

## **GAO Handicapping and Course Rating Policies and Procedures - 2016**

1. The Golf Association of Ontario shall establish a Provincial Handicap and Course Rating Committee in accordance with the Terms of Reference established by the Board of Directors. Membership shall include, but not limited to volunteers, who are certificated experienced course raters, handicap officials, Board members, and members of staff.
2. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the President. The Chair in conjunction with the President will appoint members of the Committee for a one-year term. The Committee shall have the power to fix its quorum, which shall be no less than a majority of the members.
3. The Committee will attend to the annual priorities established by the Board. All other initiatives, and endeavors identified by the Committee, shall be approved by the Board. The Committee will also assist in the implementation of Golf Canada mandates.
4. The GAO should establish course rating team(s) in every District. Training sessions shall be held, as needed, for the purpose of handicap certification, for upgrading and updating, and for training new course raters. All raters shall attend at least one GAO workshop. A team leader shall have attended at least one USGA/Golf Canada Course Rating training seminar. Some training may be District based, needed when a team disbands or retires, or when seminars and summits are organized. The team leader is an integral part of the training process. She/he will assist in recruiting, training and upgrading the team and in selecting and training a potential team leader to replace her/him when she/he retires.
5. The GAO Handicap and Course Rating Department will ensure that a club is in "good standing" before assigning it to a team leader. Each course rating team should rate courses for both MEN and WOMEN within their District and will only rate courses in another District when assigned by the Handicap and Course Rating Department of GAO. The raw data collected is the sole property of GAO and will be shared only with the team leader of the host District through the GAO office.
6. A new golf course may not be rated until its application for membership in the GAO/Golf Canada has been approved. GAO will, at this stage, advise the team leader to organize a rating as soon as possible.
7. When a club resigns from membership in the GAO, its course rating becomes invalid and the club is no longer permitted to use it, as well as the Golf Canada Handicap System, and the Golf Canada/GAO logos or markings.

8. New courses will be re-rated in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, and thereafter every ten (10) years of their existence. Established courses will be rated on a seven (7) to ten (10) year rotation, unless the a course has made significant changes to the course, and GAO deems it necessary to re-rate.

9. All ratings must comply with Section 10, "Rating Procedures", of the USGA Manual. A course must be accurately measured, and discrepancies reported to the club and GAO. The rating team shall consist of at least three (3) raters (both genders where possible). Although all members of the team will have input into the rating process, the team leader will be responsible for the final rating.

10. All course raters will be provided with their own up-to-date copies of the USGA Men's and Women's Course Rating Guides and Manuals. The team leader is responsible for all the rating equipment and will retrieve these items from raters when they retire.

11. Under the contract agreement with the USGA/Golf Canada, the Course Rating Review Committee must review all ratings, before the results are released to the club. Any discrepancies must be discussed with the team leader before any changes are made to the rating, and officially released to the club. If a club still challenges the rating, after a review and/or re-rating has been conducted, the item may be referred to the GAO Handicap and Course Rating Committee for review and analysis and a final response. An authorized official of the club must make a written request for this comprehensive review.

12. Mileage and expenses are to be forwarded to the GAO office monthly for reimbursement as per the GAO Volunteer Expense Policy.