

Washington State Gambling Commission

Summary

Our mission is to protect the public by ensuring that gambling is legal and honest, and to foster full cooperation between tribes and the state, based upon equality and a shared concern for the welfare of all the citizens of the state and tribes.

Of the 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington, 29 have compacts for Class III gaming and 22 of the tribes operate 29 casinos.

Highlights

We mutually agreed to amendments to restate the Class III compacts with Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Nisqually Indian Tribe, and Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. These restated compacts include updates to regulatory and operational processes; add provisions for high limit rooms and pits and extension of credit; provide continued cooperation to promote responsible gaming; and increase the tribe's contributions to the community.

We mutually agreed to amendments to include sports wagering appendices with five additional tribes. Of the 21 tribes with this appendix, eight tribes are operating a sportsbook with one of those offering on-premises mobile wagering.

Sports wagering vendor licensing rules became effective June 2021. Staff developed new investigative programs, procedures, and online forms to facilitate applications, and 24 sports wagering vendors have been licensed. Staff has met with vendors, operations, tribal leadership, and tribal regulatory personnel to coordinate timelines and improve communication.

To provide current information to commonly asked questions from tribal representatives, in April, the Electronic Gambling Lab created a monthly newsletter sent to our tribal regulatory and tribal gaming operational partners. The monthly update includes the status of new and previous equipment submissions that we received, investigations of equipment operated at tribal casinos, and news or updates related to the Commission.

Our Criminal Enforcement Unit sent eight information bulletins to inform and share information with our tribal partners on various crimes and suspicious activity and 10 requests for information to ask for assistance from tribal partners beneficial to combating crime. About half of the information bulletins and all the information requests brought in additional information that we used for our investigations.

We mutually agreed to annual flat rate fees for Class III employee certifications with Nisqually Indian Tribe and Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. These agreements include submitting online applications and making one payment a year. These agreements result in an improved turn-around time, reduce the number of payments made throughout the year, and reduce the data entry that we have to do with mail-in applications.

As part of our ongoing co-regulatory relationship with the tribes, and to improve operational efficiency and the use of new technology, we jointly agreed to 29 clarifications of compact appendices, and we concurred with 317 internal control and game rule submissions. Many of the submissions were related to sports wagering, a new gaming activity that required extensive staff time to complete. We also made process improvements to provide better online processing of applications.

After a two-year delay of in-person classes, we reinstated our New Agent Training. In partnership with the Chehalis Tribal Gaming Agency, we conducted a weeklong, new agent training course for over 40 students from our agency and 15 tribes. The students were regulatory staff who work at the tribal casinos. Topics included history, licensing, and regulation of Class III gaming in Washington.

Staff contact

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