



PGA
Illinois Section



GREATER CHICAGO CHAPTER
CLUB MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



March 20, 2020

Governor J.B. Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

On behalf of the golf industry in Illinois and the more than 600 golf courses in our state we stand ready to do our part as local communities, states and the nation continue to respond to the recent Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19). We recognize the difficult task the Governor's Office has in simultaneously keeping the economy going and keeping our citizens safe.

As your Office continues to respond to the evolving situation with the Executive Order, we understand that mandatory closures of gathering places (such as restaurants, bars, gyms, etc.) is among the preventative measure's businesses will need to take. We will certainly play our part, but we also want to share the unique nature of the golf course business.

The clubhouse, golf shop and/or restaurant operation is a small part of the overall footprint of a golf course. We believe the field of play, which typically represents over 200 acres of open space land, should be treated differently. The opportunity for socially distant recreation on a golf course is much like taking a walk through one of our wonderful State Parks or Prairie paths. Golf course operators all over the country have been taking extra precautions to ensure playing golf is a safe experience that complies with all health advisories and recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control. Golf facilities are adjusting their food and beverage operations to comply with all mandated restrictions, such as limiting all business to take-out food service.

We fully understand your Executive Order to close businesses around the State to avoid the gathering of people and the interaction with surfaces. As it relates to golf courses, we respectfully point you to the States of New York and California, where Governor Cuomo and Governor Newsome issued an Executive Orders, but allowed golf courses to keep the fields of play open. In that light, we ask that you similarly classify golf courses as open outdoor recreation areas (section 5c, For outdoor activity) and because the turfgrass needs to be maintained, that would be allowed as part of the Minimum Basic Operations. With the minimum amount of maintenance, golf courses may lose their playing surfaces and close permanently.

Thank you for your leadership during these challenging times, Governor Pritzker. We wish you the very best as you exercise judgment and wisdom to both protect and advance our communities.

Respectfully,

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents
Illinois Section of PGA of America
Greater Chicago Chapter, Club Management Association of America
Chicago District Golf Association