
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1458 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY PASHINSKI, YOUNGBLOOD, DAVIS, KOTIK, COHEN,
DeLUCA, MAHONEY AND CALTAGIRONE, JULY 20, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON GAMING OVERSIGHT, JULY 20, 2015

AN ACT

1 Providing for the regulation of video gaming and for powers and
2 duties of the Department of Revenue; establishing the Video
3 Gaming Account; and prescribing penalties.

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6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Short title.

9 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Video Gaming
10 Regulation Act.

11 Section 2. Definitions.

12 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
13 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
14 context clearly indicates otherwise:

15 "Account." The Video Gaming Account established under
16 section 14.

17 "Coin-operated amusement machine." A machine that requires
18 the insertion of a coin, currency or tokens to play or activate
19 a game, the outcome of which is primarily determined by the
20 skill of the player. The term does not include a video lottery
21 terminal.

22 "Department." The Department of Revenue of the Commonwealth.

23 "Distributor." Any individual, partnership, association or
24 corporation, licensed by the Department of Revenue to buy, sell,
25 service or distribute video gaming machines. The term does not
26 include a machine vendor or a manufacturer.

27 "Gaming machine." A device or machine that has the outcome
28 of play primarily determined by chance. The term includes an
29 antique slot machine under 18 Pa.C.S. § 5513(c) (relating to
30 gambling devices, gambling, etc.) when used for profit. The term

1 does not include any of the following:

2 (1) A coin-operated amusement machine.

3 (2) A video lottery terminal that has all of its seals
4 or identification plates.

5 (3) Slot machines as defined under 4 Pa.C.S. § 1103
6 (relating to definitions).

7 (4) A game of chance under the act of December 19, 1988
8 (P.L.1262, No.156), known as the Local Option Small Games of
9 Chance Act.

10 (5) Lottery machines used under the act of August 26,
11 1971 (P.L.351, No.91), known as the State Lottery Law.

12 "Host municipality." A municipality in which a licensed
13 establishment licensed under section 5 is located.

14 "Licensed establishment." A restaurant, bar, tavern, hotel
15 or club that has a valid liquor or malt or brewed beverage
16 license under Article IV of the act of April 12, 1951 (P.L.90,
17 No.21), known as the Liquor Code.

18 "Machine vendor." Any individual, partnership, association
19 or corporation that:

20 (1) is licensed by the Department of Revenue; and

21 (2) owns, services and maintains video gaming machines
22 for placement in licensed establishments.

23 "Manufacturer." Any individual, partnership, association or
24 corporation that:

25 (1) is licensed by the Department of Revenue; and

26 (2) manufactures or assembles video gaming machines.

27 "Net profits." All money put into a video gaming machine
28 minus the cash awards paid out to players.

29 "Service technician." An individual holding a service
30 technician's license issued by the Department of Revenue

1 allowing the individual to service, maintain and repair video
2 gaming machines.

3 "State Lottery." The lottery established and operated under
4 the act of August 26, 1971 (P.L.351, No.91), known as the State
5 Lottery Law.

6 "Video gaming machine." A device or machine:

7 (1) that, upon insertion of a coin or currency, will
8 play or simulate the play of a video poker, bingo, keno,
9 blackjack or any other game authorized by the Department of
10 Revenue;

11 (2) that utilizes a video display and microprocessors;
12 and

13 (3) in which, by the skill of the player or by chance,
14 the player may receive free games or credits that may be
15 redeemed for cash.

16 Section 3. Video gaming generally.

17 The department shall provide for video gaming at licensed
18 establishments. With the exception of tickets indicating credits
19 won, which are redeemable for cash, no machine may directly
20 dispense coins, cash, tokens or anything else of value.

21 Section 4. Licensing of manufacturers, distributors and
22 vendors.

23 (a) Background investigation and application fee.--The
24 department shall have the Pennsylvania State Police conduct a
25 background investigation of an applicant for a manufacturer,
26 distributor or machine vendor license as to personal and
27 business character, honesty and integrity. An applicant must pay
28 a nonrefundable application fee of \$5,000. The investigation may
29 utilize information on the applicant compiled by the
30 Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. The investigation includes

1 the following:

2 (1) An examination of criminal or civil records.

3 (2) An examination of personal, financial or business
4 records. This paragraph includes tax returns, bank accounts,
5 business accounts, mortgages and contracts to which the
6 license applicant is a party or has an interest.

7 (3) An examination of personal or business relationships
8 which:

9 (i) include a partial ownership or voting interest
10 in a partnership, association or corporation; and

11 (ii) bear on the fitness of the applicant for
12 licensure.

13 (b) Production of information.--

14 (1) In order to become a licensee, an applicant must
15 produce information, documentation and assurances as required
16 by the department.

17 (2) A license applicant must:

18 (i) consent in writing to and provide for the
19 examination of financial and business accounts, bank
20 accounts, tax returns and related records in the
21 applicant's possession or under the applicant's control
22 that establish by clear and convincing evidence the
23 financial stability, integrity and responsibility of the
24 license applicant; and

25 (ii) authorize all third parties in possession or
26 control of accounts or records under subparagraph (i) to
27 allow for their examination as deemed necessary by the
28 department in conducting background investigations.

29 (3) A license applicant must disclose on the application
30 form any criminal convictions for offenses graded above

1 summary offenses covering the 10-year period immediately
2 preceding the filing of the application. The license
3 applicant must also include on the application form any
4 convictions of the gambling laws of any jurisdiction.

5 (4) If a license applicant has conducted a gaming
6 operation in a jurisdiction that permits such activity, the
7 license applicant must produce letters of reference from the
8 gaming or casino enforcement or control agency that specify
9 the experiences of the agency with the license applicant, the
10 license applicant's associates and the license applicant's
11 gaming operations. If the license applicant is unable to
12 obtain these letters within 60 days of the request, the
13 license applicant may submit a copy of the letter requesting
14 the information together with a statement under oath or
15 affirmation that, during the period activities were
16 conducted, the license applicant was in good standing with
17 the appropriate gambling or casino enforcement control
18 agency.

19 (5) A license applicant must provide information,
20 documentation and assurances as required by the department to
21 establish by clear and convincing evidence the license
22 applicant's good character, honesty and integrity.
23 Information under this paragraph may relate to family,
24 habits, character, reputation, business affairs, financial
25 affairs, business associates, professional associates and
26 personal associates, covering the 10-year period immediately
27 preceding the filing of the application.

28 (b.1) Felony conviction prohibition.--A person that has been
29 convicted of a felony within 10 years of the date of application
30 shall not be issued a license under this act.

1 (c) Third-party disclosure.--

2 (1) A license applicant must accept any risk of adverse
3 public notice, embarrassment, criticism, damages or financial
4 loss, which may result from disclosure or publication by a
5 third party of material or information requested by the
6 department pursuant to action on an application.

7 (2) A license applicant expressly must waive a claim
8 against the department, executive director or the
9 Commonwealth and its employees from damages as a result of
10 disclosure or publication by a third party.

11 (d) Hearing upon denial.--A person who is denied a license
12 has the right to a hearing before the department in accordance
13 with the provisions of 2 Pa.C.S. Chs. 5 Subch. A (relating to
14 practice and procedure of Commonwealth agencies) and 7 Subch. A
15 (relating to judicial review of Commonwealth agency action).

16 (e) Sole proprietor vendors.--A sole proprietor vendor must
17 comply with all of the following:

18 (1) Be a resident of this Commonwealth for at least two
19 years prior to application for a license.

20 (2) Be of good moral character and reputation in the
21 community.

22 (3) Be at least 18 years of age.

23 (4) Be current in the payment of all taxes, interest and
24 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
25 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
26 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

27 (5) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
28 support the activities required to place and service video
29 gaming machines.

30 (f) Partnership vendors.--Partnership vendors must comply

1 with all of the following:

2 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
3 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
4 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
5 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

6 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
7 support the activities required to place and service video
8 gaming machines.

9 (3) Have each partner be:

10 (i) of good moral character and reputation in the
11 community;

12 (ii) at least 18 years of age; and

13 (iii) a resident of this Commonwealth for at least
14 two years prior to application for a license.

15 (4) At all times subsequent to licensing, a majority of
16 the partnership ownership interest must be held by residents
17 of this Commonwealth.

18 (g) Association and corporate vendors.--Association or
19 corporate vendors must comply with all of the following:

20 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
21 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
22 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
23 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

24 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
25 support the activities required to place and service video
26 gaming machines.

27 (3) Have each shareholder holding more than 10% of the
28 stock of a corporation be:

29 (i) of good moral character and reputation in the
30 community;

- 1 (ii) at least 18 years of age; and
2 (iii) a resident of this Commonwealth for at least
3 two years prior to application.

4 (h) Sole proprietor distributors.--A sole proprietor
5 distributor must comply with all of the following:

6 (1) Be a resident of this Commonwealth for at least one
7 year prior to application.

8 (2) Be of good moral character and reputation in the
9 community.

10 (3) Be at least 18 years of age.

11 (4) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
12 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
13 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
14 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

15 (5) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
16 support the activities required to sell and service video
17 gaming machines.

18 (i) Partnership distributors.--Partnership distributors must
19 comply with all of the following:

20 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
21 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
22 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
23 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

24 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
25 support the activities required to sell and service video
26 gaming machines.

27 (3) Have each partner be:

28 (i) of good moral character and reputation in the
29 community;

30 (ii) at least 18 years of age; and

1 (iii) a resident of this Commonwealth for at least
2 one year prior to application.

3 (4) At all times subsequent to licensing, a majority of
4 the partnership ownership interest must be held by residents
5 of this Commonwealth.

6 (j) Association and corporate distributors.--Association or
7 corporate distributors must comply with all of the following:

8 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
9 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
10 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
11 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

12 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
13 support the activities required to sell and service video
14 gaming machines.

15 (3) Have each shareholder holding more than 10% of the
16 stock of a corporation be:

17 (i) of good moral character and reputation in the
18 community; and

19 (ii) at least 18 years of age.

20 (4) For at least one year immediately prior to
21 application, have maintained and operated a coin machine
22 distributorship office and sales staff within this
23 Commonwealth. This paragraph does not apply to an association
24 distributor.

25 (k) Sole proprietor manufacturers.--A sole proprietor
26 manufacturer must comply with all of the following:

27 (1) Be of good moral character and reputation in the
28 community.

29 (2) Be at least 18 years of age.

30 (3) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and

1 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
2 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
3 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

4 (4) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
5 support the activities required to manufacture and sell video
6 gaming machines through a licensed distributor.

7 (1) Partnership manufacturers.--Partnership manufacturers
8 must comply with all of the following:

9 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
10 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
11 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
12 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

13 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
14 support the activities required to manufacture and sell video
15 gaming machines through a licensed distributor.

16 (3) Have each partner be:

17 (i) at least 18 years of age; and

18 (ii) of good moral character and reputation in the
19 community.

20 (m) Association and corporate manufacturers.--Association or
21 corporate manufacturers must comply with all of the following:

22 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
23 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
24 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
25 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

26 (2) Demonstrate sufficient financial resources to
27 support the activities required to manufacture and sell video
28 gaming machines through a licensed distributor.

29 (3) Have each shareholder holding more than 10% of the
30 stock of the corporation or association be:

1 (i) of good moral character and reputation in the
2 community; and

3 (ii) at least 18 years of age.

4 (n) Service technician.--A service technician must comply
5 with the following:

6 (1) Be current in the payment of taxes, interest and
7 penalties owed to the Commonwealth and political
8 subdivisions. This paragraph excludes items under formal
9 dispute or appeal under applicable law.

10 (2) Be of good moral character and reputation in the
11 community.

12 (3) Be at least 18 years of age.

13 (o) Written agreement.--A licensed establishment shall have
14 a written agreement with a licensed machine vendor for a minimum
15 12-month term. The agreement shall be approved by the department
16 and on file at the licensed establishment.

17 (p) Nonaccessibility to minors.--No video gaming machine may
18 be in an area easily accessible to minors. A floor-to-ceiling
19 wall is not required, but the area must be secure and easily
20 seen and observed by the employees or management of the licensed
21 establishment.

22 (q) Advertising prohibited.--No licensed establishment with
23 a video gaming license may advertise gaming in any form, written
24 or electronic, nor may its name include the words "casino,"
25 "gambling," "gaming" or any other term that may be interpreted
26 to advertise gaming.

27 Section 5. Licensed establishment license.

28 The department shall issue a license to any licensed
29 establishment upon a showing that its liquor or retail dispenser
30 license is valid and is in good standing with the Pennsylvania

1 Liquor Control Board. The annual fee for a licensed
2 establishment shall be \$500 per video gaming machine.

3 Section 6. Limitations on licensed establishments.

4 (a) Limitations.--Licensed establishments shall be subject
5 to the following limitations:

6 (1) No licensed establishment may have more than three
7 video gaming machines.

8 (2) No applicant may hold more than one type of license
9 authorized by this chapter.

10 (3) A licensee is responsible for payment of its license
11 fee. Payment of the fee by a person, partnership or
12 corporation other than the licensee is prohibited.

13 (b) Unlawful acts.--No licensed establishment shall permit:

14 (1) An individual under 21 years of age to operate or
15 attempt to operate a video gaming machine.

16 (2) An individual under 21 years of age to receive or
17 attempt to receive a prize from a video gaming machine.

18 (3) A visibly intoxicated person to play a video gaming
19 machine.

20 (4) An individual to tamper with the connection of a
21 video gaming machine to the central computer.

22 In addition to any other penalties provided by law, a person who
23 violates paragraph (1), (2) or (3) commits a summary offense.

24 (c) Seizure, forfeiture and destruction of gaming
25 machines.--Gaming machines shall be considered to be per se
26 illegal. Gaming machines and their proceeds may be seized upon
27 view as illegal contraband by agents of the department and any
28 other law enforcement agency. The owner of a gaming machine
29 shall have no right to compensation for the seizure and
30 destruction of a gaming machine or the proceeds of a gaming

1 machine.

2 (d) Penalties.--

3 (1) In the case of a gaming machine seized from a
4 licensed establishment, for a first violation, the penalty
5 shall be no less than \$1,000 nor more than \$5,000 and a
6 suspension of the licensed establishment owner's liquor
7 license for not less than seven consecutive days, and for
8 each subsequent violation, the penalty shall be \$15,000 and a
9 suspension of the liquor license for not less than 14
10 consecutive days.

11 (2) In the case of a gaming machine seized from a place
12 of business other than a licensed establishment, for a first
13 violation, the penalty shall be not less than \$1,000 nor more
14 than \$5,000 against the owner of the business from which the
15 gaming machine was seized, and for each subsequent violation,
16 the penalty shall be \$15,000.

17 Section 7. Central computer system.

18 The department shall utilize the central computer system
19 utilized by the State Lottery. All licensed video gaming
20 machines must be linked to the central computer system at the
21 State Lottery.

22 Section 8. Video gaming machine prototype.

23 The department shall develop a prototype video gaming machine
24 that includes hardware and software specifications. These
25 specifications shall include:

26 (1) All machines must have the ability to interact with
27 the central communications system.

28 (2) Unremovable identification plates shall appear on
29 the exterior of the machine containing the name of the
30 manufacturer and the serial and model number of the machine.

1 (3) Rules of play shall be displayed on the machine face
2 or screen as promulgated by the department.

3 (4) A video gaming machine may not directly dispense
4 coins, cash, tokens or any other article of exchange or value
5 except for tickets. Such tickets shall be dispensed by
6 pressing the ticket-dispensing button on the machine at the
7 end of one's turn or play. The ticket shall indicate the
8 total amount of credits and the cash award, and the player
9 shall turn in this ticket to the appropriate person at the
10 licensed establishment to receive the cash award. The cost of
11 the credit shall be 25¢, and the number of credits played per
12 game shall not exceed 10.

13 (5) No cash award for any individual game may exceed
14 \$1,000.

15 (6) All video gaming machines must be designed and
16 manufactured with total accountability to include gross
17 proceeds, net profits, winning percentages and any other
18 information the department requires.

19 (7) Each machine shall pay out a minimum of 85% of the
20 amount wagered.

21 (8) The department may contract with the board to
22 develop and verify specifications for video gaming machines.

23 Section 9. Fees.

24 (a) Vendors license and fee.--

25 (1) The annual fee for a machine vendor license shall be
26 \$25,000 for the first 50 video gaming machines and an
27 additional \$500 per video gaming machine license in excess of
28 50.

29 (2) A machine vendor license permits the vendor to sell
30 video gaming machines to another licensed machine vendor or

1 licensed distributor.

2 (b) Distributor license fee.--The annual fee for a
3 distributor license shall be \$10,000.

4 (c) Manufacturer license fee.--The annual fee for a
5 manufacturer license shall be \$10,000.

6 (d) Service technician license fee.--The annual fee for a
7 service technician license shall be \$100.

8 Section 10. Unlawful use by minors.

9 (a) Minors.--No individual under 21 years of age may use or
10 play a video gaming machine. An individual who violates this
11 subsection commits a summary offense.

12 (b) Licensees.--Licensees shall be subject to the following:

13 (1) A licensed establishment may not, regardless of
14 knowledge or intent, permit an individual under 21 years of
15 age to play or use a video gaming machine.

16 (2) A licensed establishment that violates this
17 subsection commits a misdemeanor of the second degree.

18 Section 11. Inducements prohibited.

19 (a) General rule.--A video gaming machine owner may not
20 offer or give any type of inducement or incentive to a licensed
21 establishment to secure a machine placement agreement.

22 (b) Definition.--As used in this section, the term
23 "inducement" or "incentive" means consideration from a licensed
24 machine vendor to a licensed establishment owner as an
25 enticement to solicit or maintain the licensed establishment
26 owner's business. The term includes cash, gifts, loans and
27 prepayment of commissions.

28 Section 12. Multiple types of licenses prohibited.

29 (a) Manufacturer restriction.--A manufacturer may not be
30 licensed as a machine vendor or own, manage or control a

1 licensed establishment and shall be licensed only to sell to
2 licensed distributors.

3 (b) Distributor restriction.--A licensed machine distributor
4 may not be licensed as a machine vendor or own, manage or
5 control a licensed establishment and shall only contract with
6 licensed machine vendors.

7 (c) Vendor restriction.--A machine vendor may not be
8 licensed as a manufacturer or distributor or own, manage or
9 control a licensed establishment and shall be licensed only to
10 contract with licensed distributors and licensed establishments.
11 This shall not prohibit a licensed vendor from selling used
12 equipment to another licensed vendor.

13 (d) Establishment owner restriction.--An owner of a licensed
14 establishment may not be licensed as a manufacturer, distributor
15 or vendor and shall only contract with a machine vendor to place
16 and service equipment.

17 Section 13. Illegal activities.

18 A person may not sell, distribute, service, own, operate or
19 place on location a video gaming machine unless the person is
20 licensed under this act and is in compliance with all
21 requirements of this act.

22 Section 14. Establishment of account and distribution of funds.

23 (a) Video Gaming Account.--The Video Gaming Account is
24 established in the State Treasury. Fees and fines under this act
25 and the portion of net profits under subsection (b) (2) (iii)
26 shall be deposited in the account.

27 (b) Distribution of net profits.--The following shall apply
28 to the distribution of net profits:

29 (1) Net profits shall be calculated by subtracting cash
30 awards from the total consideration played on the machine.

1 (2) The net profits from each video gaming machine shall
2 be distributed in the following manner:

3 (i) Thirty-three percent to the licensed
4 establishment.

5 (ii) Twenty-seven percent to the licensed vendor.

6 (iii) Thirty percent to the Property Tax Relief Fund
7 established under 4 Pa.C.S. § 1409 (relating to Property
8 Tax Relief Fund).

9 (iv) Five percent to the host municipality.

10 (v) Five percent to Category 1, Category 2 and
11 Category 3 licensed facilities.

12 (c) Department funding.--The department shall derive all
13 funding for its operations related to the establishment,
14 enforcement and operation of video gaming from the account.

15 (d) Payments to municipalities.--In addition to the funds
16 distributed under subsection (b) (2) (iv), the department shall
17 pay each municipality from the account \$500 per licensed machine
18 located in the municipality.

19 (e) Funds maintained in account.--An annual minimum balance
20 of \$2,000,000 shall be maintained in the account. Money in
21 excess of this amount on June 30 of each year shall be
22 transferred to the Property Tax Relief Fund.

23 (f) Funding for compulsive gambling programs.--The
24 department shall allocate from the account at least \$1,000,000
25 annually for the purpose of treating compulsive gambling in this
26 Commonwealth.

27 (g) Continuous appropriation.--The money in the account is
28 hereby continuously appropriated to the department for the
29 purposes enumerated in this act and shall not lapse at the end
30 of any fiscal year.

1 Section 15. Preemption of local taxes and license fees.

2 (a) Statutes.--Video gaming machines shall be exempt from
3 taxes levied under the following:

4 (1) The act of August 5, 1932 (Sp.Sess.1, P.L.45,
5 No.45), referred to as the Sterling Act.

6 (2) The act of December 31, 1965 (P.L.1257, No.511),
7 known as The Local Tax Enabling Act.

8 (3) 53 Pa.C.S. Pt. III Subpt. E (relating to home rule
9 and optional plan government).

10 (4) Any statute that confers taxing authority to a
11 political subdivision.

12 (b) Licensing fees.--Licensing fees shall comply with the
13 following:

14 (1) Video gaming machines are exempt from local
15 licensing fees.

16 (2) Local licensing fees imposed on all other coin-
17 operated amusement machines shall not exceed \$150.

18 Section 16. Exemption from State gaming laws.

19 Video gaming machines authorized under this act and their use
20 as authorized under this act are exempt from 18 Pa.C.S. § 5513
21 (relating to gambling devices, gambling, etc.).

22 Section 17. Exemption from Federal regulation.

23 The General Assembly declares that the Commonwealth is exempt
24 from section 2 of the Gambling Devices Transportation Act (64
25 Stat. 1134, 15 U.S.C. § 1172). Shipments of approved video
26 gaming machines into this Commonwealth in compliance with
27 sections 3 and 4 of the Gambling Devices Transportation Act (64
28 Stat. 1134, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1173 and 1174) shall be deemed legal
29 shipments into this Commonwealth.

30 Section 18. Effective date.

1 This act shall take effect in 60 days.