

STATE OF NEW YORK

4967

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 9, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. CUSICK -- read once and referred to the Committee on Racing and Wagering

AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, in relation to poker tournaments

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 185 of the general municipal law, as amended by
2 chapter 574 of the laws of 1978, is amended to read as follows:
3 § 185. Short title; purpose of article. This article shall be known
4 and may be cited as the games of chance licensing law. The legislature
5 hereby declares that the raising of funds for the promotion of bona fide
6 charitable, educational, scientific, health, religious and patriotic
7 causes and undertakings, where the beneficiaries are undetermined, is in
8 the public interest. It hereby finds that, as conducted prior to the
9 enactment of this article, games of chance were the subject of exploita-
10 tion by professional gamblers, promoters, and commercial interests, and
11 it finds further that tournaments of the various games of poker as
12 offered by authorized organizations pursuant to subdivision two of
13 section nine of article one of the New York state constitution, should
14 be regulated under this article. It is hereby declared to be the policy
15 of the legislature that all phases of the supervision, licensing and
16 regulation of games of chance and of the conduct of games of chance,
17 should be closely controlled and that the laws and regulations pertain-
18 ing thereto should be strictly construed and rigidly enforced; that the
19 conduct of the game and all attendant activities should be so regulated
20 and adequate controls so instituted as to discourage commercialization
21 of gambling in all its forms, including the rental of commercial prem-
22 ises for games of chance, and to ensure a maximum availability of the
23 net proceeds of games of chance exclusively for application to the
24 worthy causes and undertakings specified herein; that the only justi-
25 fication for this article is to foster and support such worthy causes
26 and undertakings, and that the mandate of section nine of article one of
27 the state constitution, as amended, should be carried out by rigid regu-
28 lations to prevent commercialized gambling, prevent participation by

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 criminal and other undesirable elements and prevent the diversion of
2 funds from the purposes herein authorized.

3 § 2. Subdivision 3 of section 186 of the general municipal law, as
4 amended by chapter 531 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 3. "Games of chance" shall mean and include only the games known as
7 "merchandise wheels", "coin boards", "merchandise boards", "seal cards",
8 "event games", "raffles", "poker tournaments" and "bell jars" and such
9 other specific games as may be authorized by the board, in which prizes
10 are awarded on the basis of a designated winning number or numbers,
11 color or colors, symbol or symbols determined by chance, but not includ-
12 ing games commonly known as "bingo or lotto" which are controlled under
13 article fourteen-H of this chapter and also not including "bookmaking",
14 "policy or numbers games" and "lottery" as defined in section 225.00 of
15 the penal law. No game of chance shall involve wagering of money by one
16 player against another player.

17 § 3. Section 186 of the general municipal law is amended by adding a
18 new subdivision 3-f to read as follows:

19 3-f. "Poker tournaments" shall mean and include contests in which
20 participants compete by playing poker games that are approved by the
21 board. Placement in a poker tournament shall be determined by the number
22 of poker chips that are accumulated during the course of play or by the
23 various times that contestants are eliminated from the tournament during
24 the course of play. Poker chips shall be allotted to contestants in
25 accordance with rules that are adopted by the board.

26 § 4. Subdivision 14 of section 186 of the general municipal law, as
27 amended by chapter 531 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as
28 follows:

29 14. "One occasion" shall mean the successive operations of any one
30 single type of game of chance which results in the awarding of a series
31 of prizes amounting to five hundred dollars or four hundred dollars
32 during any one license period, in accordance with the provisions of
33 subdivision eight of section one hundred eighty-nine of this article, as
34 the case may be. For purposes of the game of chance known as a merchan-
35 dise wheel or a raffle, "one occasion" shall mean the successive oper-
36 ations of any one such merchandise wheel or raffle for which the limit
37 on a series of prizes provided by subdivision six of section one hundred
38 eighty-nine of this article shall apply. For purposes of the game of
39 chance known as a bell jar, "one occasion" shall mean the successive
40 operation of any one such bell jar, seal card, event game, coin board,
41 or merchandise board which results in the awarding of a series of prizes
42 amounting to three thousand dollars. For the purposes of the game of
43 chance known as raffle "one occasion" shall mean a calendar year during
44 which successive operations of such game are conducted. For the purpose
45 of poker tournaments, "one occasion" shall mean the period of time from
46 the commencement of such tournament until a winner or winners are deter-
47 mined or a pre-determined time to conclude the tournament has been
48 reached.

49 § 5. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 5 of section 189 of the general
50 municipal law, as amended by section 11 of part MM of chapter 59 of the
51 laws of 2017, is amended to read as follows:

52 (a) No single prize awarded by games of chance other than raffle or
53 poker tournament shall exceed the sum or value of three hundred dollars,
54 except that for merchandise wheels, no single prize shall exceed the sum
55 or value of two hundred fifty dollars, and for bell jar, no single prize
56 shall exceed the sum or value of one thousand dollars.

1 § 6. Subdivision 8 of section 189 of the general municipal law, as
2 amended by chapter 434 of the laws of 2016, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 8. Except for merchandise wheels [~~and~~], raffles and poker tournaments,
5 no series of prizes on any one occasion shall aggregate more than four
6 hundred dollars when the licensed authorized organization conducts five
7 single types of games of chance during any one license period. Except
8 for merchandise wheels, raffles [~~and~~], bell jars and poker tournaments,
9 no series of prizes on any one occasion shall aggregate more than five
10 hundred dollars when the licensed authorized organization conducts less
11 than five single types of games of chance, exclusive of merchandise
12 wheels, raffles [~~and~~], bell jars and poker tournaments, during any one
13 license period. No authorized organization shall award by raffle prizes
14 with an aggregate value in excess of three million dollars during any
15 one license period.

16 § 7. Subdivision 1 of section 195-d of the general municipal law, as
17 amended by section 13 of part MM of chapter 59 of the laws of 2017, is
18 amended to read as follows:

19 1. A fee may be charged by any licensee for admission to any game or
20 games of chance conducted under any license issued under this article.
21 The clerk or department may in its discretion fix a minimum fee. No
22 more than one hundred dollars shall be charged as an admission fee to a
23 poker tournament. Fifty percent of such fee shall be applied to a prize
24 or prizes, as may be determined by the authorized organization, and
25 fifty percent of such fee shall be retained by the authorized organiza-
26 tion, subject to the provisions of subdivision six of section one
27 hundred eighty-six of this article.

28 § 8. Section 195-e of the general municipal law, as amended by section
29 14 of part MM of chapter 59 of the laws of 2017, is amended to read as
30 follows:

31 § 195-e. Advertising games. A licensee may advertise the conduct of
32 games of chance to the general public by means of newspaper, circular,
33 handbill and poster, and by one sign not exceeding sixty square feet in
34 area, which may be displayed on or adjacent to the premises owned or
35 occupied by a licensed authorized organization, through the internet or
36 television as may be regulated by the rules and regulations of the
37 commission. When an organization is licensed or authorized to conduct
38 games of chance on the premises of an authorized games of chance lessor,
39 one additional such sign may be displayed on or adjacent to the premises
40 in which the games are to be conducted. Additional signs may be
41 displayed upon any firefighting or ambulance equipment belonging to any
42 licensed authorized organization that is a volunteer fire company,
43 volunteer ambulance corps or upon any equipment of a first aid or rescue
44 squad in and throughout the community served by such volunteer fire
45 company, volunteer ambulance corps or such first aid or rescue squad, as
46 the case may be. All advertisements shall be limited to the description
47 of such event as "Games of chance" [~~or~~], "Las Vegas Night" or "Poker
48 Tournament", the name of the authorized organization conducting such
49 games, the license number of the authorized organization as assigned by
50 the clerk or department, the prizes offered and the date, location and
51 time of the event.

52 § 9. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
53 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
54 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
55 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
56 completed on or before such effective date.