

# USBGA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Revision April 1, 2023

This document will deal with the day-to-day operations of the United States Blind Golf Association (USBGA), including tournament play.

## I. USBGA MEMBERSHIP:

### A. MEMBERSHIP:

1. **MEMBERS:** Members shall be classified hereinafter. Members shall have the privileges and obligations as set forth in these Policies and Procedures and By-Laws.

**Gender Policy:** The USBGA will employ the policies of the LPGA and PGA as it relates to transgender athletes to provide the athletes an avenue to membership, an opportunity to participate in our events and in an effort to assure fair competition for all members and participants. Reference PGA of America Championship Gender Policy and the LPGA Gender Policy. If applicable, applicants will identify themselves during the USBGA membership application process.

- a. **FULL MEMBERS** must meet the specific qualifications of their membership classification and must be permanent residents of the United States.
- b. The acceptance of membership into the USBGA shall bind each Member to uphold all the provisions of the Charter, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures and other rules of the USBGA and to accept the decisions of the Board of Directors (Board) acting within provisions of the By-Laws.
- c. **Exception: ASSOCIATE PLAYER MEMBERSHIP:** Players from Central America and other Regional North American Countries that do not have sufficient players to form their own Member Association through the IBGA or a DCP who's main residence is not the United States, may apply for an Associate Player Membership to the USBGA.
  - a. Associate Player Members meet the specific qualifications of their membership classification and are responsible for paying yearly USBGA membership dues. They may play in any tournament offered through the USBGA and are responsible for paying all associated tournament fees. **Note:** Associate Player Members may not vote in elections, run for office or serve on committees.
- d. **Exception: DUAL CITIZENSHIP PLAYERS (DCP)** Players who have Dual US Citizenship and wish to apply for **Full** Membership with the USBGA will have to declare the USA as their "Home" Country and live in the United States for six (6) or more months a year. **Exception:** Dual Citizen Players who were granted DCP status prior to August 2022 are grandfathered in for the six-month residency requirement. The remaining requirements are still applicable to all DCP's.

- a. The DCP will have to declare their “Home Country” status by November 15th each year for the next calendar year.
- b. The “Home Country” is responsible for submitting the DCP’s scores to the USBGA Handicap Chair / IBGA for establishing and maintaining their handicap.
- c. If a DCP fails to comply with any of the conditions detailed here they cannot apply for Full Membership and may apply for an Associate Player Membership (ref I.A.1.c Exception above).
- d. The DCP may **NOT** serve on the “Board” of their “Non-Declared Home Country.” In doing so, the DCP will forfeit their Full USBGA Membership rights.
- e. If a DCP applies for membership to the USBGA, lives in the United States for 6 months or more a year, **declares** the United States as their “Home Country” and does not serve on the Board or hold elected office in their Non-Declared Home Country, they may apply for a Full Membership to the USBGA and may vote in elections, run for office and serve on committees provided they are in good standing with current membership dues and tournament fees.

2. **MEMBERSHIP REVIEW COMMITTEE (MRC):** The Committee Chair reviews all new applications for membership into the USBGA. The MRC Committee is made up of the Membership Chair, President, Vice President. The Membership Chair shall review and recommend each new application for membership and forward their recommendations to the MRC Committee for evaluation. Once approved, the Membership Chair will forward the recommendation to the Board and a majority vote of the Board will determine if the new applicant is accepted or rejected as a member of the USBGA.

3. **RECONSIDERATION:** If an applicant is denied membership into the USBGA, said applicant will have an opportunity to notify the Board in writing either by E-mail or regular mail sent to the President. The E-mail must be received or the letter postmarked no later than fifteen (15) days after the rejection notification is received. In addition to the request for reconsideration, the applicant will include any information he/she feels is necessary for the Board to take into consideration prior to a second and final vote regarding membership into the USBGA.

B. **CLASSIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP:** Upon approval by the Board for membership and payment of applicable membership contributions and/or dues, each Member shall be listed on the Membership Roster which will specify the membership classification of the Member.

1. **FULL USBGA MEMBER:** Full USBGA membership is offered to any individual who plays golf and meets the requirements of the B1, B2 or B3 sight classifications set forth by the International Blind Golf Association (IBGA). This must be certified by a Board-Certified Optometrist or Ophthalmologist. Full USBGA Members pay an annual membership contribution as established by the Board. Full USBGA Members have VOTING privileges and may run for a position on the Board.

2. **SUPPORT MEMBER:** Support membership is offered to anyone who wishes to assist and support the goals of the USBGA by any means, financial or otherwise. Support Members pay annual support member dues as established by the Board. Support Members are NON-VOTING members but may serve on committees or be appointed to the offices of Treasurer and Secretary at the discretion of the Board.

3. **OTHER MEMBERSHIPS:** This classification includes those memberships which do not readily fall into other categories of membership (i.e., Honorary, Inactive and Unqualified USBGA Members). The Board is authorized to establish other categories and classifications of memberships from time to time, as it shall deem advisable and in the best interest of the USBGA.
- a. **HONORARY:** Memberships whose duration and privileges are granted from time to time by the Board. Honorary memberships may be granted annually by the Board. Honorary Members are NON-VOTING members.
- b. **INACTIVE:** Inactive Members are those members who have not paid their annual dues and thus all privileges and participation in the USBGA are suspended. Inactive Members will remain on the Membership Roster for a two (2) year period and will be removed from this Roster list if their membership is not renewed. Note: At any time during the calendar year, Members may pay their membership dues and any late or overdue fees to have their full membership privileges restored.
- c. **UNQUALIFIED:** Unqualified Members are those members who have not attended and competed in a National Championship Tournament or a USBGA Sanctioned Tournament within a two (2) year period of their last tournament played. Unqualified Members must re-qualify to compete in the National Championship Tournament. Re-qualification must be accomplished in the same manner as Initial Qualification (see Paragraph VI.A.1).
1. **EXCEPTION FOR PREVIOUS USBGA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS:** A previous USBGA National Champion will not have to requalify for the upcoming USBGA National Championship. If the previous USBGA National Champion is not a USBGA Full Member, they will need to pay their annual membership dues/fees and appropriate tournament fees to participate.
2. **NEW IBGA SIGHT FORM REQUIREMENT:** Any previous USBGA National Champion or any other previous USBGA Member who has not been a Full Member for two (2) years or longer, will need to complete a new IBGA Sight Classification form to be eligible to participate in any USBGA or IBGA tournament.
- d. **ASSOCIATE PLAYER MEMBER:** Players from Central America and other Regional North American Countries that do not have sufficient players to form their own Member Association through the IBGA may apply for Associate Player Membership to the USBGA. They may play in all USBGA Sanctioned Tournaments but may not vote in elections, run for office or serve on committees.
- e. **DUAL CITIZENSHIP PLAYER:** Players who have Dual US Citizenship who wish to apply for membership to more than one IBGA Member Country will have to declare one Country as their "Home" Country and comply with all the conditions detailed in 1.A.1.d.

## **II. RESIGNATION, SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION:**

- A. **RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP:** A Member may resign by written notice to the USBGA President. The resignation will be effective the last day of the same month in which the resignation

notice is received. Upon resignation, the Member will be considered a Resigned Member and all privileges and participation in the USBGA will terminate.

**B. SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM MEMBERSHIP:** Any Member, for cause, may be suspended or expelled or other appropriate action may be taken (including, but not limited to, warnings and reprimands) by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of all Members of the Board. The Board, by similar vote, may rescind any such action and/or reinstate the Member, upon or without conditions, at its discretion.

1. **“CAUSE” DEFINED:** The term “cause” for purposes of paragraph II.B will include, but not be limited to, profane language, behavior that is abusive and unbecoming the game of golf, disorderly conduct at a USBGA Sanctioned Tournament, conduct endangering the good order, welfare or character of the USBGA, violation of the By-Laws and/or the Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Board.

**B. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:**

1. **DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE:** The Board may, at its discretion, appoint a Disciplinary Committee that will review all matters of discipline of its Members and recommend to the Board the method and severity of discipline i.e., warning, reprimand, censure, suspension or expulsion.

**C. HEARING REQUIRED:** A hearing by the Board will be required for suspension or expulsion. No hearing is required for warning, reprimand or censure. The Board may temporarily suspend a Member while awaiting a hearing and may interview the Member prior to the temporary suspension. A notice in writing of such hearing stating the reason for the proposed suspension or expulsion and notifying such Member that he or she has a right to be heard orally or in writing not less than fifteen (15) days before the effective date of the proposed suspension or expulsion by the Board. The notice must be delivered to the Member via certified mail to the Member’s last address shown on the records of the USBGA at least fifteen (15) days before such hearing is scheduled. If there is no response from the member within these fifteen (15) days, the member is considered notified.

**D. RIGHT OF APPEAL:** Any Member may, at his or her own expense, appeal suspension or expulsion by written notice to the general membership at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at a Special Meeting of the General Membership called for that purpose. The notice of appeal must be delivered to the USBGA President within fifteen (15) days after such action by the Board. Upon appeal, the Board’s action may be overturned by a majority of the Voting Members of the USBGA present at the next AGM or Special General Meeting after the suspension or expulsion.

**III. FEES AND DUES:**

**A. FEES and DUES:** Membership fees for each classification of membership may be of a different monetary amount and will be due on or before December 31 of each year. The Board will maintain and publish a current list of dues annually. Dues will not be prorated for any part of a year.

Members who have unpaid dues will be classified as Inactive Members on the Membership Roster. They will remain on the USBGA Membership Roster for a two (2) year period and will be removed from the Roster if their membership dues are not renewed. A Member will be reinstated to their

previous status if they pay their annual dues and any fees incurred. Reference “**I.B.3.c. UNQUALIFIED**” for additional requirements.

1. **LATE FEE:** A \$25 late fee will be assessed to a player if their annual membership dues are not paid by the December 31 deadline. This late fee must be paid before USBGA playing and voting privileges are restored for the year.
2. **MEMBERSHIP DUES ROLLOVER:** New USBGA Members who have paid their annual dues but did not play in a tournament in their first year of membership can rollover their dues to the following year. This rollover applies only to New Members in their first year of membership.

B. **RETURNED CHECK FEE:** There will be a charge, equal to the cost to the USBGA, for checks returned for insufficient funds. Any Member giving or endorsing a check to the USBGA which is not paid on presentation will be notified of such non-payment. If the amount of the check, and returned check fee, is not paid to the USBGA within fifteen (15) days from the mailing of the notice of non-payment, the Member will be suspended, without further action, from all USBGA privileges until the amount of the check, and returned check fee, is paid. Written notice of such suspension will be immediately given to the Member, including the reason for such action.

#### **IV. COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:**

A. **ACCEPTABLE COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES:** Member complaints and grievances will be held in strictest confidence by the Board. All complaints and grievances must represent an infraction of the By-Laws, Policies and Procedures and/or other Rules of the USBGA.

B. **MEMBER OBLIGATION:** In order to be heard at the next scheduled Board meeting, the Member's complaint or grievance must be submitted in writing, signed and dated by the Complainant (Member), and properly addressed to the President. The complaint or grievance must be postmarked by regular mail or E-mail, at least fifteen (15) days prior to said meeting.

C. **BOARD OBLIGATION:** In consideration of any such grievance or complaint, the Board will:

1. Invite the Complainant to clarify the complaint at the next Board meeting.
2. Listen to the concerns of the Complainant and be sure that the grievance or complaint is defined in terms of alleged cause and alleged ill-effects.
3. Interview other parties supporting or refuting the complaint or grievance.
4. Consider potential solutions with respect to the effects on the Complainant, the Membership, and the interested public as a whole.
5. Decide the outcome of complaints and grievances by means of majority vote.
6. Issue to the Complainant a written Board decision on the grievance within sixty (60) days of the Board meeting in which the complaint was initially heard.

7. Carry out the Board's decision by assigning a Board Member to supervise the implementation of the decision, and report back to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting.

D. **MALICIOUS COMPLAINT:** If a complaint against the Board, its By-Laws or Policies and Procedures document or any Member is found to be unsubstantiated and perpetrated to inflict injury to person, property or reputation, the Board may determine this is an unsubstantiated and malicious complaint and take disciplinary action against the Complainant.

## V. COMMITTEES:

- A. **STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES:** At the discretion of the Board, Ad Hoc Committees may be authorized. The President, with the approval of the Board, will designate a Chairperson for each of the various committees authorized by the Board. The following committees will be recognized as Standing Committees in the USBGA: Communication, Election/Voting, Finance, Handicap, Membership, Tournament and Hall of Fame.
- B. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC):** The Executive Committee (EC) will consist of the President and the Vice President. The EC will advise the Board in all matters concerning its interest and management of its affairs, and generally perform such duties and exercise such powers as may from time to time be conferred by the Board. During intervals between Board meetings, the EC will have the authority to exercise all the powers of the Board in the management and operation of the USBGA. The affirmative vote of both EC Members is necessary for any action. The EC, however, cannot undertake financial commitments on behalf of the USBGA without prior full Board approval. All actions of the EC will be reported to the Board at the next meeting succeeding such action, as all committee reports are done or request Board approval via electronic means.
- C. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Committee Members are Members in good standing or non-members selected by the Board and serve at the discretion and with the approval of the Board. All committees are advisory to the Board, but the Board must respond to recommendations from any committee in a timely manner.

## VI. QUALIFICATION, COMPETITION AND RULES OF PLAY:

### A. **QUALIFICATION:**

1. **INITIAL QUALIFICATION:** To play stroke in a National Championship Tournament a new blind or vision impaired Member must submit three (3) scores that meet the following criteria. For the new blind (B1) Member (both men and women), it is recommended they have a maximum handicap of forty-eight (48) or lower. For the new vision impaired (B2) Member (both men and women) it is recommended they have a maximum handicap of forty (40) or lower. For the new vision impaired (B3) Member (both men and women), it is recommended they have a maximum handicap of thirty-two (32) or lower. All rounds are played on a regulation golf course from the designated tees for men (including seniors) and from the designated tees for women.

Score cards must be attested to by the player, coach and a golf professional. All efforts should be made for the attesting coach to be the coach for the player in his/her first National Championship.

If the new member cannot meet the Initial Qualification requirements to play Stroke in a National Championship, then it is recommended they play Stableford until they can meet the Initial Qualification criteria as stated above for Stroke Play.

If a new member has a USGA GHIN and a verifiable handicap, we will accept those scores in lieu of submitting three additional (3) qualification scores.

2. **EYESIGHT CLASSIFICATION CHANGE AND QUALIFICATION:** Any qualified USBGA Member who undergoes a change in his/her eyesight classification must re-qualify in their new eyesight classification (see paragraph VI.A.1).
3. **PLAYING GOLF IN THE SAME EYESIGHT CLASSIFICATION FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR:** Any qualified USBGA Member must play golf in the sight classification in which he/she begins play in at the first tournament of the year for the entire calendar year unless he/she undergoes a change in their eyesight classification in which they must re-qualify in their new eyesight classification (see paragraph VI.A.1).
4. **TO QUALIFY FOR A COMPETITION:** To qualify for a competition in each sight classification for a National or Division Championship, there must be a minimum of two (2) players for an award to be presented. This would encompass all competitions, both low gross and net. To compete in all USBGA events, Members must have a current verifiable GHIN or IBGA handicap.

B. **COACH:** All members must arrange for the use of their own Coach to compete at a tournament. Exceptions can be made but must be arranged or approved by the National Tournament Committee prior to the tournament.

C. **RULES OF PLAY:** The rules of play for the National Championship Tournament or any tournament sanctioned by the USBGA will be governed by the 2023 United States Golf Association (USGA) Rules of Golf and Rule 25 “Modifications for Players with Disabilities.” The Tournament Committee at the site of any National Championship or Sanctioned Tournament may adopt such local rules as, in their opinion, conditions warrant. Any local rules must conform to the USGA Rules of Golf and Rule 25.2 Modifications for Players Who Are Blind.

1. **TEES:** In any USBGA Sanctioned Tournament or USBGA National Championship Tournament, the tees used will be determined by the course being played. Women will play from the designated forward tees and the men (including Senior’s competing in the Senior Division) from the designated back tees. These tees will be determined by the Tournament Committee or by the Board of Directors using the following criteria: Each set of tees must meet or exceed a Course Rating of 68 and a Slope Rating of 120. There will not be a yardage restriction placed on the tee selection.

D. **PLAYER DIVISIONS:** The USBGA has four (4) Player Divisions as follows:

1. **MENS DIVISION:** This division includes all male players sixty-four (64) years of age and under. If a male player over the age of sixty-four (64) chooses to play in the Men's Division, then the player will notify the Tournament Committee of their decision prior to the tournament. Men are not permitted to compete in the women's division.
2. **WOMEN'S DIVISION:** This division includes all women regardless of age. If a female player chooses to play in another USBGA Division, then that player will notify the Tournament Committee of their decision prior to the tournament and would be subject to that Division's designated rules for tees and age requirements.
3. **SENIOR DIVISION:** The Senior Division is reserved for men sixty-five (65) years to seventy-nine (79) years old. A player who wishes to play in the Senior Division and compete for the Senior Trophy must notify the Tournament Committee of their decision prior to the tournament. Any player competing in the Senior Division is eligible to have their handicap considered for any Invitational Tournament, such as the Vision Cup or the Worlds.
4. **SUPER SENIOR DIVISION:** The Super Senior Division is reserved for men who are eighty (80) years of age or older. If a player chooses to compete in this division, then the player will notify the Tournament Committee of their decision prior to the tournament. Super Seniors will play from the designated forward tees.

**Note:** It is recommended, but not required, that the player only play nine (9) holes each day which would be the longest of the two sides of the course. The Tournament Scorekeeper would then double the players score for the nine holes played to provide an eighteen (18) hole total.

E. **TIE BREAKER:** In the event of a tie, for any position in which an award or awards are given for the National Championship, or any USBGA Sanctioned Tournament, the winner will be determined by a sudden death play-off, if feasible. Otherwise, if the tournament is contested over more than one round, the lowest total score from the final round will determine the winner. Subsequently, the recommendations in the USGA Rules of Golf for determining a winner when a play-off is not feasible will be used to determine the winner. The Tournament Director & Tournament Committee may use one of several options such as the lowest round of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day to break a tie.

F. **AWARDS:** Listed below are the types of awards presented at the National Championship Tournament.

**Guidelines to consider depending on the number of players in each sight classification and competition format (Stroke and Stableford), when determining awards:**

- One (1) award for two (2) to four (4) players, two (2) awards for five (5) to seven (7) players and three (3) awards for eight (8) or more players.

**Exceptions applied to all sight classifications:**

- Players can only win one award at each National Championship or Sanctioned Tournament. If a player is eligible for more than one award in any category within their sight classification, the player must decide which award they receive.
- Only one award is presented for Stroke Play Low Net in each sight classification regardless of the number of players.

1. **PAT BROWNE JR AWARD:** The first place B1 Low Gross winner is presented with the “Pat Browne Jr. National Champion” award. Second and third place B1 Low Gross awards are presented to the second and third place finishers in the B1 classification.
2. **CHARLIE BOSWELL AWARDS:** The first place B1 Low Net winner is presented with the “Charlie Boswell B1 Low Net National Champion” award.
3. **JOE LAZARO AWARD:** The “Joe Lazaro Most Improved” award is presented to the B1 player who shows the most improvement in their gross score when compared to their previous National Championship Tournament score.
5. **B2 VISION IMPAIRED LOW GROSS AWARDS:** The first place B2 Low Gross winner is presented with the “B2 Low Gross National Champion” award. Second and third place B2 Low Gross awards are presented to the second and third place finishers in the B2 classification.
6. **B2 VISION IMPAIRED LOW NET AWARD:** The first place B2 Low Net winner is presented with the “B2 Low Net National Champion” award.
7. **B3 VISION IMPAIRED LOW GROSS AWARDS:** The first place B3 Low Gross winner is presented with the “B3 Low Gross National Champion” award. Second and third place B3 Low Gross awards are presented to the second and third place finishers in the B3 classification.
8. **B3 VISION IMPAIRED LOW NET AWARD:** The first place B3 Low Net winner is presented with the “B3 Low Net National Champion” award.
9. **B2 and B3 VISION IMPAIRED MOST IMPROVED AWARDS:** The “B2 Most Improved” and the “B3 Most Improved” awards are presented to the B2 and B3 players with the most improved Gross score when compared to their previous National Championship Tournament score.
10. **MCMAHON STABLEFORD DIVISION AWARDS:** The Stableford Championship Awards were renamed in 2018 to the McMahon Stableford Division Awards. They are presented to the B1, B2 and B3 players who have the most Stableford points above their point quota based on their IBGA or World Handicap System (WHS) handicap in their respective sight classifications. These awards will be named the “McMahon Stableford B1 Champion”, the “McMahon Stableford B2 Champion” and the “McMahon Stableford B3 Champion”. Second and third place awards are presented to the second and third place finishers in each sight classification as applicable.
11. **WOMEN’S DIVISION AWARDS:** At any sanctioned USBGA tournament or at the National Championships, awards must be considered for each sight classification when there are two (2) or more women players participating in this division.
12. **SENIOR DIVISION AWARDS:** At any sanctioned USBGA tournament or at the National Championships, awards must be considered for each sight classification when there are two (2) or more senior players participating in this division.

13. **SUPER SENIOR DIVISION AWARDS:** At any sanctioned USBGA tournament or at the National Championships, awards must be considered for each sight classification when there are super senior players participating in this division.

G. **ADDITIONAL AWARDS:** Additional awards may be presented at the discretion of the Tournament Committee and/or the Board of Directors.

H. **SANCTIONED TOURNAMENT AWARDS:** The Tournament Committee and the Board of Directors determine the awards for Sanctioned Tournaments. Every effort should be made to follow the criteria in the awards section for the National Championship. For Regional Tournaments, consideration should be given to the number of participants and the type of tournament played.

## **VII. SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS:**

A. **SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS:** All Sanctioned Tournaments open to the Full Membership must offer an equal number of participant positions from each sight classification, B1, B2, B3. All other Sanctioned Tournaments, classified as Invitational or Limited, must have either Board approval or the approval of the Tournament Committee, when such committee is designated or given the responsibility.

B. **TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE:** All matters concerning the participation of members and the playing of the game of golf at Sanctioned Tournaments will be the responsibility of the Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee will have a Chair and may be made up of Board Members, Board Advisors and USBGA Members appointed by the Board. If a non-member is Tournament Chair then a USBGA member in good standing must be a Tournament Co-Chair.

C. **INVITATIONS:** Invitations for any competition given under the jurisdiction of the USBGA are subject to the approval of the Board and any invitation may be withheld by the Board for any reason. Other than the National Championship Tournament, invitations to tournaments will be based on standings using the finishing positions in the most recent National Championship Tournament. Some exceptions may be based on a Tournament Committee request or special situation. An invitation may be withheld from any Member by the Board for any reason, including but not limited to, unbecoming and unsportsmanlike conduct and may disqualify the Member from the competition.

D. **MEMBERSHIP FUNDRAISING FOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP:** If a player raises at least \$1,000 for the USBGA through a fundraising event such as their personal Classy fundraising page, an event at their local golf club, a GoFundMe fundraiser or a donation from friends and/or family, their entry fee for a National Championship may be waived. The Member may select which year's National Championship entry fee will be waived. Fundraising efforts will only impact entry fees for the National Championship and no other USBGA tournaments.

E. **INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS:** An Invitational Tournament is a golf competition which is sanctioned by the Board but not funded by the USBGA. A Notification of the Sanctioned Invitational will be sent to the Membership thirty (30) days prior to the event. An Invitational Tournament must have a minimum of 2 Members. If awards are provided, there must be at least two

(2) Members within a sight classification. The competition must follow the normal rules of a golf tournament using USBGA Handicaps, USBGA Rules of Competition and USGA Rules of Golf.

- F. **REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS:** A Regional Tournament is a golf competition which is sanctioned by the Board and where all USBGA Members are notified and invited. A Regional Tournament is a golf competition between at least 2 Members and is partially funded and organized by the USBGA. If awards are provided, there must be at least two members within a sight classification. This competition must follow the normal rules of a golf tournament using USBGA Handicaps and USBGA Rules of Competition and USGA Rules of Golf. Non-members may play in a Regional Tournament but must pay for all expenses (e.g., tournament fee, hotel, golf, travel). Non-member participants are not eligible for awards.
- G. **QUALIFYING ROUNDS:** A Qualifying Round is identified by the IBGA Handicap Policy (2023), Appendix 1 Section 2 Qualifying Round. Only scores from valid qualifying rounds may be submitted as an official round or tournament score. A Qualifying Round is any round of golf played in a blind golf tournament which is sanctioned by the USBGA Board or the IBGA. The scorecard must be signed, attested, and submitted to the Handicap Chair.

#### **Acceptable Rounds:**

1. Playing USBGA sanctioned competitive rounds (tournaments) hosted by the USBGA or IBGA Member Association. Members may submit any number of scorecards from competitive rounds sanctioned by and organized by the USBGA or an IBGA Member Association, provided they are a member in good standing.
2. Rounds played in competition with sighted golfers. Competitive rounds (tournaments) with sighted golfers must meet the criteria of a Qualifying Round as specified in the IBGA Handicap Policy Appendix 1 Section 2. Current Members may only submit a maximum of two (2) scorecards from competitive rounds per calendar year.
3. When playing non-sanctioned competitive rounds with other adaptive golf organizations, Members may submit any number of scorecards from competitive rounds (tournaments) played in any WR4GD authorized tournament event.
4. A Member may count a maximum of three (3) Qualifying Rounds in their first year of membership and a maximum of two (2) in each subsequent year. The IBGA Handicap Index displays up to twenty (20) of the most recent scores for each player.

#### **VIII. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. **USBGA:** United States Blind Golf Association
- B. **IBGA:** International Blind Golf Association
- C. **FULL MEMBER:** A person classified as a Full Member who meets the IBGA sight classification standards and is in good standing with current membership dues and tournament fees, has voting privileges, may serve on committees, may run for elected office to serve on the Board and may play in any sanctioned tournament sponsored by the USBGA or IBGA.

- D. **SUPPORT MEMBER:** Anyone who wishes to aid and support the goals of the USBGA by any means, financial or otherwise, may become a Support Member and contribute an annual membership fee as established by the Board. They are NON-VOTING members but may serve on committees or be appointed to the offices of Treasurer and Secretary with the approval of the Board. Support Members do not have sight restrictions.
- E. **ASSOCIATE PLAYER MEMBER:** Players from Central America and other Regional North American Countries that do not have sufficient players to form their own Member Association through the IBGA or a DCP who's main residence is not the United States. Associate Player Members may play in all USBGA or IBGA Sanctioned Tournaments but may not vote in elections, run for office or serve on committees.
- F. **DUAL CITIZENSHIP PLAYERS (DCP):** A Player who has dual citizenship with the USA and another IBGA Member Association. DCP's must meet all the requirements of Section I.A.1.d to have Full Member privileges otherwise they may apply to be an Associate Player Member.
- G. **HONORARY MEMBERSHIP:** Memberships whose duration and privileges will be granted from time to time by the Board. The Board may grant annually Honorary Memberships. Honorary Members are NON-VOTING members.
- H. **INACTIVE:** Inactive Members are those Members who have not paid their annual dues and thus all privileges and participation in the USBGA are suspended for the calendar year. Inactive Members will remain on the Membership Roster for a two (2) year period and will be removed from this roster list if their membership is not renewed.
- I. **UNQUALIFIED:** Unqualified Members are those Members who have not attended and competed in a National Championship Tournament or a USBGA Sanctioned Tournament within a two (2) year period of their last tournament played. Unqualified Members must re-qualify to compete in the National Championship Tournament. Re-qualification must be accomplished in the same manner as Initial qualification (see Paragraph VI.A.1).
- J. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM):** The meeting held every year for Members in good standing to conduct the business of the USBGA including election of Board Members.
- K. **DIRECTOR (Board Member):** A person elected by the Full Membership to serve on the USBGA Board of Directors.
- L. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Board):** Members elected to the USBGA Board to manage the business of the USBGA between Annual General Meetings.
- M. **IBGA HANDICAP INDEX:** The handicap system developed and managed by the IBGA and used in all IBGA and USBGA Sanctioned Tournaments to track Member handicaps and scores.
- N. **STABLEFORD PLAY:** The Stableford point system is an alternative way of scoring as opposed to Stroke play golf. A golf tournament or competition that uses Stableford points is one in which the object is to get the highest score. That is because in Stableford, golfers are awarded points based on their scores on each hole. The points awarded depend on how the golfer did compared to a fixed score that is set by tournament organizers, and that can be in relation to par (bogey, double bogey, par, etc.) or a number of strokes (4, 6, 8, whatever). The point system is used when a

player's fixed par has been determined and their score is determined by that fixed par in accordance with the USGA and R & A rules.

a. The USGA & R&A define Stableford points as:

- More than one (1) over fixed score (or no score returned) - 0 points
- One over fixed score - 1 point
- Fixed score - 2 points
- One under fixed score - 3 points
- Two under fixed score - 4 points
- Three under fixed score - 5 points
- Four under fixed score - 6 points

- O. **STROKE PLAY:** In Stroke Play, a player counts the strokes used to complete the play of each hole, then adds up the total number of strokes at the end of the round for his or her score.
- P. **NET SCORE:** The Net Score is a player's Gross Score (the actual number of strokes played) minus the strokes his or her course handicap allows to be deducted during the course of the round.
- Q. **BLIND (B1) CLASSIFICATION:** B1 is no light perception in either eye up to light perception but unable to differentiate between a blank sheet of white paper and a sheet of white paper with a black symbol on it. The black symbol is displayed in Section 3 of the International Blind Golf Association Sight Classification Form and is used as part of the exam at any distance or in any direction. The IBGA Sight Classification Form can be found on the USBGA website ([www.usblindgolf.com](http://www.usblindgolf.com)) under the "Membership" tab, "Steps to Join" section.
- R. **VISION IMPAIRED (B2) CLASSIFICATION:** B2 is from B1 to a maximum visual acuity of less than 20/600 (2/60) or equivalent corrected in either or both eyes in any direction.
- S. **VISION IMPAIRED (B3) CLASSIFICATION:** B3 is from B2 to a maximum visual acuity of less than 20/200 (6/60) in any direction corrected in either or both eyes.
- T. **REGULATION GOLF COURSE:** A regulation 18-hole golf course with a minimum course where the tees used meet or exceed the Course Rating of 68 and slope of 120 or higher. Variations to these requirements must be preapproved by the USBGA Tournament Committee and/or the IBGA. There are no yardage restrictions if the tees used meet or exceed the Course and Slope Ratings.
- U. **CLASSIFICATION and DIVISION:** In this document, the word "Play" is used to determine the type of scoring system used, either Stroke or Stableford. The word "Classification" is used to differentiate Members with sight differences, B1, B2 or B3 or to differentiate the types of Members: Full, Support, Honorary, Inactive or Unqualified. The word "Division" is used to distinguish the various competitive groups for awards: general, seniors, super seniors and women.
- V. **WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM (WHS):** A new, unified system designed by the USGA / R & A in partnership with all handicap authorities worldwide. The new program will ensure all players are graded on the same criteria, no matter where they are in the world. The WHS will encompass both the Rules of Handicapping and the Course Rating System. The USBGA uses the USGA Golf Handicap & Information Network (GHIN) system to track Member scores and handicaps.

## **History of Revisions:**

Revised 2016; Revised September 2017; Revised February 2018; Revised July 2018; Revised July 2019; Revised September 2019; Revised June 2020 by Lynne Lazaro; Revised December 9 2020 by Lynne Lazaro; Revised July 25, 2022, Revised July 27, 2022; Revised September 10, 2022, April 1, 2023 by Lynne Lazaro