



## 2026 Open Qualifying – Key Changes

### **Hard Card**

- New MLR added which allows for free relief for an embedded ball in any player’s pitch-mark in the general area in an area cut to fairway height or less.
- New MLR which reduces the penalty for a ball at rest moved when the player is unaware, before the stroke is made, that the ball might have moved.

*More information on these Model Local Rules can be found in the January 1, 2026, Rules of Golf Clarifications update on [www.usga.org](http://www.usga.org).*

### **Preferred Lies Policy**

- Relief area for preferred lies now one scorecard length.

*Reference 2026 PGA TOUR Preferred Lies Card for more information.*

### **Distance-Measuring Device Policy**

- Traditional “rangefinder-style” instrument, used optically for measuring distance, should be used.
- Other distance-measuring devices such as wearables, watches, mobile devices, tablets or any applications are not permitted.
- Player or caddies who do not comply with this Term of the Competition are subject to disqualification under Rule 1.2.

*Reference Limitations on Distance-Measuring Devices document and Mobile Device Allowed and Not Allowed document for more information.*