



DCSGC Modified Local Rules

Revised 7/23/26

Per the USGA, a Club can adopt “Modified Local Rules” to account for Club or Golf Course specific conditions to the Rules of Golf. The intention is to maintain course and scoring integrity, but allow room for exceptions.

The complete (and rather long!) list of Modified Local Rules (MLR) are available in the following link.
<https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/rules-hub/clarifications-of-the-rules-of-golf.html>

The Diablo Creek Seniors Golf Club has approved and adopted the USGA’s MLR’s. Some of the more common ones are explained below. In addition we have also adopted and will allow other DCSGC specific Local Rules for our own safety and the pace of play.

Modified Local Rule: Winter Rules

A separate document details the DCSGC “Winter Rules”, which covers conditions such as standing water and embedded balls. It is effect typically only in the Winter months. The Rules Director will notify the membership via email when it starts (around November) and ends (typically April).

Modified Local Rule “6 inch bump”

The DCSGC has adopted a “6 inch Bump” Local Rule, that allows any player to move a ball (including improving a lie) up to 6 inches. While this does apply in the fairway and the rough, it does not apply on the green, or bunker or in any penalty area.

Modified Local Rule “Root Relief”

The DCSGC has adopted a “Root Relief” Local Rule, that allows any player to move a ball (including improving a lie) if there is a tree root in the swing path. This is to protect our senior muscles and bones from potential injury. The relief distance is not limited, but should be the nearest point of relief (hopefully inches) and no closer to the hole.

Modified Local Rule “Out of Bounds, alternative to Stroke and Distance”

Per the Rule of Golf if a player thinks that a ball may have been hit out of bounds, he may elect to hit a provisional. If he doesn’t hit a provisional and the ball is lost or out of bounds, he can elect to drop and play another ball in the *fairway* across from the OB entry point. The penalty is 2 strokes.

Modified Local Rule “Unplayable ball in a bunker”

If a player hits into a bunker and for any reason considers it “unplayable”, the player has an extra option allowing relief outside the bunker using the back-on-the-line procedure, but for a total of two penalty strokes.

Modified Local Rule “Removing stones in a bunker”

Although normally not allowed, you may remove a stone or pebble in a bunker if it is in the path of a stroke, but not a leaf or stick. This is for safety reasons. (Man made objects are allowed to be removed per the Rules of Golf.)

Modified Local Rule: "Hole Stroke Index Allocation" is Tee Based rather than Gender based for Competitive Events.

Per the USGA and R&A Rules every golf course scorecard has a "Handicap" (or difficulty) rating for every hole. The most difficult hole on the course is rated as the #1 handicap, the easiest is the 18th handicap. The USGA and NCGA base their individual hole handicap (difficulty) rating on the average male and female player, regardless of tees played. Using the Diablo Creek scorecard as an example, the NCGA has determined that male golfers use the upper (blue border) hole handicap schedule regardless of which tees they play, even the Red tees. And the female golfers use the lower (red border) hole handicapping regardless which tees they play (Blue, White, Gold or Red). Their premise is "gender based", regardless of tees played.

In June of 2026 the DCSGC Membership voted and approved a Local Modified Rule to change the hole stroke index allocation from "gender based" to "tee based", to allow our players to use the hole handicap (difficulty) rating based on the Tees we play, not the gender of the player. If a male Member wants to play from the Red tees, then the per hole handicapping would follow the red bordered schedule. This appears to be a much fairer way to assign the difficulty rating of the holes for us Seniors. This Local Rule would only be applied during competitive events, like Better Ball with a partner or a Match Play. It would not apply on a typical Monday play day when we deduct the Course Handicap for the tees we play from for our total Net stroke score for 3 Buck Chuck. An additional clarification is that although the competitive event might be scored and awarded per a "tee based" hole handicap, USGA score posting will still be tabulated on the USGA "gender based" handicap system.

Following the "tee based" schedule seems to be a much fairer way to assign handicap "pops" on holes that are actually more difficult from, for example, the Red tees.

Edits and Changes:

07/23/26: Added MLR for Hole Stroke Index Allocation