer the hole than the reference point (but not if played from nearer the *hole* than the spot of the original ball or the estimated point where the ball last crossed the edge of the *penalty area*).

This Local Rule does not change the procedure for taking Back-On-the-Line relief under a relevant Rule. This means that the reference point and *relief area* are not changed by this Local Rule and that Rule 14.3c(2) can be applied by a player who drops a ball in the right way and it comes to rest outside the *relief area*, whether this occurs on the first or second drop.”

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MLR F-1

Defining Abnormal Course Conditions and Integral Objects

Purpose. There are many ways in which a committee can define abnormal course conditions and integral objects on the course and so it is not appropriate or possible to provide a complete list of Model Local Rules that can be used for this purpose. The key is to be clear and specific when defining abnormal course conditions and integral objects in the Local Rules.

The Committee has the scope to adopt Local Rules for the following purposes without the need for them to fit with the MLR's detailed in Section 2:

- Clarifying the status of objects that may be obstructions.
- Declaring any artificial object to be an integral object (and not an obstruction).
- Declaring artificial surfaces and edges of roads to be integral objects.
- Declaring roads and paths that don't have artificial surfaces and edges to be obstructions if they could unfairly affect play.
- Defining temporary obstructions on the course or next to the course as movable, immovable, or temporary immovable obstructions.

No specific Model Local Rules are included in this section given the variety of options available, but some examples are provided below:

- Ground under repair is defined by any area encircled by a white line [or insert other color or description as appropriate].
- Ground under repair includes exposed rocks in areas cut to fairway height or less [or within a stated distance of the fairway, such as two club-lengths].
- **Areas in bunkers where sand has been removed by the movement of water resulting in deep furrows through the sand are ground under repair.**
- Mats that are secured and plastic cable ramps that are covering cables are immovable obstructions.
- Protective fences around greens are immovable obstructions.
- The rails on split rail fences are [movable or immovable] obstructions.
- Retaining artificial walls and pilings when located in penalty areas are integral objects.
- Wires and other objects [closely] attached to trees are integral objects.
- All gates that are for the purpose of getting through boundary walls and fences [or specify the hole(s) on which this applies] are integral objects.

See Sections 2F and 5B(4) for more information on abnormal course conditions.

See Sections 2H and 5B(4) for more information on integral objects.

F-10

Damage by Animals

Purpose. There may be times when animals cause damage to the course that is so widespread that it is not practical to mark all the damaged areas as ground under repair. Also, some types of animal damage may not be covered by Rule 16.1.

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If animals, including insects, create damage on a course, the Committee can choose to treat such damage as ground under repair from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1. This is done by defining the areas or the condition rather than attempting to mark all the areas of damage.

A Committee can choose to limit relief only for damage that interferes with the lie of the ball or the area of intended swing.

Model Local Rule F-10

**“In the *general area*, areas of damage caused by animals are treated as *ground under repair* from which relief is allowed under Rule 16.1b. But interference does not exist if the damage only interferes with the player’s *stance*.
Penalty for Playing Ball from a *Wrong Place* in Breach of Local Rule: *General Penalty* Under Rule 14.7a.**

MLR F-16 Bunker Filled with Temporary Water

Purpose. If a bunker is flooded, free relief under Rule 16.1c may not be sufficient to allow for fair play. A Committee can choose to treat that bunker as ground under repair in the general area from which free relief is allowed outside the bunker. The Committee should only use this Local Rule on a case-by-case basis and is not authorized to make a Local Rule providing generally that all flooded bunkers are ground under repair.

Model Local Rule F-16

A flooded bunker is ground under repair in the general area. It is not treated as a bunker during the round. A flooded bunker is defined as a bunker full of water from which the player cannot take proper relief in the bunker. If the player’s ball lies in or touches this ground under repair or the ground under repair interferes with the player’s stance or area of intended swing, the player may take free relief outside the bunker under Rule 16.1b. All other bunkers on the course, whether they contain temporary water or not, are still bunkers for all purposes under the Rules.

Penalty for Playing Ball from a Wrong Place in Breach of Local Rule: General Penalty Under Rule 14.7a.

MLR G-9 Replacing Club that is Broken or Significantly Damaged

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Model Local Rule G-9

Rule 4.1b(3) is modified in this way:

If a player's club is "broken or significantly damaged" during the *round* by the player or *caddie*, except in cases of abuse, the player may replace the club with any club under Rule 4.1b(4). When replacing a club, the player must immediately take the broken or significantly damaged club out of play, using the procedure in Rule 4.1c(1).

For the purposes of this Local Rule:

A club is "broken or significantly damaged" when:

- the shaft breaks into pieces, splinters or is bent (but not when the shaft is only dented)**
- the club face impact area is visibly deformed (but not when the club face is only scratched)**
- the clubhead is visibly and significantly deformed**
- the clubhead is detached or loose from the shaft, or**
- the grip is loose.**

Exception: A club face or clubhead is not "broken or significantly damaged" solely because it is cracked.

Penalty for Breach of Local Rule – See Rule 4.1b.