



Act 285 of the 2023 Regular Session Electronic Video Bingo Machines

Act 285 of the 2023 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature (“Act 285”) made changes to La. R.S. 4:724, regarding certain electronic video bingo licenses and permits previously issued by the Office of Charitable Gaming (“OCG”). The provisions of Act 285 became effective July 1, 2023, and provide the following:

1. Any active license or permit issued to any location for the use of electronic bingo machines as of June 30, 2022, is deemed a bona fide and valid license and permit.
2. Any active license or permit issued to any distributor for the use of electronic video bingo machines as of June 30, 2022, is deemed a bona fide and valid license and permit.
3. OCG shall not issue any new license or permit to any location or to any distributor for use of electronic bingo machines after June 30, 2022.
4. If the physical location in which a charitable gaming organization operates electronic video bingo machines is destroyed or damaged as a result of an occurrence over which the licensee or permittee has no control, then OCG may allow electronic or video bingo machines to operate at the same physical location.
5. A location or electronic video bingo machine lawfully licensed by OCG may be sold or transferred to a new owner if the new owner is found suitable to hold a charitable gaming license.
6. If the Louisiana Legislature authorizes OCG to issue new licenses or permits after June 30, 2022, no new license or permit can be issued that would allow an electronic or video bingo machine to be placed within one mile from certain properties. These restricts do not apply in situations described in #4 above.

The effect of Act 285 is to recognize and validate all current licenses and permits issued to a location or distributor as of June 30, 2022 and to prohibit the issuance of any new license or permit to any location or distributor for use of machines after June 30, 2022. For purposes of this prohibition, the issuance of a license to a person or entity that either purchases a licensed location or purchases actively permitted machines from a distributor in accordance with R.S. 4:724(M) is not considered the licensing of a new electronic video bingo location or distributor.

The Office of Charitable Gaming (OCG) has issued this information bulletin in compliance with La. R.S. 4:705(9) to familiarize the public and its external customers with provisions of the Charitable Gaming laws. This bulletin contains informal information but does not have the force and effect of law.

The changes to La. R.S. 4:724 enacted by Act 285 do not prohibit the movement of electronic bingo machines which were permitted as of June 30, 2022 from one location licensed as of June 30, 2022 to another location licensed as of June 30, 2022.

Act 285 did not make changes to La. R.S. 4:724(K). Therefore, it is still permissible to replace a permitted machine that is destroyed or rendered inoperable in any manner with a machine of similar make and model. The replacement machine can be removed from a warehouse or purchased new.

OCG Information Bulletins No. 2021-003 and 2021-003A are rendered moot by Act 285.

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