

205 CMR: MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION

205 CMR 147.00: UNIFORM STANDARDS OF RULES OF THE GAMES

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147.01: Scope and Purpose

205 CMR 147.00 shall govern the authorization of the rules of the game for table games offered for play in a gaming establishment and the standards applicable to table games offered for play in a gaming establishment.

147.02: Rules of the Game

Only those table games and their rules authorized by the Commission and posted on the Commission's website in accordance with 205 CMR 147.03(1) may be offered for play in a gaming establishment. A gaming licensee shall not offer a new game or game variation for play until the new game or game variation has been approved by the Commission in accordance with 205 CMR 147.04.

147.03: Notice and Patron Access

- (1) The Commission shall maintain on its website the complete text of the rules of all authorized table games.
- (2) Each gaming licensee shall maintain in the Game Sense area a printed or digital copy of the complete text of the rules of all authorized table games.
- (3) A gaming licensee shall not change the rules of a table game that is presently being operated from one authorized rule to another or add, change, or delete any additional wagering requirement permitted by 205 CMR 147.07(6) unless, at least one-half hour in advance of such change, the gaming licensee:
 - (a) Posts a sign at the gaming table advising patrons of the rule or wager change and the time that it will go into effect;
 - (b) Announces the rule or wager change to patrons who are at the table; and
 - (c) Notifies the Bureau of the rule or wager change, the gaming table where it will be implemented, and the time that it will become effective.
- (4) A gaming licensee may, at any time, change the permissible minimum or maximum wager at a table game without notifying the Bureau of such change upon posting a sign at the gaming table advising patrons of the new permissible minimum or maximum wager and announcing the change to patrons who are at the table.

- (5) The location, size, and language of each sign required by 205 CMR 147.03(3) and 205 CMR 147.03(4) shall be submitted to and approved by the Bureau prior to its use.

147.04: Petition for a New Game or Game Variation

- (1) A petitioner may petition the Bureau for approval of a new game or game variation.
- (2) A proposed new game or game variation may be a variation of an authorized game, a composite of authorized games, or a new game.
- (3) A petition for a proposed new game or game variation shall be in writing, signed by the petitioner(s), and shall include, at a minimum, the following information:
- (a) The name(s) and address(es) of petitioner(s);
 - (b) The name of the game, which must be different than the name of a game previously approved by the Commission;
 - (c) Whether the game is a variation of an authorized game, a composite of authorized games, or a new game;
 - (d) The name of the gaming licensee serving as a sponsor of the new game or game variation petition;
 - (e) A complete and detailed description of the game for which approval is sought, including:
 - 1. A summary of the game, including the objectives of the game, the method of play, and the wagers offered;
 - 2. A draft of the proposed rules of the game including a description of the equipment used to play the game and specific examples and dealing procedures;
 - 3. Specific procedures to remedy all misdeals and malfunctions of any gaming equipment utilized;
 - 4. The true odds, the payout odds, and the house advantage for each wager;
 - 5. Sample(s) of new or modified gaming accessories or apparatuses associated with the game;
 - 6. A sketch or picture of the game layout, if any;
 - 7. Sketches or pictures of the equipment used to play the game; and
 - 8. The report of the Commission-certified independent testing laboratory issued pursuant to 205 CMR 147.04(4).
 - (f) Whether the game, its name, or any of the equipment used to play it is covered by any copyrights, trademarks or patents, either issued or pending;
 - (g) A request for a test or experiment of the game in accordance with 205 CMR 147.04(5);
 - (h) Any other information or material requested by the Bureau.
- (4) Independent Certified Testing. In addition to filing a request with the Bureau, the petitioner shall, at its expense, submit copies of the items listed in 205 CMR 147.04(3)(e)(1)-(7) for review to an independent testing laboratory certified by the Commission pursuant to 205 CMR 144.06 to conduct a mathematical analysis of the game pursuant to 205 CMR 147.03(e)(4).
- (5) Field Trials.

- (a) Petitioners shall submit the following in connection with any proposed test of the game in accordance with 205 CMR 147.04(3)(g):
 1. The name of the gaming establishment where the test of the proposed new game or wager will take place;
 2. The dates and times when the test will take place, and the gaming tables or other gaming equipment that will be involved;
 3. The proposed signage to be posted at or within the direct vicinity of the table where the test is to be conducted;
 4. The criteria proposed for use in determining the success of the test, and the methods proposed for documenting it, including any necessary forms; and
 5. Any other materials or information requested by the Bureau.
 - (b) A test of the new game or wager shall take place at such times and places and under such conditions as the Bureau may require. The rules of the game and the test may be modified at any time during the test period if the Bureau deems it necessary to do so.
- (6) Comment Period. There shall be a public comment period during which comments on proposed new games or game variations may be submitted to the Bureau for review. This comment period shall begin on the first day of the new game or game variation field trial and shall conclude on the final day of the new game or game variation field trial.
- (7) Review. In reviewing a petition for a new game or game variation, the Bureau may consider rules and method of play; true and payout odds; wagers offered; layout; equipment used to play the game; personnel requirements; game security and integrity; similarity to other authorized games or other games of chance; other variations or composites of the game previously approved as authorized games; results of the field trials conducted pursuant to 205 CMR 147.04(5), as well as any other relevant factors. The Commission shall have the discretion to approve or deny with reasonable cause the gaming licensee's petition for a new game or game variation following a recommendation from the Bureau.

147.05: Gaming Tournaments.

- (1) A gaming licensee may conduct a gaming tournament for any table game authorized by the Commission pursuant to 205 CMR 147.00.
- (2) No gaming tournament shall be conducted unless the gaming licensee files a written notice with the Bureau at least five business days prior to the commencement of such tournament, which shall include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - (a) The date(s), time(s), and location(s) of the scheduled gaming tournament;
 - (b) The number of participants expected;
 - (c) The game type;
 - (d) Rules concerning tournament play and participation;
 - (e) The prize structure;
 - (f) Dealer tips, if applicable;
 - (g) Participant registration procedures;
 - (h) The methodology for determining winners;
 - (i) The equipment to be used; and

- (j) Forms utilized in connection with the tournament.
 - (k) A description of security and surveillance measures that will be implemented for the gaming tournament;
 - (l) A certification from the supervisors of the gaming licensee's security, gaming operations, and surveillance departments that the proposed gaming tournament will not adversely affect the security and integrity of gaming operations;
 - (m) A certification from the gaming establishment controller or designee that he or she has reviewed the rules for the tournament in regard to gaming tournament revenue reporting; and
 - (n) A certification from a holder of key gaming employee license that the tournament will be conducted in accordance with 205 CMR 147.05(2).
- (3) The Bureau may, at any time, require the gaming licensee to immediately cease any gaming tournament conducted if the gaming tournament is in any material manner different from the description contained in the information provided pursuant to 205 CMR 147.05(2).
 - (4) All funds collected by a gaming licensee to fund the prize pool (for example, buy-in, re-buy, or add-on) shall be disbursed to the participants as a prize pool, except that a gaming licensee may withhold dealer tips in an authorized tournament upon notification to the participants.
 - (5) A gaming licensee shall make available to the public on its website the information required by 205 CMR 147.05(2).

147.06: Electronic, Electrical, and Mechanical Devices Prohibited

Except as specifically permitted by the Commission, no person shall possess with the intent to use, or actually use, at any table game, either by himself or in concert with others, any calculator, computer, phone, watch, camera or other electronic, electrical or mechanical cheating and swindling device pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23K, § 40, to assist in projecting an outcome at any table game or in keeping track of or analyzing the cards having been dealt, the changing probabilities of any table game, or the playing strategies to be utilized. No electronic, electrical, or mechanical device will be permitted on the gaming table.

147.07: Minimum and Maximum Wagers; Additional Wagering Requirements

- (1) A gaming licensee may offer:
 - (a) Different maximum wagers at one gaming table for each permissible wager in an authorized game;
 - (b) Different maximum wagers at different gaming tables for each permissible wager in an authorized game.
- (2) A gaming licensee shall provide notice of the minimum and maximum wagers in effect at each gaming table and any changes thereto in accordance with 205 CMR 147.03(3) and 205 CMR 147.03(4).
- (3) Notwithstanding 205 CMR 147.07(3), a gaming licensee may, in its discretion, permit a player to wager below the established minimum wager or above the established maximum wager at a gaming table.

- (4) Any wager accepted by a dealer shall be paid or lost in its entirety in accordance with the rules of the game, notwithstanding that the wager exceeded the current table maximum or was lower than the current table minimum.
- (5) Nothing in this section shall preclude a gaming licensee from establishing additional wagering requirements that are consistent with the rules of the game, such as a requirement that wagers be made in specified increments, provided that the gaming licensee satisfies the notice requirements of 205 CMR 147.03(3).

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