

Houston Telephone Golf Association

Membership / Handicap / Competition Committee

Association By-Laws provide for a Membership / Handicap Chair appointed by the Officers responsible for specific Association activities. The Chair is to recruit volunteers from the membership to assist in conducting those activities. The Association President is an ex officio member of the Membership / Handicap Committee. The ability to provide WHS Handicaps in accordance with HTGA's TxGA License and HTGA's ability to conduct tournaments for score entry to Golf Genius requires the Association maintain a Handicap Committee. The HTGA Handicap Committee (aka Competition Committee) can develop guidelines for HTGA tournament play that meet the requirements of USGA Rules of Play.

The committee is responsible for maintaining a roster of paid members eligible to participate in association tournaments that include minimally the members email and phone contact information. Member contact information can only be provided to officers and committee members for conducting association business.

The committee is responsible for reviewing individual handicaps applicable for use in HTGA tournaments, can provide a handicap if desirable for any member who does not have an official GHIN handicap for participation in a scheduled HTGA tournament and has the right provided in WHS guidelines to adjust an individuals' handicap for tournament play when deemed necessary.

The committee will also maintain and modify as necessary standard rules of play in HTGA Tournaments. The following are the current standards as of summer, 2020.

1. USGA Rulebook rules apply other than specific exceptions provided by the course or the HTGA Competition Committee.
2. Course specific information as provided on course property or on the course score card such as the designation of OB or Penalty areas will always be applicable.

3. The maximum course index a participant can be assigned for use in Tournament play scoring is 36 strokes.

4. As HTGA plays numerous courses that do not consistently mark or stake penalty areas and Out of Bounds (OB), all third party property and course practice areas will be considered during tournament play as OB (fence line, streets, unmarked property boundaries, driving range, etc.) and all non-maintained natural landscaping will be considered a lateral penalty area if not otherwise marked (forested areas, nature areas, dessert areas, rock outcroppings, etc.). However, plants within the confines of the course such as Pampas grass or landscape beds that may identify the boundary of a fairway is considered a maintained area and a ball deemed to be within that area is considered lost not subject to proceeding under lateral penalty area procedures if the ball is unable to be located.

5. HTGA utilizes the USGA allowed rules modification of applying an additional penalty stroke and dropping a ball one club length into the fairway from the rough no nearer the hole for any ball deemed lost or OB in the vicinity of where the player believes the ball was lost or crossed OB. This option is available if a Provisional Ball was not already played to avoid having to return to replay the original shot. If a Provisional Ball was played, this option will not apply to the original shot. Assistance from playing partners is allowed in determining where the ball may have been lost or crossed the OB boundary. For an example of implementation, a player who cannot locate a drive in an area not otherwise considered a lateral penalty area that did not hit a provisional ball can drop a ball one club length from the edge of the fairway laterally to where they thought their original ball was lost and would be hitting their 4th shot.

6. HTGA as allowed in the By-Laws normally uses three sets of tees during play. The Tournament designated tees, one tee box forward for members who are 65 years of age by the date of the tournament and an additional tee forward from that for female members.

7. Course handicaps will be determined for each monthly tournament as of the golfers first of the month individual handicap using the course slope and rating for the tees that member is playing on the day of the tournament. This does not apply to match play or team tournaments. Those will be determined based upon when the event is scheduled to take place.
8. Any tournament that play is designated cart path only prior to commencing play will be played as lift, clean and place throughout the course of the tournament, even if conditions change during play allowing carts on the course. Bunkers will also be out of play that tournament. The drop for a ball ending in a bunker must keep the spot where the ball rests in line with the flagstick (do not drop laterally). If the ball cannot be located due to water in the bunker, do your best to determine where the ball would be resting. Otherwise, lift, clean and place procedures, either through the green or throughout the course will be determined and communicated by the Competition Committee prior to start of play.
9. If course bunkers have not been raked, golfers can use lift, rake or smooth if rakes are unavailable and replace their ball within the bunker. The Competition Committee will otherwise determine prior to play when bunkers will be out of play for any specific tournament (if not cart path only). If bunkers are in play but golfers encounter an unplayable bunker as determined by unanimous consensus of the playing group, a player can proceed to drop outside of the bunker with the drop keeping the spot where the ball rests in the bunker in line with the flagstick.
10. Unmarked areas of questionable ground under repair can be determined by unanimous consensus of the playing group. If the playing group is unable to agree, the original ball and a provisional ball should be played and scored with the Competition Committee making a determination once reviewing the circumstances of the area after play. This applies to damaged green areas as well. Players can obtain relief from damage if on the green and they can relocate the ball no closer to the hole to avoid putting through the damaged area.