

Washington State Gambling Commission

SUMMARY

Mission: Protect the public by ensuring that gambling is legal and honest.

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 as a result of gaming.

Of the 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington State, 29 have compacts for Class III gaming and 21 of the tribes operate 28 casinos.

HIGHLIGHTS

Our updated tribal relations policy was finalized in November after receiving input from the tribes. The policy was re-written to align with our current processes and practices.

We've had robust discussions with tribal leaders and regulators; however, we have yet to agree on a solution to improve the current regulatory billing structure outlined in the Class III gaming compacts. We will continue discussions on this topic. We are continuing discussions with tribal leadership, regulators, operators, and health care professionals on a statewide self-exclusion process approved by the Legislature and we have begun discussions on sports gambling. We will continue to have regular discussions and provide updates for tribal leaders on these and any other emerging topics.

We mutually agreed to an amendment of the Muckleshoot Tribe's Class III gaming compact. The changes are consistent with other tribes' gaming compacts. We also mutually agreed to an amendment of the Nooksack Indian Tribe's Class III gaming compact. This agreement allows Class III gaming at the tribe's Northwood Casino and added a provision for creating a responsible gaming policy.

Our Tribal Gaming Unit worked with the Kalispel Tribe of Indians' Tribal Gaming Agency (TGA) and the casino staff to open the tribe's second Class III gaming facility in Cusick, Washington. The facility opened in April with 120 machines.

Agency staff traveled to the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) in Las Vegas to meet with tribes, other regulators, and manufacturers and to view new technology that may find its way to Washington.

We are continuing our work with a group of tribal regulators, operators, and industry staff to improve the review process for electronic gambling equipment used only in tribal gaming facilities. The group is drafting technical standards that, once agreed upon, will be used for future electronic equipment reviews.

In 2018, a request to transport and display unapproved tribal lottery system machines at the Northwest Indian Gaming Conference (NWIGC) & Expo was denied, which impacted equipment manufacturers for tribal casinos. In January 2019, our Commissioners voted to initiate rulemaking to clarify what gambling devices can be displayed at trade shows. We

requested and received input from stakeholders, including tribal regulators, to find a solution. The rule was subsequently finalized and implemented before the 2019 NWIGC expo.

In partnership with the Muckleshoot Tribe's TGA, we conducted a weeklong new agent training course. The 60 students who attended are regulatory staff from 15 different tribes who will be working at the tribal casinos. Topics included history, licensing, and regulation of Class III gaming in Washington State.

Our Electronic Gambling Lab and Tribal Gaming Unit staff conducted two intermediate tribal lottery system training classes with 40 students from 5 tribes. Each class covered how to best review and regulate the various tribal lottery systems in operation at tribal casinos. The Electronic Gambling Lab also provided individual training to TGA staff as requested.

We participated in, or organized, meetings and trainings for: licensing staff, TGA directors, gaming executives, equipment manufacturers, and independent testing laboratories. We provided assistance to TGA directors on accessing our online portal through SecureAccess Washington (SAW). This is the secure portal where users can submit licensing applications and fees, as well as access records and reports. We provided instructions in three additional languages (Simplified Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese) to assist TGA staff who need to register for SAW.

As part of our ongoing co-regulatory relationship with the tribes, and to improve operational efficiency and adaptation of new technology, we jointly agreed to 44 clarifications of compact appendices via Appendix A and X2 revisions and memorandums of understanding. We also concurred with 284 internal control and game rule submissions.

STAFF CONTACT

Julie Lies, Tribal Liaison, 360-486-3586, julie.lies@wsgc.wa.gov