



# WASHINGTON STATE GAMBLING COMMISSION



## ILLEGAL GAMBLING ACTIVITIES

Gambling in Washington is illegal unless the activity is specifically authorized by state law.

Gambling involves three elements:

- Prize (you win something of value, like cash or merchandise)
- Chance (random selection of winners)
- Consideration (entry fee, wager, donation, or anything of value)

Conducting illegal gambling activities may result in criminal charges being filed against you, your organization, and/ or its officers, and forfeiture of all property or money associated with the illegal gambling.

### BOOKMAKING

Bookmaking means taking bets or wagers on the outcome of a future event, typically sporting events, when you: Conduct the activity as a business, or you accept a fee or “vigorous” from the bettor for the chance to place a bet.

### ANIMAL FIGHTING

Professional gambling is illegal and is often involved with animal fights. State law prohibits anyone from training animals to fight, fighting animals, or being present at fights, whether or not gambling is taking place.

### ILLEGAL GAMBLING DEVICES

The following gambling devices are illegal:

- Slot machines.
- Video poker and video pull-tabs.
- Pachinko and pachislo machines.
- Other electronic games of chance.

### ANTIQUÉ SLOT MACHINES

Antique slot machines ownership is okay if it is:

- At least 25 years old (antique).
- Played at no cost.
- Not operated for gambling purposes.

### CARD / DICE GAMES

It is illegal for individuals to offer card or dice games, or any gambling activity, for profit. No one, except a licensed card room, can collect a fee or percentage of wagers from card games.

Commercial businesses that sell food or drink for on-premises consumption may allow patrons to roll dice or flip coins for food, drink, or coin-operated music purchases only. Patrons must never be allowed to roll dice for money. In addition, these businesses may apply for a license to offer card games with wagering and/or fees.

Charitable and nonprofit organizations may let their members, (no guests), play unlicensed card and dice games under restricted conditions. The organization must have a liquor license.

In order to allow up to 25% non-members to play card games or to collect a fee from card players, nonprofit organizations must apply for a card room license.

### SPORTS WAGERING

Sports wagering is illegal, except for the following:

- 100-square sports boards under restricted conditions.
- Tribal casinos with approved sports book wagering licensing agreements in negotiated state compacts.



## INTERNET GAMBLING

The use of the internet or telephone to transmit or receive gambling information, (conducting gambling), is illegal in Washington State. For example, conducting raffles, bingo, or pull-tabs on Facebook is illegal. Exception, Tribal sports wagering is specifically authorized by law.

## PROFESSIONAL GAMBLING

If you have a substantial interest in or other control over any premises, you will be held responsible and could be charged with professional gambling if you knowingly allow unauthorized gambling activity on your premises.

You are engaged in “professional gambling” if, acting other than as a player, you knowingly:

- Engage in conduct which materially aids any form
- of gambling activity; or
- Pay a fee to participate in a card game, contest of chance, lottery, or other gambling activity; or
- Accept or receive money or other property from participation in a gambling activity; or
- Engage in bookmaking; or
- Conduct a lottery.

Conduct may include activity directed toward:

- Creating or establishing the particular game, contest, scheme, device; or
- Acquiring or maintaining the premises, paraphernalia, equipment or apparatus; or
- Soliciting or inducing persons to participate in the activities; or
- Actually conducting the playing phases; or
- Arranging any of its financial or recording phases or any other phase of its operation.

## PLAYER

“Player,” as used in gambling laws, means:

- A natural person who engages, on equal terms with the other participants, solely as a contestant or bettor; and
- No person will profit from the activity other than personal gambling winnings; and
- Not offering material assistance to the establishment, conduct or operation of the social game merely by performing, without fee or remuneration, acts directed toward the arrangement or facilitation of the game, such as inviting persons to play, permitting the use of premises for the game, or supplying cards or other equipment to be used in the games.

A person who engages in “bookmaking” is not a “player.”

## CRIMINAL PENALTIES

### FIRST DEGREE PROFESSIONAL GAMBLING CLASS B FELONY

Penalty: Up to 10 YEARS prison and/or \$20,000 fine

You are engaged in professional gambling in the first degree if you knowingly cause, aid, abet, or conspire with another to engage in professional gambling, and you:

- Act in concert or conspire with five or more people;
- Personally accept wagers exceeding \$5,000 during any thirty-day period on future contingent events;
- Work or are involved in an operation, that accepts wagers exceeding \$5,000 during any thirty-day period on future contingent events;
- Operate, manage, or profit from the operation of a premises or location where persons are charged a fee to participate in card games, lotteries or other gambling activities not authorized or licensed by us; or
- Engage in bookmaking

### SECOND DEGREE PROFESSIONAL GAMBLING CLASS C FELONY

Penalty: Up to 5 YEARS prison and/or \$10,000 fine

You are engaged in professional gambling in the second degree if you knowingly cause, aid, abet, or conspire with another to engage in professional gambling, and you:

- Act in concert or conspire with less than five people; or
- Accept wagers exceeding \$2,000 during any thirty-day period on future contingent events; or
- Work or are involved in an operation, that accepts wagers exceeding \$5,000 during any thirty-day period on future contingent events;
- Maintain a gambling premises as defined in [RCW 9.46.0249](#), or gambling records as defined in [RCW 9.46.0253](#).

### THIRD DEGREE PROFESSIONAL GAMBLING GROSS MISDEMEANOR

Penalty: Up to 1 YEAR prison and/or \$5,000 fine

You are engaged in professional gambling in the third degree if you knowingly cause, aid, abet, or conspire with another to engage in professional gambling, and:

- The activity does not constitute first or second degree;
- You operate unlicensed gambling activities in an illegal way; or
- Directly participating in, but not managing or directing, any gambling activity.