

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
Gaming Control Board

Statutory Authority: 28 Delaware Code, Section 1122 (28 Del.C. §1122)
10 DE Admin. Code 101

PROPOSED

PUBLIC NOTICE

101 Regulations Governing Bingo

A. Type of Regulatory Action Required

Amendment to Existing Regulations

B. Synopsis of Subject Matter of the Regulation

The Delaware Gaming Board will seek public comments on the issue of whether its current rules in 10 DE Admin. Code 101 regarding bingo should be amended. The Board proposes to change the rules to make it clear that members of charitable organizations who are working at the bingo event may not themselves play in the bingo games and also that the amount of the prize in each bingo game must be announced to the players. In addition, a rule will be amended to explain that where the statute allows promotional giveaways on holidays, the meaning of the term holidays is official state holidays. The Board proposes to change the rules to make it clear that the limit of 15% of the total amount of all prizes which may be offered as an inducement to players refers to inducements other than the cookie jar bingo games, where a cookie jar may have a prize of up to \$1,000.

Persons wishing to present their views regarding this matter may do so at a public hearing to be held on Thursday, April 5, 2012 at a meeting of the Delaware Gaming Control Board, 861 Silver Lake Boulevard, Cannon Building, Suite 203, Dover, DE 19904. Persons may also submit responses in writing by the close of business on or before April 1, 2012 at the same address. A copy of these regulations is available from the above address or may be viewed at the Division of Professional Regulation business office at the same address.

C. Summary of Proposal

Currently, the rules do not clearly address the issue of whether members of the charitable organization which is conducting the event may themselves play in the event if they are working at it. Rules do provide that a member must be in charge of the event and the Board believes that members who are working at the event should not be playing the games themselves at the same time.

Currently, the rules do not expressly state that the prize amount in bingo games must be announced, although the sponsor must file an after occasion report which lists the amount of all prizes. To be sure there is no confusion, the Board wishes to make it clear that the amount of the prize at each bingo game must be announced to the players.

Currently, the statute and rules state that promotional giveaways up to \$500 per year may be distributed on the organization's anniversary date and on no more than three (3) holidays per year. The Board wishes to clarify that those holidays are the same holidays as those recognized by the State of Delaware as holidays, namely, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Election Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Currently, Rule 4.6 states that a licensee may offer inducements, including but not limited to cookie jar bingo games that do not exceed \$1,000 per game per night, provided the value of the inducement is limited to 15% of the total amount of all other prizes. Prizes at bingo are limited to \$250 per game and \$1,250 total for all games at a single event. The Board wishes to make it clear that the 15% limit refers to inducements other than the cookie jar games.

101 Regulations Governing Bingo

1.0 Definitions

"Bingo" A game of chance played for prizes with cards bearing numbers or other designations, five or more in one line, the holder covering numbers as objects similarly numbered are drawn from a receptacle and the game being won by the person who first covers a previously designated arrangement of numbers on such a card.

"Bingo Statute" The statutory law concerning bingo, as contained in 28 Del.C., §1101 et. seq.

"Board" The Delaware Gaming Control Board.

"Color Coded" A different color for each of the five letters of the word "BINGO."

“Cookie Jar Bingo” A game of chance in which players pay a set fee into a cookie jar or other container and receive a number which entitles the player to a chance to win the total funds in the cookie jar or container. At the start of the event, a bingo number shall be drawn which shall serve as the “cookie jar number.” That number shall be posted for all players to see. During the games played on that occasion, if a player achieves bingo when the cookie jar number is drawn, the player shall win the funds in the cookie jar or container. If no one achieves bingo when the cookie jar number is drawn, the funds in the jar shall not be awarded. An organization may not otherwise offer a cookie jar game and may not designate the last game of the night or any other particular game as a cookie jar game at which the funds will be awarded without a person achieving bingo when the cookie jar number is drawn. The fee to play a cookie jar bingo game must be collected separately and such fee may not be included in the fee to play regular bingo games or in any other fee.

Any amounts in any cookie jar bingo games shall not be included in any prize money limitations contained in these rules. An organization may not have more than two cookie jar bingo pots at any one time. The first jar must be awarded before a third jar can be started. If two cookie jar pots each contain the maximum amount of money allowed by law, the first jar must be awarded at the same event at which the second jar reaches the allowable maximum. If the first jar has not been awarded by the final game of the night, a special final bingo game of “full card” or “black out” bingo using a separate, single card, shall be played and the jar will be won by the first person who covers all spaces on their entire card.

The fees for cookie jar bingo shall be collected at the beginning of the event and added to the jar or jars before the first number is drawn. If at the beginning of an event when players pay their fee, one jar contains the maximum (up to \$1,000) and the second jar would go over the maximum if the fees are added, the fees shall be held and not placed in the second jar at that time. When the first jar is then won, the second jar shall be filled to a total of the maximum and the remaining fee moneys shall be placed in a new jar.

The organization conducting the bingo event may choose any amount up to \$1,000 for each cookie jar. The organization shall post the amount available to be won in the cookie jar and also clearly announce to the players the amount available to be won in the cookie jar.

“Districts” Those districts mentioned in Article II, 917A of the Delaware Constitution.

“Equipment” The receptacle and color coded numbered objects to be drawn from it, the master board upon which such objects are placed as drawn, the cards or sheets bearing numbers or other designations to be covered and the objects used to cover them, the boards or signs, however operated, used to announce or display the numbers or designations as they are drawn, public address systems, tables, chairs, and other articles essential to the operation, conduct and playing of bingo.

“Game” The game of bingo.

“Instant Bingo” A game of chance played with sealed or covered cards which must be opened in some fashion by the holder such that the cards reveal instantly whether the holder has won a prize. This type of game includes but is not limited to games commonly known as “rip-offs” or “Nevada pull-tabs.”

“Member in Charge” A bona fide, active member of the “Qualified Organization” in charge of, and primarily responsible for the conduct of the game on each occasion.

“Occasion” A single gathering or session at which a series of successive bingo games (regular, special, or otherwise) is played, not to exceed forty (40) in number.

“Proceeds” The gross income received from all activities engaged in or on occasion when bingo is played, less only, such actual expenses incurred as are authorized in the Bingo Statute and these Rules and Regulations.

“Qualified Organization” A volunteer fire company, veterans organization, religious or charitable organization, or fraternal society that is operated in a manner so as to come within the provisions of Section 170 of the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury.

“Week” means a seven day period beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday.

2 DE Reg. 1224 (01/01/99)

12 DE Reg. 357 (09/01/08)

13 DE Reg. 412 (09/01/09)

13 DE Reg. 1355 (04/01/10)

14 DE Reg. 486 (11/01/10)

15 DE Reg. 367 (09/01/11)

2.0 Applications For Bingo License

2.1 Original applications shall be filed upon:

2.1.1 the first application of an organization for a license;

2.1.2 after the first application and upon a subsequent change in the organization's charter or bylaws; or

- 2.1.3 in the event of a subsequent application after a prior refusal, suspension, or revocation by the Board.
- 2.2 Supplemental applications for bingo licenses shall be filed in all instances except those covered by the original application. All promotional give-away events, as defined under 28 **Del.C.** §1139(h)(2), must be listed on an applicant's application for licensure, giving the dates of the promotional give-away events. If the event is not listed on the application, no promotional give-away event can be conducted.
- 2.3 All original and supplemental applications shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board at least six (6) weeks prior to the date of the occasion.
- 2.3.1 An application must be submitted in advance of the proposed date of the function as to allow the Board to consider the application at two consecutive board meetings before deciding to approve or deny the application.
- 2.4 No applications (original or supplemental) shall be accepted unless the applicant, at the time of the filing, attaches a check or money order for the full amount of the fees payable by law for each occasion requested. In the event an application is refused by the Board, the application fees shall be refunded in full to the applicant. There shall be a license fee of \$15 for each occasion on which bingo is conducted under a license.
- 2.5 No application shall be received by the Commission unless it clearly shows that the applicant is located in and seeks to conduct the game in a district which has approved the licensing of bingo by referendum, and on premises owned or regularly leased by the applicant. If the applicant desires to conduct games on premises specially leased for the occasion, a separate written request therefor (together with supporting reasons) shall accompany the application. The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any application for the conduct of games on specially leased premises. Organization conducting a Function shall prepare and have available on the premises a list of all persons taking part in the management or operation of the Function. Such list shall be maintained as part of the licensees, records of the Function and shall be made available to any member or agent of the Board or law enforcement officer.

2 DE Reg. 1224 (1/1/99)

8 DE Reg. 531 (10/01/04)

12 DE Reg. 357 (09/01/08)

3.0 Bingo Licenses

- 3.1 Upon receiving an application, the Board shall make an investigation of the merits of the application. The Board shall consider the impact of the approval of any license application on existing licensees within the applicant's geographical location prior to granting any new license. The Board may deny an application if it concludes that approval of the application would be detrimental to existing licensees.
- 3.2 The Board may issue a license only after it determines that:
- 3.2.1 The applicant is duly qualified to conduct games under the State Constitution, statutes, and regulations.
- 3.2.2 The members of the applicant who intend to conduct the bingo games are bona fide active members of the applicant and are persons of good moral character and have never been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude.
- 3.2.3 The bingo games are to be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the State Constitution, statutes, and regulations.
- 3.2.4 The proceeds are to be disposed of as provided in the State Constitution and statutes.
- 3.2.5 No salary, compensation or reward whatever will be paid or given to any member under whom the game is conducted. If the findings and determinations of the Board are to the effect that the application is approved, the Secretary shall execute a license for the applicant.
- 3.3 The license shall be issued. The original thereof shall be transmitted to the applicant.
- 3.4 If the findings and determinations of the Commission are to the effect that the application is denied, the Secretary shall so notify the applicant by certified mail of the reasons for denial, and shall refund any application fees submitted.
- 3.5 In the event of a request for an amendment of a license, the request shall be promptly submitted to the Commission in writing, and shall contain the name of the licensee, license number, and a concise statement of the reasons for requested amendment. The Commission may grant or deny the request, in its discretion, and may require supporting proof from the licensee before making any determination. The Commission may require the payment of an additional license fee before granting the request. The licensee shall be notified of the Commission's action by appropriate communication, so that the licensee will not be unduly inconvenienced.
- 3.6 No license shall be effective for a period of more than one year from the date it was issued.
- 3.7 No license shall be effective after the organization to which it was granted has become ineligible to conduct bingo under any provision of Article II, §17A of the Delaware Constitution.

- 3.8 No license shall be effective after the voters in any District designated in Article II, §17A of the Constitution have decided against bingo in a referendum held pursuant to that section and subchapter II of the Bingo Statute.
- 3.9 No bingo licensee licensed prior to July 14, 1998, shall conduct more than ten (10) bingo events in any calendar month and no bingo licensee licensed after the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998) shall conduct more than one (1) bingo event per week. A bingo licensee who was licensed prior to July 14, 1998 whose license lapses for six (6) months or more due to non-renewal or suspension or any other reason shall, upon licensing thereafter, be considered a licensee licensed after the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998).
- 3.10 The license application shall contain a full and fair description of the prize and the appraised value of the prize. In lieu of submitting an appraisal, the applicant or licensee may submit the full retail value of the prize. In cases where the applicant or licensee purchases the prize from a third party, the Board may require that the applicant or licensee arrange for an independent appraisal of the value of the prize from a person licensed to render such appraisals, or if there is no person licensed to render such appraisals, from a person qualified to render such appraisals.
- 3.11 When bingo is conducted in conjunction with a carnival, festival, or similar event scheduled for more than one day, the game may be played up to every night of the event and shall be considered a single event for purposes of the rule allowing one event per week for those licensed after July 10, 1998 or ten events per month for those licensed before July 10, 1998.

2 DE Reg. 1224 (1/1/99)

3 DE Reg. 1692 (6/1/00)

4 DE Reg. 334 (8/1/00)

13 DE Reg. 412 (09/01/09)

13 DE Reg. 486 (11/01/10)

4.0 Conduct of Bingo

- 4.1 The officers of a licensee shall designate a bona fide, active member to be in charge of and primarily responsible for the conduct of the game of chance on each occasion. The member in charge shall supervise all activities on the occasions for which he or she is in charge and shall be responsible for the making of the required report thereof. The member in charge shall be familiar with the provisions of the Bingo Statute, and these rules and regulations.
- 4.1.1 Neither the member in charge of conducting the event, nor any other member of the sponsoring organization who is assisting in conducting the event or otherwise working at the event shall be permitted to play the bingo games.
- 4.2 The room where any game is being held, operated, or conducted, or where it is intended that any game shall be held, operated, or conducted, or where it is intended that any equipment be used, shall at all times be open to inspection by the appropriate law enforcement officers and agents of the District in which the premises are situated, and to the Board and its agents and employees. Bingo games shall not be commenced prior to 1:30 p.m. and the operation of a function shall be limited to six hours. Instant bingo is permitted during any event sponsored by the organization that is licensed to conduct it, regardless of the day or time.
- 4.3 No person under the age of eighteen (18) may participate in any bingo game. No person under the age of 18 shall be permitted to participate in any instant bingo game. Persons between the ages of 16 through 18 may conduct or assist in conducting the bingo game and persons over the age of fourteen (14) may act as waiters and waitresses in the handling of food or drinks at an occasion on which a licensee conducts bingo.
- 4.4 No organization licensed prior to enactment of 71 **Del. Law** 444 (July 14, 1998), may hold, operate, or conduct bingo more often than ten (10) days in any calendar month. No bingo licensee licensed after the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998) shall conduct more than one bingo event per week. A bingo licensee licensed prior to the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998), whose license lapses for six (6) months or more due to nonrenewal or suspension or any other reason shall, upon licensing thereafter, be considered a licensee licensed after the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998).
- 4.5 The Board and its duly authorized agents and employees may examine the books and records of any licensee, so far as those books and records relate to any transaction connected with the holding, operating, and conducting of the game of bingo, and may examine any manager, officer, director, agent, member, employee, or assistant of the licensee under oath in relation to the conduct of the game of bingo.
- 4.6 No prize in an amount or value greater than \$250 shall be offered or given in any single game and the aggregate amount or value of all prizes offered or given in all games played on a single occasion shall not exceed \$1,250. The amount of the prize in each bingo game shall be announced at the start of the game. At the end of each game, there will be an announcement of the total number of winners and the amount paid to

each. All winners shall be determined and all prizes shall be awarded in any game played on any occasion within the same calendar day as that upon which the game is played. The value of any promotional giveaways, which shall be no more than \$500 per annum to be distributed at an organizational anniversary date and no more than three (3) holiday dates per year, shall not be counted towards the dollar amounts described in this section. Holiday dates means those holiday dates officially recognized by the State of Delaware as holidays. However, a licensee may offer inducements, ~~including but not limited to cookie jar bingo games that do not exceed \$1,000 per game per night,~~ free refreshments, and free transportation of players to and from bingo events, to attract bingo players to the bingo event, provided that the fair market value of inducements is limited to 15% of the total amount of all other prizes offered or given during the bingo event.

- 4.7 Two or more organizations may not hold games of bingo at the same place on the same day. Unless a bingo licensee has been licensed prior to the enactment of 71 **Del. Laws** 444 (July 14, 1998), only one licensed organization may hold bingo games in a licensed organization's building during any given week.
- 4.8 No alcoholic beverages shall be permitted in the room from the time the bingo hall opens until the conclusion of the last bingo game of the occasion.
- 4.9 All games shall be conducted with equipment that is owned absolutely by the licensee or that is leased for fees not in excess of those allowable under the Schedule of Rental for leasing of equipment on file with the Board. Equipment shall include playing cards. If the licensee uses cards that are for more than one session of playing bingo, these cards should be identified as the property of the licensee.
- 4.10 All winners shall be determined and all prizes shall be awarded in any game played on any occasion within the same calendar day as that upon which the game is played.
- 4.11 When more than one player is found to be the winner on the call of the same number in the same game, the designated prize shall be divided equally as possible; and when division is not possible, substitute prizes, whose aggregate value shall not exceed that of the designated prize, shall be awarded; but such substitute prizes shall be of equal value to each other.
- 4.12 The equipment used in the playing of bingo and the method of play shall be such that each card shall have an equal opportunity to be a winner. The objects drawn shall be essentially equal as to size, shape, weight, and balance, and as to all other characteristics that may control their selection, and all shall be present in the receptacle before each game is begun. All numbers shall be announced so as to be visible or audible to all players present.
- 4.13 The particular arrangement of numbers required to be covered in order to win the game shall be clearly described and announced to the players immediately before each game is begun.
- 4.14 No arrangement of numbers shall be required to be covered in order to win the game other than the following:
 - 4.14.1 one unspecified horizontal row;
 - 4.14.2 one unspecified vertical row;
 - 4.14.3 one unspecified full diagonal row;
 - 4.14.4 one unspecified row (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal);
 - 4.14.5 Two or more of the foregoing, forming a specified arrangement;
 - 4.14.6 The entire card;
 - 4.14.7 Four corners;
 - 4.14.8 Eight spaces surrounding the free space.
 - 4.14.9 Any other configuration or shape on the card established by an organization, provided the players are informed of the shape needed to win before play commences.
- 4.15 Within the limits contained in 28 **Del.C.** §1132(b), alternate prizes may be offered depending upon the number of calls within which bingo is reached, provided the application for the bingo license and the license so specify.
- 4.16 Any player shall be entitled to call for a verification of all numbers drawn at the time a winner is determined, and for a verification of the objects remaining in the receptacle and not yet drawn. The verification shall be made in the immediate presence of the member designated to be in charge on the occasion, but if such member is also the announcer, then in the immediate presence of an officer of the licensee.
- 4.17 No licensee shall conduct more than forty (40) games on a single occasion.
- 4.18 In the playing of bingo, no person who is not physically present in the room where the game is actually conducted shall be allowed to participate as a player in the game.
- 4.19 Within the limits contained in 28 **Del.C.** §1132(6), the prizes offered may be varied depending upon the number of people who attend the occasion, provided the application for bingo license and license so specify. If a licensee avails itself of the provisions of this rule, it must announce at the beginning of each game the number of people present and the prizes to be awarded.

- 4.20 The entire proceeds of the games of bingo must be used solely for the promotion or achievement of the purposes of the licensee.
- 4.21 Any local rules adopted by the licensee that affect the conduct of the players or the awarding of prizes shall be prominently posted in at least four locations within the area where the bingo games are conducted.
- 4.22 The licensee shall be permitted to reserve seats within the area where the bingo games are conducted to provide for the special needs of handicapped persons, and the licensee shall ensure that the remaining seats are made available to the players on an equal basis.
- 4.23 A licensee may charge an admission fee to a game event in any room or area in which a game is to be conducted. The admission fee shall entitle the game player (a) to a card enabling the player to participate without additional charge in all regular games to be played under the license at the event, or (b) to free refreshments. The licensee may charge an additional fee to a game player for a single opportunity to participate in a special game to be played under license at the event.
- 4.24 No person shall conduct or assist in conducting any game except an active member of the organization to which the license is issued.
- 4.25 No item of expense shall be incurred or paid in connection with the conduct of the game except shall be incurred or paid in connection with the conduct of the game except such as are bona fide items of a reasonable amount for merchandise furnished or services rendered which are reasonably necessary for the conduct of the game.

2 DE Reg. 1224 (1/1/99)

2 DE Reg. 1761 (4/1/99)

12 DE Reg. 357 (09/01/08)

13 DE Reg. 107 (07/01/09)

13 DE Reg. 412 (09/01/09)

13 DE Reg. 1355 (04/01/10)

5.0 Reports After the Function

- 5.1 When no game is held on a date a licensee is authorized to hold such game, a report to that effect shall be filed with the Board.
- 5.2 Within 5 days of the last day of the function, the member-in-charge shall submit a report to the Board that includes all information required by 28 **Del.C.** §1140(a).
- 5.3 If a licensee fails to timely file a report or if a report is not properly verified, or not fully, accurately, and truthfully completed, no further license shall be issued to the licensee and any existing license shall be suspended until such time as the deficiency has been corrected.

11 DE Reg. 516 (10/01/07)

12 DE Reg. 357 (09/01/08)

13 DE Reg. 107 (07/01/09)

6.0 Suspension and Revocation of Licenses

- 6.1 Proceedings to suspend or to revoke a license shall be brought by notifying the licensee of the ground thereof and the date set forth for a hearing thereon. The Commission may stop the operation of a game pending hearing, in which case the hearing must be held within five (5) days after such action.
- 6.2 When suspension or revocation proceedings are begun before the Commission, it shall hear the matter and make written findings in support of its decision. The licensee shall be informed of the decision and of the effective date of the suspension or revocation.
- 6.3 When a license is suspended or revoked, the licensee shall surrender up the license to the Board on or before that effective date set forth in the notice of decision. In no case shall any license be valid beyond the effective date of suspension or revocation, whether surrendered or not.
- 6.4 Upon finding of the violation of these rules and regulations or the Bingo Statute, such as would warrant the suspension or revocation of a license, the Board may in addition to any other penalties which may be imposed, declare the violator ineligible to conduct a game of bingo and to apply for a license under said law for a period not exceeding thirty (30) months thereafter. Such declaration of the ineligibility may be extended to include, in addition to the violator, any of its subsidiary organizations, its parent organization and any other organization having a common parent organization or otherwise affiliated with the violator, when in the opinion of the Board, the circumstances of the violation warrant such action.

7.0 Severability

If any provision of these Regulations or the application of such provision to any person or circumstances shall be held invalid, the validity of the remainder of these Regulations and the applicability of such provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

2 DE Reg. 1224 (1/1/99)

15 DE Reg. 1290 (03/01/12) (Prop.)