

Immoveable Objects or Obstruction: Penalty or No Penalty

Most Immoveable obstructions on a golf course you get to take relief from, without penalty. At River Oaks the pump house/well on hole # 3; sprinkler heads, are good examples of no penalty areas.

There are some immovable obstructions that you can not take relief from without penalty, because they are an integral part of the course or out of bounds boundaries. This would include;

- Out of bounds markers, whether they're stakes, walls, ditches, fences, or whatever, are not obstructions.
- Any part of an artificial object that's for out of bounds is not an obstruction. The netting on Hole # 2 is an out of bounds boundary. No free lift. This doesn't include the netting on hole # 4 because it's an obstruction running through the course. Free lift.
- Railroad ties placed on hole # 3, 6 # 11 and behind the green on hole # 4 No free lift. Generally, you might assume that if your ball, your stance, or the area of your intended swing is affected by a wall, you would be entitled to free relief — especially if you're outside of the penalty area. No free lift because they are all Integral parts of the golf course.
- Culverts and bridges that are in hazard areas on holes #9, 10, 18, & bridges on 14. No free lift, unless the area is marked separating them from the penalty area.

You can always attempt to play the ball in some way. If you decide not to play it, you may proceed under **Rule 19 –Unplayable Ball**, in which theoretically at least, you have three options, all under penalty of one stroke.

1. You can go back to where you last played from;
2. Drop within two club-lengths not nearer the hole;
3. Go back as far as you like on a line keeping the point where your ball lies between you and the flag.

Culverts: The culverts at holes #9, 10, & 18 are into a hazard area, if your ball lands into one of them. No free lift, unless the area is marked separating them from the penalty area. The culvert at hole # 12 is not into the hazard area. You get a free relief if your ball lands into it.

Retaining Walls: Man-Made Objects: Buildings, sprinklers, or the roped areas on holes 10; 14; 15; or disturbed ground due to repair work can obstruct the golfer's stance or swing. For relief without penalty, the golfer lifts the ball and drops it within one club length of the nearest point of relief, but not closer to the hole.

Bridges: The bridges on hole # 14 are over penalty areas. "Penalty areas do not have any vertical boundaries." If your ball lands on the bridge, No free lift, unless the area is marked separating them from the penalty area.



What relief can you get for each 5 different positions?

- Ball number 1 is in the *Red Penalty Area* and as the ditch is dry at this time of year many players would consider playing it as it lies except that the bridge will interfere with stance or swing if you want to play it towards the hole. However, there is no relief from the

bridge as the ball is inside the *Penalty Area*. If you don't want to play it as it lies your only option is to take *Penalty Area* relief under Rule 17.

- Ball number 2 is inside the *Penalty Area* and on the bridge. Similar to ball 1, your only options are to play it as it lies or take *Penalty Area* relief.
- Ball number 3 is in the middle of the path leading to the bridge. You can take free relief from the path as an *Immovable Obstruction* under Rule 16. The *nearest point of complete relief* is likely to be towards Ball 4 for a right handed player but on the other side of the path for a left hander player.
- Ball 4 is outside the penalty area, and far enough away from the bridge for it not to interfere with a right handed player's stance or area of intended swing. Even though the railings are on the line towards the flag and could well interfere with the flight of the ball there is no relief available other than taking an unplayable lie (Rule 19). However a left hander player's stance would probably be on the path so they would be able to take free relief. (NB It would not be reasonable for a right handed player to claim that they intend to play a left hander stroke in this circumstance).
- Ball 5 is also outside the penalty area but it is close enough to the bridge that it would cause interference with the stance or area of intended swing. The nearest point of complete relief is likely to be towards Ball 4 but do not forget that you can then drop up to a club length away from this spot (not nearer the hole) to try and minimize the impact of the railings on the likely flight of the ball.

Note: The "New" cart path on hole # 17 if you land on it and you couldn't drop and take your stance without getting full relief from the cart path such that he was in bounds (i.e. on the golf course), then the nearest point is, by definition, to the left of the cart path.

Remember, he you have to take relief not just for his golf ball but for his stance and swing as well.