



2026 MSGA Tournament & Event Changes

As we look toward the beginning of the 2026 season, players can expect to see the following changes made to the following Maryland State Golf Association events.

Championships

Women's State Team Format

A pod format for Women's State Team Matches will be introduced. Each pod will consist of four teams, grouped by total team handicap. Within each pod, Seed 1 will play Seed 4 and Seed 2 will play Seed 3 in the first round with the winners meeting to determine the pod champion. The pod featuring the top four overall teams will service as the Championship Pod, where teams will compete for the Women's State Team Championship title.

Mid-Amateur Entry Process

Due to the increase in entries over the last few seasons, the Maryland Mid-Amateur will now use the following Preferred Entry method to fill the field:

- Players who have a handicap index of 2.0 or better as of their registration date will be approved instantly. Players with an index of 2.1 to 7.1 will be placed on a pending list. The remainder of the field will be filled by players on the pending list beginning **10 days** prior to the closer of entries. Players will then be approved by their entry date. Upon registration, all players will need to have three (3) verifiable tournament results that have occurred in the past two (2) years.

Senior Amateur Entry Process & Championship

Due to the increase in entries over the last few seasons, the Maryland Senior Amateur will now use the following Preferred Entry method to fill the field:

- Players who have a handicap index of 4.0 or better as of their registration date will be approved instantly. Players with an index of 4.1 to 7.1 will be placed on a pending list. The remainder of the field will be filled by players on the pending list beginning **10 days** prior to the closer of entries. Players will then be approved by their entry date.
- The maximum handicap index has been lowered to 7.1.
- The cut for each division will increase to 50% of each respective field.
- Entry fee is now \$200

Senior Open Entry Process & Championship

Due to the increase in entries over the last few seasons, the Maryland Senior Open will now use the following Preferred Entry method to fill the Amateur portion of the field:

- Amateurs who have a handicap index of 4.0 or better as of their registration date will be approved instantly. Players with an index of 4.1 to 7.1 will be placed on a pending list. The remainder of the field will be filled by players on the pending list beginning **10 days** prior to the closer of entries. Players will then be approved by their entry date.
- The maximum handicap index has been lowered to 7.1.
- Past Champions within the last 10 years will also be automatically approved.

Women's Amateur

The championship will be a **walking only** event.



DC Amateur / Maryland Amateur & Open Exemption

The champion of the DC Amateur will receive an exemption into both the Maryland Amateur and Open provided they meet the tournament eligibility guidelines.

Policies

Reinstated Amateurs / Past Maryland Amateur & Open Champions

A player who has turned professional and is later reinstated as an Amateur will have their exemption status restored. Any time spent as a professional will still count toward their accumulated years.

Entry Priority for Past Champions

Each championship will have a spot reserved for the previous year's champion in the Championship Division. Players must enter before the entry deadline otherwise the spot will be forfeited.

Loss of Exemption

A player who is exempt from local qualifying, at the time of entry, may elect to forgo the exemption, pay the qualifying fee, and compete in a pre-qualifying qualifier. The election to waive the exemption is irreversible.

Professionals in Good Standing for State Opens

State Opens are open to professionals who are Middle Atlantic PGA Members or registered Associates who are in good standing, as of the entry deadline, qualifying (if necessary), and tournament date; employed by MSGA member clubs; or residents of Maryland that have an active GHIN at a green-grass facility.