

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2009 SESSION

CHAPTER 121

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 18.2-340.16, 18.2-340.23, and 18.2-340.24 of the Code of Virginia, relating to charitable gaming; exemption from regulation.

[H 2595]

Approved February 25, 2009

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 18.2-340.16, 18.2-340.23, and 18.2-340.24 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-340.16. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Bingo" means a specific game of chance played with (i) individual cards having randomly numbered squares ranging from one to seventy-five, (ii) Department-approved electronic devices that display facsimiles of bingo cards and are used for the purpose of marking and monitoring players' cards as numbers are called, or (iii) Department-approved cards, in which prizes are awarded on the basis of designated numbers on such cards conforming to a predetermined pattern of numbers selected at random.

"Board" means the Charitable Gaming Board created pursuant to § 2.2-2455.

"Bona fide member" means an individual who participates in activities of a qualified organization other than such organization's charitable gaming activities.

"Charitable gaming" or "charitable games" means those raffles and games of chance explicitly authorized by this article.

"Charitable gaming supplies" includes bingo cards or sheets, devices for selecting bingo numbers, instant bingo cards, pull-tab cards and seal cards, and any other equipment or product manufactured for or intended to be used in the conduct of charitable games. However for the purposes of this article, charitable gaming supplies shall not include items incidental to the conduct of charitable gaming such as markers, wands or tape.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

"Conduct" means the actions associated with the provision of a gaming operation during and immediately before or after the permitted activity, which may include, but not be limited to, (i) selling bingo cards or packs, electronic devices, instant bingo or pull-tab cards, or raffle tickets, (ii) calling bingo games, (iii) distributing prizes, and (iv) any other services provided by volunteer workers.

"Department" means the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

"Fair market rental value" means the rent that a rental property will bring when offered for lease by a lessor who desires to lease the property but is not obligated to do so and leased by a lessee under no necessity of leasing.

"Gaming expenses" means prizes, supplies, costs of publicizing gaming activities, audit and administration or permit fees, and a portion of the rent, utilities, accounting and legal fees and such other reasonable and proper expenses as are directly incurred for the conduct of charitable gaming.

"Gross receipts" means the total amount of money generated by an organization from charitable gaming before the deduction of expenses, including prizes.

"Instant bingo," "pull tabs," or "seal cards" means specific games of chance played by the random selection of one or more individually prepacked cards, including Department-approved electronic versions thereof, with winners being determined by the preprinted or predetermined appearance of concealed letters, numbers or symbols that must be exposed by the player to determine wins and losses and may include the use of a seal card which conceals one or more numbers or symbols that have been designated in advance as prize winners. Such cards may be dispensed by electronic or mechanical equipment.

"Jackpot" means a bingo game that the organization has designated on its game program as a jackpot game, exclusive of a "winner-take-all" bingo game, in which the prize amount is greater than \$100.

"Landlord" means any person or his agent, firm, association, organization, partnership, or corporation, employee, or immediate family member thereof, which owns and leases, or leases any premise devoted in whole or in part to the conduct of bingo games, and any person residing in the same household as a landlord.

"Management" means the provision of oversight of a gaming operation, which may include, but is not limited to, the responsibilities of applying for and maintaining a permit or authorization, compiling, submitting and maintaining required records and financial reports, and ensuring that all aspects of the operation are in compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations.

"Operation" means the activities associated with production of a charitable gaming activity, which

may include, but not be limited to (i) the direct on-site supervision of the conduct of charitable gaming; (ii) coordination of volunteers; and (iii) all responsibilities of charitable gaming designated by the organization's management.

"Organization" means any one of the following:

1. A volunteer fire department or rescue squad or auxiliary unit thereof which has been recognized in accordance with § 15.2-955 by an ordinance or resolution of the political subdivision where the volunteer fire department or rescue squad is located as being a part of the safety program of such political subdivision;
2. An organization operated exclusively for religious, charitable, community or educational purposes;
3. An athletic association or booster club or a band booster club established solely to raise funds for school-sponsored athletic or band activities for a public school or private school accredited pursuant to § 22.1-19 or to provide scholarships to students attending such school;
4. An association of war veterans or auxiliary units thereof organized in the United States;
5. A fraternal association or corporation operating under the lodge system;
6. A local chamber of commerce; or
7. Any other nonprofit organization that raises funds by conducting raffles that generate annual gross receipts of ~~\$25,000~~ *\$40,000* or less, provided such gross receipts from the raffle, less expenses and prizes, are used exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or community purposes.

"Qualified organization" means any organization to which a valid permit has been issued by the Department to conduct charitable gaming or any organization that is exempt pursuant to § 18.2-340.23.

"Raffle" means a lottery in which the prize is won by (i) a random drawing of the name or prearranged number of one or more persons purchasing chances or (ii) a random contest in which the winning name or preassigned number of one or more persons purchasing chances is determined by a race involving inanimate objects floating on a body of water, commonly referred to as a "duck race."

"Reasonable and proper business expenses" means business expenses actually incurred by a qualified organization in the conduct of charitable gaming and not otherwise allowed under this article or under Board regulations on real estate and personal property tax payments, travel expenses, payments of utilities and trash collection services, legal and accounting fees, costs of business furniture, fixtures and office equipment and costs of acquisition, maintenance, repair or construction of an organization's real property. For the purpose of this definition, salaries and wages of employees whose primary responsibility is to provide services for the principal benefit of an organization's members shall not qualify as a business expense. However, payments made pursuant to § 51.1-1204 to the Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund shall be deemed a reasonable and proper business expense.

"Supplier" means any person who offers to sell, sells or otherwise provides charitable gaming supplies to any qualified organization.

§ 18.2-340.23. Organizations exempt from certain permits and fees.

A. No organization that reasonably expects, based on prior charitable gaming annual results or any other quantifiable method, to realize gross receipts of ~~\$25,000~~ *\$40,000* or less in any 12-month period shall be required to (i) notify the Department of its intention to conduct charitable gaming, or (ii) comply with Board regulations. If any organization's actual gross receipts for the 12-month period exceed ~~\$25,000~~ *\$40,000*, the Department may require the organization to file by a specified date the report required by § 18.2-340.30.

B. Any volunteer fire department or rescue squad or auxiliary unit thereof which has been recognized in accordance with § 15.2-955 by an ordinance or resolution of the political subdivision where the volunteer fire department or rescue squad is located as being part of the safety program of such political subdivision shall be exempt from the payment of application fees required by § 18.2-340.25 and the payment of audit fees required by § 18.2-340.31. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as exempting volunteer fire departments and rescue squads from any other provisions of this article or other Board regulations.

C. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Department from conducting any investigation or audit it deems appropriate to ensure an organization's compliance with the provisions of this article and, to the extent applicable, Board regulations.

§ 18.2-340.24. Eligibility for permit; exceptions; where valid.

A. To be eligible for a permit to conduct charitable gaming, an organization shall:

1. Have been in existence and met on a regular basis in the Commonwealth for a period of at least three years immediately prior to applying for a permit.

The three-year residency requirement shall not apply (i) to any lodge or chapter of a national or international fraternal order or of a national or international civic organization which is exempt under § 501 (c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code and which has a lodge or chapter holding a charitable gaming permit issued under the provisions of this article anywhere within the Commonwealth; (ii) to booster clubs which have been operating for less than three years and which have been established solely to raise funds for school-sponsored activities in public schools or private schools accredited pursuant to § 22.1-19; (iii) to recently established volunteer fire and rescue companies or

departments, after county, city or town approval; or (iv) to an organization which relocates its meeting place on a permanent basis from one jurisdiction to another, complies with the requirements of subdivision 2 of this section, and was the holder of a valid permit at the time of its relocation.

2. Be operating currently and have always been operated as a nonprofit organization.

3. Have at least 50% of its membership consist of residents of the Commonwealth; however, if an organization (i) does not consist of bona fide members and (ii) is exempt under § 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, the Board shall exempt such organizations from the requirements of this subdivision.

B. Any organization whose gross receipts from all charitable gaming exceeds or can be expected to exceed ~~\$25,000~~ *\$40,000* in any calendar year shall have been granted tax-exempt status pursuant to § 501 (c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. At the same time tax-exempt status is sought from the Internal Revenue Service, the same documentation may be filed with the Department for an interim certification of tax-exempt status. If such documentation is filed, the Department may, after reviewing such documentation it deems necessary, issue its determination of tax-exempt status within 60 days of receipt of such documentation. The Department shall charge a fee of \$500 for such determination. This interim certification of tax-exempt status shall be valid until the Internal Revenue Service issues its determination of tax-exempt status, or for 18 months, whichever is earlier.

C. A permit shall be valid only for the locations, dates, and times designated in the permit.