

ADVISORY

Casino Style Games

Fundraising event that offers casino-style games, such as poker, blackjack and roulette, must be licensed. This includes games that are played using chips or “funny money”.

We are aware of instances where an organization has hired a company (typically from out-of-state) to operate a fundraising event that offer casino-style games, such as poker, blackjack and roulette. Attendees generally pay a “donation” or “admission” fee in exchange for chips or “funny money”, which are used to place bets at the gaming tables. Typically, at the end of the evening, participants use their winnings to purchase raffle tickets or bid in an auction, or the player with the highest number of chips/funny money may win a prize.

This type of event appears to be a combination of a raffle with games of chance but does not fully comport with either statute. The event does not qualify as a raffle under RSA 287-A, because organizers limit the number of people that can participate in the raffle to those that have been successful at the games of chance. The games are more akin to “games of chance” because participants are risking something of value upon future contingent events based on the understanding, they may obtain something of value in return, namely the opportunity to enter the raffle, bid on the auction or otherwise win a prize.

Games of chance events held in New Hampshire must comply with (RSA 287-D) and (Lot 7200). These regulations require, among other things, that the organization hosting the event and the game operators running the games be licensed by the New Hampshire Lottery Commission.

If your organization hosts an event that includes casino-style games, it is your responsibility to ensure that such games are operated in accordance with New Hampshire’s gaming laws. For more information regarding these requirements, please contact the Licensing Unit of the New Hampshire Lottery Commission, Investigation and Compliance Division at (603) 271-7613.