

Big Canoe GC Local Rules

Revised October 13, 2025

1. **Rules Of Play:** Play is governed by the **current USGA Rules of Golf**. Unless otherwise specified, any breach of a rule is the general penalty in stroke play and loss of hole in match play.
2. **Relief for Abnormal Course Conditions - Rule 16**
 - **Animal Hoof, Paw, or Footprint Damage:** [MLR 8F-13](#)
 - Damage caused by Animal hoof, paw, or footprint damage, for example, by deer or dogs, is ground under repair, from which free relief is allowed under Rule 16.1. Rule 16.1 does not apply to the Putting Green as such damage may be repaired under Rule 13.1. This rule does not apply to human tracks or to balls in a Penalty Area.
 - **Preferred Lies (Lift Clean & Place), also known as Winter Rules** [MLR 8E-3](#)
 - **Effective: November-March (winter rules), regardless of course conditions. Also, in effect, at any time when the entire course or a full 9 holes is Cart Path Only throughout the year.**
 - When the ball lies in the General Area **on grass cut to fairway height or first cut of rough**, the player may take free relief by placing the original ball or another ball within one club length of the original ball, not nearer the hole and in the same condition. A ball in the fairway must be placed back in the fairway. A ball in the rough must be placed back in the rough. You must use your hand to place the ball. There is no need to mark the ball before lifting it. Preferred Lies may not be taken in Penalty Areas, Bunkers, pine straw, mulch, or wooded areas.
 - **Sodded areas and newly seeded grass are considered no-play zones –** [MLR F-7](#)
 - Free relief is available from sodded grass with visible seams, newly seeded grass, or mesh netting holding down such areas. These areas are considered a No Play Zone even if not marked. If your ball rests within or your stance is on such areas, you **MUST** take full relief at the Nearest Point of Complete Relief. The relief area is 1 club-length, no closer to the hole, and in the General Area. **Note:** if a ball is in the No Play Zone within a Penalty Area, it **must not** be played as it lies, and Penalty Area relief per rule 17.1d relief must be used.
 - **Leaf Rule –** [MLR F-14](#)
 - Effective: November thru January
 - Relief is granted only on the hole being played and is restricted to the following areas that have a temporary accumulation of leaves:
 - Routinely cut and regularly maintained grass or in a bunker.
 - The definition of routinely cut and regularly maintained grass is grass that is mowed multiple times throughout the year.
 - If the ball is lost in leaves in a bunker, relief must be made in the same bunker. For balls lost in leaves in these areas, determine where the ball is estimated to have come to rest in the leaves and if all players (that had a view) agree that the ball came to rest within a 2 club-length circle and then drop within 1 club-length of that spot, no closer to the hole. You may clear away any leaves in this relief area.
 - No Relief under this rule is allowed if a ball is in a Red Penalty Area (RPA), though you may remove leaves as loose impediments in the RPA. For a ball in the RPA not found due to leaves, you must take relief under the options of 17.1d for a ball in an RPA.
 - **Aeration Holes –** [MLR E-4](#)
 - If a player's ball lies in or touches an aeration hole:
 - **The Ball is in the General Area:** The player may take relief by dropping the ball within 1 club length of the reference point, no closer to the hole and in the General Area. If the ball rests in another aeration hole, the player may take relief again under this Local Rule.
 - **The Ball is on the Putting Green:** The player may take relief by placing the ball at the nearest point of complete relief where the ball does not rest on a hole.
 - Interference does not exist if the aeration hole(s) only interfere with the player's stance or, on the Putting Green, on the player's line of play.
 - **Additional relief options for penalty areas along certain cart paths:**
Red Arrows or Dashes on cart paths are found on the following cart path locations:

Creek 2	left side
Choctaw 3, 8	left side
Cherokee 2, 3, 8	right side

Red arrows or dashes painted along the cart paths of the above holes physically define the Penalty Areas but are not on the cart path. These arrows or dashes represent a continuous line from arrow to arrow or dash to

dash. While the arrows or dashes themselves are physically painted on the cart path, the line itself is off the cart path on the PA side, and the cart path itself is outside the Penalty Area. You may take normal Red PA relief under Rule 17.1d with 1 Penalty Stroke. In most cases, when taking this relief, you will measure 2 club lengths and have the cart path interfere. As an extra relief option, the nearest point of complete relief will be on the fairway side of the cart path. Go to the fairway side, drop at the Nearest Point of Complete Relief within one club length and not nearer the hole. Add 1 Penalty Stroke for taking Red Penalty Area relief. If a Drop Zone is available, you may use that as an additional option.

3. Alternative to Stroke and Distance for a ball that is Lost or Out of Bounds – [MLR E-5](#)

Effective: For general or daily league play only and not for club tournaments. If you are playing with a group or in an event, check with the organizer to determine if this Local Rule is in use. This Local Rule **CANNOT** be used for an unplayable ball or for a ball that is known or virtually certain * to be in a penalty area. If a provisional ball is played, then the provisional ball must be used. When a player's ball has not been found (lost) or is known or virtually certain to be out of bounds, the player may take relief by dropping the original ball or another ball in the relief area described as follows for two penalty strokes: the relief area is a wide arc between the point where the ball is estimated to have come to rest on the course for a lost ball or the point it crossed the course boundary for a ball OB, then 2 club lengths into the edge of the fairway of the hole being played, not nearer the hole. 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.

4. Cooling fans (Temporary Immovable Obstructions - TIO) – [MLR F-23](#)

You may take free relief for both physical and line of sight interference per USGA Rules of Golf, Model Local Rule, F-23. The reference point is the **Nearest Point of Complete Relief**, where both physical and line of sight interference no longer exist, within one club length, not nearer the hole, and in the **General Area**. This does not include bunkers or penalty areas.

5. Immovable Obstructions – [Rule 16.1](#)

The following are considered immovable obstructions. Free relief may be taken at the Nearest Point of Complete Relief (NPCR) within one club length, not nearer the hole, and in the General Area (not including the Putting Green).

- Paved or artificially lined (mulch) cart paths and yardage markers.
- Man-made stone-lined drainage ditches and catchment areas, whether dry or wet.
- The player also has these extra options to take relief when such immovable obstructions are close to the Putting Green and on the line of play; these include valve boxes and sprinkler heads:

Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b if an immovable obstruction is:

- On the line of play, and is:
 - o Within two club lengths of the putting Green, and
 - o Within two club lengths of the ball.

Exception – No Relief If Line of Play Clearly Unreasonable. There is no relief under this Local Rule if the player chooses a line of play that is clearly unreasonable.

6. The walls on the left side of Cherokee 2 & 4, and Creek 9 greens are outside the Red Penalty area (PA) and are in the General Area (GA).

The walls are **not** defined as Integral Objects. If Red PA stakes are present along these walls, they designate that the Red PA is along the outside face side of the wall facing the PA with all its curvatures and do not define the PA.

- **Penalty Area Relief options under rule 17.1d.:** If a ball enters the Red PA on Choctaw 3, Cherokee 2, or Creek 9 along their stone retaining wall next to the putting green, your relief options are:
 - a. Lateral Red PA relief option is 2 clublengths from the face side of the wall, no closer to the hole, anywhere on the course, including on Putting Green from its last point of entry. Relief cannot be in the same Penalty Area.
 - b. Stroke & Distance
 - c. Back on The Line relief

7. Wood Chips, Mulch, And Pine Straw:

Play the ball as it lies.

Exception: mulch is an artificial substance when explicitly used to create a road or path, and the ball is not in a Penalty Area. Free Abnormal Course Condition (ACC) relief is allowed when your ball lies in or on such a surface, and it is a path extension to the Putting Green from a cart path or a path to a teeing ground.

8. Dropping Zones – [MLR 8-E1](#)

They are identified by white stakes with 2 black stripes on top or by a placard and a White circle if painted.

Drop zones may be used as an additional Rule 17.1 relief option for balls entering the Red Penalty Areas on:

Creek – 1, 3, 5

Choctaw - 9

Cherokee – 3

If a white circle is present defining the DZ, drop within it; otherwise, drop the ball within a 1-club-length circle around the white and black striped stake. You may remove the stake to make your stroke. The size and shape may vary if the grass is cut to fairway height next to the stake, but you must drop within this closely cut area.

Cherokee – 9 A Dropping Zone is available at the bottom of the hill near the front of the green. This DZ may be used as an additional option under rule 17.1d however it **cannot be used if a ball hit from the tee** enters the Penalty Area, only for subsequent shots off the tee.

RULES COMMITTEE: The current Big Canoe Professional Golf Staff

***Definitions: Virtual Certainty:** Although there is a very small degree of doubt, all reasonably available information shows that it is at least 95% likely that the event in question happened.