



National Alliance for  
**Accessible Golf**

# **Accessible Golf Toolkit**

**Golf Course Owners and Operators**

July 24, 2023

# National Alliance for Accessible Golf (“Alliance”)

- The National Alliance for Accessible Golf (“Alliance”) is an organization working to ensure the opportunity for all individuals with disabilities to play the game of golf.
- The Alliance is represented by major golf organizations in the United States, organizations that provide services for people with disabilities, and others who advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities into society.
- The Alliance also provides golf course personnel with technical assistance if needed..



# The Goals of the Alliance Are To:

- ◆ Increase persons with disabilities understanding of the benefits of golf;
- ◆ Increase the golf industry's awareness of the benefit of serving persons with disabilities;
- ◆ Advance models and resources for persons with disabilities to learn the game of golf;
- ◆ Increase awareness of the needs of golfers with disabilities among golf course owners, teaching professionals and related personnel;
- ◆ Advance scientific understanding of the benefits of golf for persons with disabilities;
- ◆ Assist the golf industry in resolving issues related to expanding services to persons with disabilities; and
- ◆ Assemble and review technical information for golf course managers, rehabilitation and recreation professionals, and golf professionals that lead to improved inclusive services

For more information on the Alliance, please visit us at [www.accessgolf.org](http://www.accessgolf.org)

# Accessible Golf Toolkit

- This toolkit is designed to provide basic guidance to golf course owners and operators as they seek ways to make their golf courses more accessible to golfers with disabilities.
- There are specific requirements for golf course accessibility laid out in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) was adopted to remove the barriers that have prevented society from benefiting from the participation and contributions of individuals with disabilities.
- Title III of the ADA requires public accommodations, including golf courses, to provide goods and services to people with disabilities on an equal basis with the rest of the general public.
- In addition, Title II of the ADA requires public entities, such as states and local governments, to make golf courses and other facilities accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

# What is an Owners Responsibility?

- It is illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability. Beyond that, many golf course owners and operators have recognized that golfers with disabilities represent a growing market. Indeed, as the population continues to age, today's avid golfers may become golfers with disabilities who desire to keep playing the game they love.
- New golf course facilities must be accessible in accordance with the ADA. The ADA also requires removal of architectural barriers in existing facilities when "readily achievable." (see below). For courses owned or operated by a state or local government, access must be provided when doing so is necessary to make the "program" of golf accessible.
- **A privately owned golf course**, whether for profit or nonprofit, that is open to the public, is subject to Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Title III requirements for existing courses are that courses shall make changes to the course or a facility when to do so is "readily achievable." [28 CFR 36.304 - Removal of barriers](#)

# What Does Readily Achievable Mean?

- The term readily achievable means easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense. In determining whether an action is readily achievable, factors to be considered include -
- (A) the nature and cost of the action needed
- (B) the overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the action; the number of persons employed at such facility; the effect on expenses and resources, or the impact otherwise of such action upon the operation of the facility;



North Ohio Hemophilia

# What Does Readily Achievable Mean?

- (C) the overall financial resources of the covered entity; the overall size of the business of a covered entity with respect to the number of its employees; the number, type, and location of its facilities; and
- (D) the type of operation or operations of the covered entity, including the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce of such entity; the geographic separateness, administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility or facilities in question to the covered entity.
- An excellent booklet that is easy to read and understand is available from the US Department of Justice at the following website  
[www.ada.gov/regs2010/smallbusiness/smallbusprimer2010.htm](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/smallbusiness/smallbusprimer2010.htm)

# Owned or Operated by a Local Government?

A golf course owned or operated by a unit of state or local government, such as a municipal parks and recreation department or a course at a state university, is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Title II requirements for existing courses are that courses shall make changes to the course or the facility when such changes are necessary to make the program (of golf) accessible. This “program access” test is different than readily achievable and requires more effort by state and local governments. State and local government’s services, programs, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, must be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. This standard applies to all existing facilities of State and local governments.

# Owned or Operated by a Local Government?

State and local government's services, programs, and activities, when viewed in their entirety, must be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. This standard applies to all existing facilities of State and local governments. Removing barriers to access in pre-ADA facilities – or moving programs from pre-ADA facilities to newer and more accessible facilities or even providing those programs in alternate accessible ways – will ensure full and independent opportunities to participate for people with disabilities while minimizing costs.

Governments do not have to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of their programs or result in an undue financial or administrative burden, taking into account all resources available for use by the program. The US Department of Justice has produced a booklet that provides more direction on “program access” and may be found on the Internet [www.ada.gov/civiccommonprobs.htm](http://www.ada.gov/civiccommonprobs.htm)

# Making Your Golf Course Accessible

First, remember that accessibility includes not only physical access, but “programmatic access” as discussed above as. Providing physical access includes all of the built facilities (club house, pools, parking lots, etc.) as well as programmatic access (state and local government). As far as physical access goes, there are checklists and booklets that will be helpful in determining how to ensure that your course is accessible (see the following slides). Structural and landscape architects are now very familiar with the ADA and its requirements.

# Making Your Golf Course Accessible

In addition, a couple of possibilities would be for course to assemble an accessibility advisory team to assist. Many organizations focused on disability and accessibility are available in most communities to provide this type of support. On a personal level, as a golf course operator or owner, if you were to take a golf car around all playable areas of the golf course, it would provide a good sense on where problem areas might exist. There are also “Accessibility Checklists available, including those for recreational facilities. See as an example, [www.adachecklist.org](http://www.adachecklist.org) on the Internet.



# Minimum Guidelines for Golf Course Accessibility

The development of minimum accessibility guidelines for golf courses is the responsibility of the U.S. Access Board. The Access Board is an independent federal agency comprised of public and government members appointed by the President. The Access Board staff spent more than 10 years developing standards for recreation facilities, including golf courses. The guidelines became final in 2002 and were updated as the new ADA and ABA Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities in 2004. Golf is included as a subsection on Recreation Facilities (Chapter 10) and [www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm](http://www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm). The Access Board has also produced a free and concise [7 page booklet](#) with illustrations on the physical requirements of golf course accessibility.

# Minimum Guidelines for Golf Course Accessibility

The Access Board guidelines address only the physical and architectural aspects of golf course accessibility. Golf course owners and operators must evaluate the policies and procedures implemented at their courses to ensure that there are no “barriers to entry” for customers with disabilities seeking to play their courses. One way to meet this objective is to look at the policies from the perspective of a person with a disability, then then make every reasonable accommodation to overcome existing barriers to participation.

# Other Recreational Facilities

In addition to the golf course, club house, parking lot, practice facilities and other typical amenities, many golf facilities include other social facilities such as Swimming pools and Playgrounds. The US Access Board has also produced accessibility guidelines for swimming pools and playgrounds among other recreation facilities in addition to those for golf courses. The accessibility of these areas are more detailed and include more criteria since unlike golf courses, they are considered built facilities and occupy a finite space.

# Other Recreational Facilities

Golf facilities that also include these types of facilities, including spas, saunas, steam and locker rooms, boating and/or fishing areas among others must meet accessibility criteria. If you have any of these or other types of recreational facilities, you will need to ensure that they also meeting the ADA accessibility guidelines.

# Department of Justice and the ADA

Finally, The US Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for enforcement of the ADA. The Department of Justice's [revised regulations for Titles II and III](#) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) were published in the Federal Register on September 15, 2010. They were effective as of March 15, 2012. They can be found at [www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAstandards.htm](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAstandards.htm) The provisions for golf courses and other recreation facilities may be found in Chapters 1, 2, and 10.

All of the recreation related standards may be found in [Chapter 10](#).

# Department of Justice and the ADA

The DOJ has recently provided guidance via <http://www.ada.gov/opdmd.htm> on the ADA requirement for “Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids and Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices” for title II (state and local government services) and title III (public accommodations and commercial facilities). The DOJ did not specifically address the extent to which golf courses are required to have accessible golf cars.

The National Alliance for Accessible Golf encourages golf course owners/operators to be proactive in reaching out to individuals with disabilities and to use the game to foster inclusion and to grow your business.

# Resources

- National Alliance for Accessible Golf  
[www.accessgolf.org](http://www.accessgolf.org)
- National Center on Accessibility  
<http://www.ncaonline.org/>
- National Center on Physical Activity and Disability  
[www.ncpad.org/lifetime/fact\\_sheet.php?sheet=830](http://www.ncpad.org/lifetime/fact_sheet.php?sheet=830)
- Accessibility Online  
[www.accessibilityonline.org](http://www.accessibilityonline.org)

# Hotlines

- Advice about specific ADA compliance issues is available from government experts by contacting the following hotlines:
  - U.S. Department of Justice Hotline: 1 (800) 514-0301, ext. 8
    - [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)
  - Access Board: 1 (202) 272-0080, ext. 3
    - [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)
  - Regional Disability & Business Technical Assistance Centers, 1 (800) 949-4232
    - [www.adata.org](http://www.adata.org)

**Checklist for facility accessibility** [www.adachecklist.org](http://www.adachecklist.org)

# Golf Related Organizations

- Make Golf Your Thing [www.makegolfsyourthing.org](http://www.makegolfsyourthing.org)
- Ladies Professional Golf Association [www.lpga.com](http://www.lpga.com)
- Club Managers Association of America [www.cmaa.org](http://www.cmaa.org)
- American Society of Golf Course Architects [www.asgca.org](http://www.asgca.org)
- Golf Range Association of America & Golf Range Magazine  
[www.golfrange.org](http://www.golfrange.org)

# Golf Related Organizations

- Wadsworth Golf Charities Foundation  
[www.wadsworthgolffoundation.org](http://www.wadsworthgolffoundation.org)
- National Golf Course Owners Association [www.ngcoa.org](http://www.ngcoa.org)
- Golf Course Superintendents Association of America  
[www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org)
- Golf Course Builders Association of America [www.gcbaa.org](http://www.gcbaa.org)
- PGA of America [www.pga.com](http://www.pga.com)
- United States Golf Association (USGA) [www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

All golf course operations are covered. The only exception is a private club. However, the law (ADA) is specific in identifying what qualifies as a private club and the U.S. Department of Justice takes an extremely narrow view of the definition of “private.” Basically, if you allow any public play on your course or functions at the facility then you are required to comply with the ADA. Even if you do not allow public play, if you open your facility to the public for weddings, receptions, spectators or other events, it in essence becomes a public entity at those times and is covered.

## 2. What part of the facility is covered?

All parts of the facility, including the clubhouse and golf course, are covered. Rules governing the accessibility of the clubhouse are found in the Americans with Disabilities Act Access Guidelines (ADA/ABA). The final guidelines issued by the Access Board for recreational facilities include guidelines for golf courses, such as the number of accessible tee boxes, accessible golf car passage, greens access and dimensions for weather shelters on the course. The following references provide the details on these guidelines:

<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/guides> and  
<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/Guidance2010ADAstandards.htm>

( Search - 1006 Golf Facilities)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **3. May I ask a golfer who requests accommodation under the ADA if he/she has a disability that is covered by the ADA?**

You can not single out golfers with disabilities for this question. However, you may ask all golfers if they have need for a modification or accommodation to enjoy golf because of a disability. It is discriminatory to single out one golfer for that question. In this discussion you should not ask the golfer to tell you what the disability is. You only need to know that he/she have a disability. A golfer's disability may not be apparent visually. You should take the person's word for it. Some facilities have information posted in the pro shop that explains the ADA and the definition of a covered disability.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 4. What rights do people with disabilities have?

The concepts are clear in the ADA: people with disabilities are entitled to the same treatment as people without disabilities. But how does that translate to the daily routine of a golf course? Here are some brief examples of how a golf course can make reasonable accommodations for customers with disabilities. If a golfer with a disability wishes to bring his or her own golf car to the golf course and use it on the course, let the person do so subject to your observation of the use of the car . Your observation should be intended only to assure that the car will cause no more damage to the course than cars you provide. In addition, you may be able to regulate whether the car is battery or gasoline powered. This allows a golfer with a disability who may be a frequent customer at your course to purchase his/her own car for use. Many courses prohibit golf cars from going into certain areas, like the front parking lot, or along a route used heavily by automobiles for insurance reasons. But some golfers may need special consideration.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 4. What rights do people with disabilities have? (continued)

For example, a golfer with a disability may need to transfer from his/her wheelchair into a golf car or single rider or adapted car. In these cases, he/she would need to leave his/her wheelchair in their vehicle. Others with crutches, walkers, etc. would be aided by not having to go from the parking lot to the bag drop or pro shop carrying their clubs. There are also devices that require attachment to the golf car and can only be accomplished in the parking lot. Bend your rules and allow that golfer to have a golf car out in the parking lot. In fact, if necessary, have a member of your staff take the golf car out to the lot. The golfer in a wheelchair can't drive the golf car and his/her wheelchair at the same time. Course management wants every golfer to come into the pro shop. Those sleeves of balls, shirts, hats, gift certificates, lessons and clubs add up.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 4. What rights do people with disabilities have? (continued)

Welcome golfers with disabilities into your pro shop. If your counter in your existing pro shop is higher than 36", come around the counter to conduct business. Better yet, reduce the height of a portion of your counter to 36". This nominal cost sends a clear message that you understand some elements of accessibility and are complying where you can. That will translate into return customers. Also, check the width of your aisles to ensure that the golfer can get to the counter. They should be a minimum of 36" wide. These are options when dealing with an existing clubhouse. All newly constructed clubhouses would need to comply with the Guidelines.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 5. What “rights” does management have?

As always, the operator has the right to run his or her operation and make a fair and reasonable profit. Management makes the determination to restrict cars to paths or allow no cars if weather or agronomic conditions dictate. Management has no right to treat any individual with a disability in any way differently than another paying golfer. In the event of any litigation, the burden of proof will fall to management to justify his or her action. It is suggested that the owner or operator refer to the resources listed in this tool kit.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 6. When do I have to have everything done?

All areas of your operation should already be accessible and meet the accessibility standards built after 1992. The ADA became effective in 1990. If there are elements of your facility not in compliance, planning to make them accessible should begin as soon as possible. The requirements for golf courses covered by Title III (privately owned courses) states that “barriers” be removed when it is “readily achievable.” Readily achievable is defined as “easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.” Just use common sense to make decisions about making your course accessible. A strong, good faith effort towards compliance goes a long way in your defense.

A golf course owned or operated by a unit of state or local government, such as a municipal park and recreation department or a course at a state university, is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Title II requirements for existing courses are that courses shall make changes to the course or the facility when such changes are necessary to make the program (of golf) accessible. This “program access” test is different than ready achievability and requires more effort by state and local governments.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**7. My facility is more than 20 years old and making it accessible will cost too much.**

**Can the work be scheduled on a staggered basis? What are my options?**

Clubhouse facilities and other non-playing surfaces are already addressed under the original ADAAG should be accessible if constructed after 1992. In terms of making the golf course itself accessible, the final regulations/standards may be located at the US Department of Justice website ([www.access-board.gov/ADA-ABA/final.cfm#recreation](http://www.access-board.gov/ADA-ABA/final.cfm#recreation)) 1006 Golf Facilities. Basically, as you renovate your course, you must make sure that accessibility is part of the plan. There are many architects and golf course builders who have expertise in the ADA and in making golf courses accessible. They will help ensure that you are in compliance. Removing barriers to golfers with disabilities' capacity to enjoy and participate in the game is the key.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 8. If it isn't obvious, how can I tell someone has a disability?

In many cases you may not be able to tell if a person has a disability. There are hundreds of disabilities that are invisible that are covered by the ADA. The ADA defines a person with a disability as someone with a condition or disorder that has a substantial affect on one or more major life functions such as walking, hearing, seeing, etc. Temporary conditions are generally excluded, but a severe, long-lasting injury could meet the test. The preferred approach is to assume that those who identify themselves as having a disability should be accommodated.

Every operation should have a policy or policies that outline the requirements to be eligible for reasonable modifications on the golf course. There may be situations that will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **9. How often should I train my staff on the requirements of the ADA and accessibility of the course?**

As a golf course owner or operator, you should review your policies and the success of their implementation annually. Because of the turnover in frontline employees, training on the ADA and accessibility should be included in all new employee orientation and then a refresher training held for all staff at least once a year and/or during times of high staff turnover.

## **10. Are there any tax credits available as I make my business accessible?**

The ADA provides for a tax credit (Title III) outlining amounts that may be provided in making an existing facility accessible. See the ADA tax incentive information at [www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm](http://www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm)

# Frequently Asked Questions

**11. We have a telephone automated tee time system. Am I required to make it accessible for people who are deaf or hard of hearing?**

Whether you use a TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf) or an automated system, someone who is hearing impaired must be able to make a reservation. If a golfer identifies him/ herself as deaf when checking in, please insure someone from your staff, or one of his playing partners, lets him/her know when his time is called. Phone systems in every state also have the relay system, where a caller who is deaf can use a third-party to make calls. Course staff should be aware of the relay system for outgoing and incoming calls.

**12. I had a golfer with a disability come in with a friend. The golfer was from Brazil. Does the ADA apply to people from other countries?**

All customers count. The law of the land covers all individuals, with or without disabilities, while they are visiting.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 13. All of my teeing areas have 8” curbing. Do I have to tear it out?

The final rule on golf course accessibility requires that one or more teeing grounds on each hole be made accessible, i.e., ability to get a golf car onto the teeing ground. If there are barriers that prohibit access, then they should be removed – or altered to provide a golf car passage.

Study your course. Are there artificial barriers that won't permit access to a tee or green such as roping or signage? You should work toward the goal of making it possible for all golfers to have access to the course. It might not be necessary to tear out all curbing. You might be able to cut an opening in the curb to allow access to the tee or fairway or build a ramp over the barrier.

# Frequently Asked Questions

- 14. Our policy is everyone has to rent a golf car, whether they use it or not. If a blind person brings a “coach”, do I have to give him a car for free?**

So long as you are consistent in your policies toward all customers, you won't violate the ADA. If the 'coach' is not playing golf, then you cannot charge him for driving the car. However, they don't necessarily need a separate car since they most likely will be driving the car for the blind golfer.

- 15. Other players have asked not to play with a golfer with a disability. What do I do?**

You should not honor such requests. How would you reply if it were a preference not to play with a woman, or a Hispanic or an African American? Honoring such a request is discriminatory.

- 16. My course has a lot of water on it and I am afraid a golfer with a disability may drive their cart into the lake.**

Anyone who is careless while driving a golf car can run into a water hazard— whether they have a disability or not. All golf car drivers are responsible for driving safely and responsibly. As stated before, you cannot discriminate against people with disabilities and you can't develop policies based on stereotypes or perceptions.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**17. I closed the course to all but walkers. Someone with a disability showed up, saw the mowers were let out and then demanded a modification.**

This situation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The answer does not depend on whether or not mowing equipment is out. An owner is within his/her rights to deny modification if it will negatively impact the course. If the course is closed to cars as a result of an agronomic decision such as overseeding, weather, etc., you are within your rights as a business owner. Train your staff to include consideration of the type of modification that is being requested (i.e., what if any type of adaptive device is being used) before denying access to the course. Remember, there are some people who can **ONLY** play from a mobility device, it is their sole means of mobility, so it is important that in such cases that you at least consider exceptions.

# Frequently Asked Questions

- 18. Our policy is to allow anyone who needs to, to drive the golf car as close as 30 feet from the fringe. A customer with a disability demands to drive closer and I have even heard of some driving onto the green. Do I have to allow a golfer with a disability unlimited access with their car – including on to greens?**

This situation arises frequently. Golfers with disabilities need full access to the game, including the greens. The ADA requires you to make modifications necessary to not discriminate against people with disabilities. The only exception is if weather or agronomic conditions are such that a golf car on the green will cause irreparable damage and significant financial harm. Once again, the burden of proof lies with the golf course operator.

On the issue of golf cars on the greens, product development continues to develop “greens friendly” mobility devices. The PSI (pounds per square inch of pressure) of some of these single rider golf cars on the greens surface is often less than the human footprint and less than that applied by motorized mowing equipment. Include information in your golf car policy regarding the appropriate operation of a motorized car on the green. As stated above, the burden of proof, in case of complaint or litigation, will rest on the golf course owner to prove that allowing these mobility devices on greens surfaces will create an undo burden. It is important to be factual when you make this decision and not rely on perceptions or stereotypes.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **19. Sometimes when golfers without disabilities follow golfers with disabilities, they complain about the slow pace of play. What do I do?**

No player, regardless of disability should slow play. The impact on other players is unacceptable. However, don't focus on the golfers with disabilities to the exclusion of other groups. A golfer with a disability seems to automatically be the focus for charges of slow play when he/she is not the cause. If, in fact, an individual with a disability may be slowing down the field, perhaps some assistance or lessons might help,. Offer help in the same way you offer for others who slow play down.

Training of your marshals and rangers on sensitivity to this is key. Just as you don't want them always singling out women, juniors or senior citizens as the source of slow play, they should not automatically look to your customers with disabilities as the source of the issue. A good resource for this issue is the Etiquette Booklet, printed by the National Center on Accessibility. (<https://ncaonline.org/>)

# Frequently Asked Questions

**20. I believe golfers with disabilities would have a better experience at my course if they utilized the afternoon tee times. Can I encourage them to come to the course at those times?**

All of your customers appreciate knowing good times to play your course. However, it is discriminatory to restrict golfers with disabilities to certain times of the day. All players must have equal access

**21. Because my course is flat, more golfers with disabilities come here to play. How can I even things out and let the wear be the same?**

Controlling and minimizing wear on a golf course is an issue regardless of the demographics of your clientele. First, meet with your superintendent. Define the areas of wear. Generally, a change in roping direction or some other minor alteration will take care of the problem.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **22. I got a phone call yesterday asking about my golf car policy. Should I have one?**

Yes. You should have a written accessibility policy that not only spells out how and when golf cars are provided, but also welcomes the golfer with a disability. This should be visible so that golfers without disabilities and all golf course staff are fully aware of your policy. Your policy should state what the ADA requires and that all reasonable modifications to policies are made to allow people with disabilities to play.

For example: Green Acre Golf Course welcomes golfers with disabilities. The course will make reasonable modifications to ensure that golfers with disabilities are able to enjoy the course. See John Jones at the course for more information.

## **23. Am I required by law to provide accessible cars at my golf course?**

It is best practice to insure that golfers who play the game from a seated position be accommodated. Some golf courses have purchased one or more accessible cars, others have pooled cars and others have worked directly with the golfer who requires this accommodation in determining what will work best for him or her.

# Frequently Asked Questions

- 24. My fellow owners and operators don't see any golfers with disabilities at their courses and don't think there is a problem. Why should I be the first to do something?**

The number of outreach programs introducing people with disabilities to the game of golf is increasing. Also, as the population continues to age, many of your regular customers may begin to require some types of accommodation. By the year 2020, one in every four persons will be 65 years of age or older. Many of these individuals will also have a disability. It is good for business to plan now for the future.

- 25. It seems to me that a good strategy is to wait until somebody complains, then address the problem.**

Waiting until someone complains is not a good strategy. In addition to the potential negative publicity, think of all the revenue you may have lost by not addressing the needs of these golfers. Further, if you wait and lose in a court of law or administrative decision, you may also incur the costs of an attorney and maybe the costs of the complainant's attorney.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **26. Do I have to have special clubs for rent for golfers with disabilities?**

No. You are not required to have special clubs available for rent.

## **27. I need to restrict golfers with disabilities to certain holes because my course is very hilly. Will this policy put me in violation of the ADA?**

The question of course safety and where it is appropriate for a golfer to take a golf car is the decision of the golf car driver. If there are specific and unique circumstances that concern you, please let the golfer with a disability know before his round. However, you must make your decisions on where golf cars may go applicable to ALL golfers, not just those with disabilities. You may ban all golf cars from certain holes, but not just cars used by golfers with disabilities.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **28. I know it's the right thing to do and good for the game and business, but how do I get more golfers with disabilities to my course?**

Without knowledge about your course, golfers won't come. The same rule applies to golfers with disabilities. If they don't know about your course, they won't come and you will miss out on that market segment. There are numerous opportunities for golf course marketing to people with disabilities. Golfers with disabilities come in all shapes and sizes, and just like other golfers, with varying skills and varying degrees of readiness to golf.

There are as many as 6,000 municipal park and recreation departments throughout the country. All provide recreation opportunities for adults and children with disabilities, and many employ Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists. These departments employ specialists who are skilled in recreation program planning and have knowledge of various disabilities. A phone call, a meeting, and an invitation for the parks and recreation agency to use your course and your staff for scheduled golf programs, lessons, leagues, tournaments and clinics for people with disabilities is a great start.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**28. I know it's the right thing to do and good for the game and business, but how do I get more golfers with disabilities to my course?  
(continued)**

Some people with disabilities learn or relearn golf after an injury resulting in disability. Hospitals and rehabilitation centers employ Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists, occupational therapists and physical therapists, all of whom have the opportunity to use golf as a rehabilitation tool. These professionals will welcome an approach from a golf course regarding clinics, outings, and lessons for patients from the hospital or rehabilitation facility. To contact these professionals, call your local hospital and ask for the recreation therapy department, occupational therapy department or physical therapy department. Additionally, more PGA and LPGA golf professionals are learning to teach people with disabilities to play golf and are willing to assist. Check with your local PGA Section for the names of these professionals.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **29. Do I have to change my pricing policy?**

It is not necessary to change any policy except to increase accessibility. The key is that all policies must apply equally to all people.

## **30. Most of my revenue comes from golf car rentals. Can I charge a trail fee if someone brings an accessible golf car to my course?**

It depends on what your trail fee policy is for non-disabled golfers. They should be the same. If a trail fee is charged for a golfer without a disability, the same fee can be charged for a golfer who brings a accessible car he or she owns.

If you offer accessible cars and someone wants to use his/her own accessible car, then you may charge a trail fee; as you would for another golfer who brings his or her own golf car.

If your course is walking only, the person with a mobility disability does not have the option to walk so you must make an accommodation to allow the golf car or without charging a fee.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 31. How many accessible parking spaces am I required to have?

The number of parking spaces required to be accessible to people with disabilities is found in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and can be found at [www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards.pdf). These rules, which became effective in 1992 and updated in 2010 state that you must have at least one accessible parking place per 25 total spaces. Where only one accessible space is provided, it must be an accessible van space. The rules also state that parking spaces should be placed closest to the area/facility being accessed. Therefore, it is also important to consider the placement of those accessible spaces. They should be located where they provide the best access to your facility for golfers with disabilities. For example, near the bag drop and clubhouse entrance. Be sure to check local and state requirements that may exceed federal ADA requirements.

## 32. Do I also have to provide parking that is accessible to vans?

These rules are also found in the [ADAAG](#) – one van accessible space is required for every eight spaces that are required to be accessible. Be sure the spaces are cleared for the van user and do not have inappropriate devices such as dumpsters, etc. that would not permit a van to be opened. Additionally, check local and state requirements, which may exceed ADAAG requirements for accessibility.

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**33. I don't allow golf cars in my parking lot. Am I required to allow a playing partner to bring a golf car to the parking lot to assist the golfer with disabilities?**

Some facilities do not allow golf cars in the parking lot for insurance purposes. This may put a burden on the player with a disability in getting to your course. Please examine your procedures, and if golf cars cannot be allowed on your lot, perhaps a golf car attendant can pick up the individual with a disability and his/her equipment in the parking lot. The issue is customer service – making this accommodation will ensure that the customer with a disability has a good experience at your course.

**34. What accommodations have to be made in the clubhouse?**

These are found in the [ADAAG](#).

**35. I contract out my food and beverage operations to another entity. What are my responsibilities in this scenario?**

The ADA applies to all facilities and services – including those operated under contract. If there is a potential problem, corrective action should be taken to insure that people with disabilities have access to all amenities associated with your golf operation.

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## **36. How wide do the aisles in my retail shop need to be?**

The accessibility guidelines require aisle space in a retail environment to be at least 36 inches wide. In some cases where turning is required, additional space will be needed. These ADAAG Guidelines are available on the DOJ website (<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards.pdf>) . You should be aware of the guidelines, and always remember to make it easy for any customer, with or without a disability to spend money.

## **37. *Our dressing room is unisex. Is this acceptable?***

Yes. However, it should be wheelchair accessible. Where male and female dressing rooms are provided, they must also be accessible.

## **38. If my golf shop cash register and counter are too high to meet accessibility guidelines, do I have to get a new one?**

Yes, unless it was built before 1992 and not renovated or significantly altered. In such cases it still needs to meet accessibility standards unless it is not readily achievable. In those cases, staff should have specific training on providing good customer service that will serve as effectively and completely as everyone else. So, as an example, your employees would need to be trained to come out from behind the counter to assist the customer with a disability if an existing counter is too high.

Thank you for your interest in access and inclusion in the game of Golf.

Please contact the

*National Alliance for Accessible Golf*

if you have any additional questions or need assistance.

[info@accessgolf.org](mailto:info@accessgolf.org)

561-709-8002



# For More Information

**Contact the National Alliance for Accessible Golf**

E-mail: [info@accessgolf.org](mailto:info@accessgolf.org)

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**Accessible Golf**