

CHAPTER 31

AN ACT concerning regulation of the casino industry, amending P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.)

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 88 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-88) is amended to read as follows:

C.5:12-88 Renewal of casino licenses.

88. a. Subject to the power of the commission to deny, revoke, or suspend licenses, any casino license in force shall be renewed by the commission for the next succeeding license period upon proper application for renewal and payment of license fees and taxes as required by law and the regulations of the commission. The license period for a casino license renewed after April 30, 2004, shall be up to five years, but the commission may reopen licensing hearings at any time. In addition, the commission shall reopen licensing hearings at any time at the request of the division. The commission shall act upon any such application prior to the date of expiration of the current license.

b. Application for renewal shall be filed with the commission no later than 120 days prior to the expiration of the current license, and all license fees and taxes as required by law shall be paid to the commission on or before the date of expiration of the current license. c.

Upon renewal of any license the commission shall issue an appropriate renewal certificate or validating device or sticker which shall be attached to each casino license.

2. Section 94 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-94) is amended to read as follows:

C.5:12-94 Approval and denial of registrations and licenses other than casino licenses.

94. a. Upon the filing of an application for any license or registration required by this act, other than a casino license, and after submission of such supplemental information as the commission may require, the commission shall request the division to conduct such investigation into the qualification of the applicant, and the commission shall conduct such hearings concerning the qualification of the applicant, in accordance with its regulations, as may be necessary to determine qualification for such license or registration.

b. After such investigation, the commission may either deny the application or grant a license to or accept the registration of an applicant whom it determines to be qualified to hold such license or registration.

c. The commission shall have the authority to deny any application pursuant to the provisions of this act. When an application is denied, the commission shall prepare and file its order denying such application with the general reasons therefor, and if requested by the applicant, shall further prepare and file a statement of the reasons for the denial, including the specific findings of fact.

d. When the commission grants an application, the commission may limit or place such restrictions thereupon as it may deem necessary in the public interest. Casino service employee registration shall, upon issuance, remain in effect unless revoked, suspended, limited, or otherwise restricted by the commission. Licenses may be granted and renewed as follows:

(1) All casino employee licenses, casino service industry licenses issued pursuant to subsection c. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92), and junket representative and junket enterprise licenses issued pursuant to section 102 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-102) shall be issued for an initial term of four years, and may be renewed for subsequent terms of five years each; and

(2) All casino key employee licenses and casino service industry licenses required pursuant to subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92) shall be issued for an initial term of three years, and may be renewed for subsequent terms of five years each.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the commission shall reconsider the granting of any license or the approval of any registration at any time at the request of the division.

e. After an application is submitted to the commission, final action of the commission shall be taken within 90 days after completion of all hearings and investigations and the receipt of all information required by the commission.

- f. A complete application for the renewal of a casino employee or casino key employee

license shall be filed with the commission no later than the last day of the fifth month prior to the month in which the current license term expires.

3. Section 100 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-100) is amended to read as follows:

C.5:12-100 Games and gaming equipment.

100. a. This act shall not be construed to permit any gaming except the conduct of authorized games in a casino room in accordance with this act and the regulations promulgated hereunder and in a simulcasting facility to the extent provided by the "Casino Simulcasting Act," P.L.1992, c.19 (C.5:12-191 et al.). Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the commission approves the game of keno as an authorized game pursuant to section 5 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-5), as amended, keno tickets may be sold or redeemed in accordance with commission regulations at any location in a casino hotel approved by the commission for such activity.

b. Gaming equipment shall not be possessed, maintained or exhibited by any person on the premises of a casino hotel except in a casino room, in the simulcasting facility, or in restricted casino areas used for the inspection, repair or storage of such equipment and specifically designated for that purpose by the casino licensee with the approval of the commission. Gaming equipment which supports the conduct of gaming in a casino or simulcasting facility but does not permit or require patron access, such as computers, may be possessed and maintained by a casino licensee in restricted casino areas specifically designated for that purpose by the casino licensee with the approval of the commission. No gaming equipment shall be possessed, maintained, exhibited, brought into or removed from a casino room or simulcasting facility by any person unless such equipment is necessary to the conduct of an authorized game, has permanently affixed, imprinted, impressed or engraved thereon an identification number or symbol authorized by the commission, is under the exclusive control of a casino licensee or his employees, and is brought into or removed from the casino room or simulcasting facility following 24-hour prior notice given to an authorized agent of the commission.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, equipment which supports a multi-casino progressive slot system and links and interconnects slot machines of two or more casino licensees but is inaccessible to patrons, such as computers, may, with the approval of the commission, be possessed, maintained and operated by a casino licensee either in a restricted area on the premises of a casino hotel or in a secure facility specifically designed for that purpose off the premises of a casino hotel but within the city limits of the City of Atlantic City.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a person may, with the prior approval of the commission and under such terms and conditions as may be required by the commission, possess, maintain or exhibit gaming equipment in any other area of the casino hotel; provided such equipment is used for nongaming purposes.

c. Each casino hotel shall contain a count room and such other secure facilities as may be required by the commission for the counting and storage of cash, coins, tokens and checks received in the conduct of gaming and for the inspection, counting and storage of dice, cards, chips and other representatives of value. All drop boxes and other devices wherein cash, coins, or tokens are deposited at the gaming tables or in slot machines, and all areas wherein such boxes and devices are kept while in use, shall be equipped with two locking devices, one key to which shall be under the exclusive control of the commission and the other under the exclusive control of the casino licensee, and said drop boxes and other devices shall not be brought into or removed from a casino room or simulcasting facility, or locked or unlocked, except at such times, in such places, and according to such procedures as the commission may require.

d. All chips used in gaming shall be of such size and uniform color by denomination as the commission shall require by regulation.

e. All gaming shall be conducted according to rules promulgated by the commission. All wagers and pay-offs of winning wagers shall be made according to rules promulgated by the commission, which shall establish such limitations as may be necessary to assure the vitality of casino operations and fair odds to patrons. Each slot machine shall have a minimum payout of 83%.

f. Each casino licensee shall make available in printed form to any patron upon request the

complete text of the rules of the commission regarding games and the conduct of gaming, pay-offs of winning wagers, an approximation of the odds of winning for each wager, and such other advice to the player as the commission shall require. Each casino licensee shall prominently post within a casino room and simulcasting facility, as appropriate, according to regulations of the commission such information about gaming rules, pay-offs of winning wagers, the odds of winning for each wager, and such other advice to the player as the commission shall require.

g. Each gaming table shall be equipped with a sign indicating the permissible minimum and maximum wagers pertaining thereto. It shall be unlawful for a casino licensee to require any wager to be greater than the stated minimum or less than the stated maximum; provided, however, that any wager actually made by a patron and not rejected by a casino licensee prior to the commencement of play shall be treated as a valid wager.

h. (1) Except as herein provided, no slot machine shall be used to conduct gaming unless it is identical in all electrical, mechanical and other aspects to a model thereof which has been specifically tested by the division and licensed for use by the commission. The division may, in its discretion, and for the purpose of expediting the approval process, utilize the services of any testing laboratory with a plenary license as a casino service industry pursuant to subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92) when testing a slot machine model. The division shall, within 60 days of its receipt of a complete application for the testing of a slot machine model, recommend the approval or rejection of the slot machine model to the commission. If the division is unable to complete the testing of a slot machine model within this 60-day period, the division may recommend that the commission conditionally approve the slot machine model for test use by a casino licensee provided that the division represents that the use of the slot machine model will not have a direct and materially adverse impact on the integrity of gaming or the control of gross revenue. The division shall give priority to the testing of slot machines which a casino licensee has certified it will use in its casino in this State. The commission shall, by regulation, establish such technical standards for licensure of slot machines, including mechanical and electrical reliability, security against tampering, the comprehensibility of wagering, and noise and light levels, as it may deem necessary to protect the player from fraud or deception and to insure the integrity of gaming. The denominations of such machines shall be set by the licensee; the licensee shall simultaneously notify the commission of the settings.

(2) The commission shall, by regulation, determine the permissible number and density of slot machines in a licensed casino so as to:

- (a) promote optimum security for casino operations;
- (b) avoid deception or frequent distraction to players at gaming tables;
- (c) promote the comfort of patrons;
- (d) create and maintain a gracious playing environment in the casino; and
- (e) encourage and preserve competition in casino operations by assuring that a variety of gaming opportunities is offered to the public.

Any such regulation promulgated by the commission which determines the permissible number and density of slot machines in a licensed casino shall provide that all casino floor space and all space within a casino licensee's casino simulcasting facility shall be included in any calculation of the permissible number and density of slot machines in a licensed casino.

i. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1991, c.182).

j. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1991, c.182).

k. It shall be unlawful for any person to exchange or redeem chips for anything whatsoever, except for currency, negotiable personal checks, negotiable counter checks, other chips, coupons or complimentary vouchers distributed by the casino licensee, or, if authorized by regulation of the commission, a valid charge to a credit or debit card account. A casino licensee shall, upon the request of any person, redeem that licensee's gaming chips surrendered by that person in any amount over \$100 with a check drawn upon the licensee's account at any banking institution in this State and made payable to that person.

l. It shall be unlawful for any casino licensee or its agents or employees to employ, contract with, or use any shill or barker to induce any person to enter a casino or simulcasting facility or play at any game or for any purpose whatsoever.

m. It shall be unlawful for a dealer in any authorized game in which cards are dealt to deal cards by hand or other than from a device specifically designed for that purpose, unless otherwise permitted by the rules of the commission.

n. It shall be unlawful for any casino key employee or any person who is required to hold a casino key employee license as a condition of employment or qualification to wager in any casino or simulcasting facility in this State, or any casino employee, other than a junket representative, bartender, waiter, waitress, or other casino employee who, in the judgment of the commission, is not directly involved with the conduct of gaming operations, to wager in a casino or simulcasting facility in the casino hotel in which the employee is employed or in any other casino or simulcasting facility in this State which is owned or operated by the same casino licensee. Any casino employee, other than a junket representative, bartender, waiter, waitress, or other casino employee who, in the judgment of the commission, is not directly involved with the conduct of gaming operations, must wait at least 30 days following the date that the employee either leaves employment with a casino licensee or is terminated from employment with a casino licensee before the employee may gamble in a casino or simulcasting facility in the casino hotel in which the employee was formerly employed or in any other casino or simulcasting facility in this State which is owned or operated by the same casino licensee.

o. (1) It shall be unlawful for any casino key employee or boxman, floorman, or any other casino employee who shall serve in a supervisory position to solicit or accept, and for any other casino employee to solicit, any tip or gratuity from any player or patron at the casino hotel or simulcasting facility where he is employed.

(2) A dealer may accept tips or gratuities from a patron at the table at which such dealer is conducting play, subject to the provisions of this subsection. All such tips or gratuities shall be immediately deposited in a lockbox reserved for that purpose, accounted for, and placed in a pool for distribution pro rata among the dealers, with the distribution based upon the number of hours each dealer has worked, except that the commission may permit a separate pool to be established for dealers in the game of poker, or may permit tips or gratuities to be retained by individual dealers in the game of poker.

p. Any slot system operator that offers an annuity jackpot shall secure the payment of such jackpot by establishing an annuity jackpot guarantee in accordance with the requirements of this act, P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.), and the rules of the commission.

4. Section 104 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-104) is amended to read as follows:

C.5:12-104 Casino licensee leases and contracts.

104. a. Unless otherwise provided in this subsection, no agreement shall be lawful which provides for the payment, however defined, of any direct or indirect interest, percentage or share of: any money or property gambled at a casino or simulcasting facility; any money or property derived from casino gaming activity or wagering at a simulcasting facility; or any revenues, profits or earnings of a casino or simulcasting facility. Notwithstanding the foregoing:

(1) Agreements which provide only for the payment of a fixed sum which is in no way affected by the amount of any such money, property, revenues, profits or earnings shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection; and receipts, rentals or charges for real property, personal property or services shall not lose their character as payments of a fixed sum because of contract, lease, or license provisions for adjustments in charges, rentals or fees on account of changes in taxes or assessments, cost-of-living index escalations, expansion or improvement of facilities, or changes in services supplied.

(2) Agreements between a casino licensee and a junket enterprise or junket representative licensed, qualified or registered in accordance with the provisions of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.) and the regulations of the commission which provide for the compensation of the junket enterprise or junket representative by the casino licensee based upon the actual casino gaming or simulcast wagering activities of a patron procured or referred by the junket enterprise or junket representative shall be lawful if filed with the division prior to the conduct of any junket that is governed by the agreement.

(3) Agreements between a casino licensee and its employees which provide for casino

employee or casino key employee profit sharing shall be lawful if the agreement is in writing and filed with the commission prior to its effective date. Such agreements may be reviewed by the commission under any relevant provision of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.).

(4) Agreements to lease an approved casino hotel or the land thereunder and agreements for the complete management of all casino gaming operations in a casino hotel shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection but shall rather be subject to the provisions of subsections b. and c. of section 82 of this act.

(5) Agreements which provide for percentage charges between the casino licensee and a holding company or intermediary company of the casino licensee shall be in writing and filed with the commission but shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection.

(6) Agreements relating to simulcast racing and wagering between a casino licensee and an in-State or out-of-State sending track licensed or exempt from licensure in accordance with subsection c. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92) shall be in writing, be filed with the commission, and be lawful and effective only if expressly approved as to their terms by the commission and the New Jersey Racing Commission, except that any such agreements which provide for a percentage of the parimutuel pool wagered at a simulcasting facility to be paid to the sending track shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection.

(7) Agreements relating to simulcast racing and wagering between a casino licensee and a casino service industry licensed pursuant to the provisions of subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92) as a hub facility, as defined in joint regulations of the Casino Control Commission and the New Jersey Racing Commission, shall be in writing, be filed with the commission, and be lawful and effective only if expressly approved as to their terms by the commission and the New Jersey Racing Commission, except that any such agreements which provide for a percentage of the casino licensee's share of the parimutuel pool wagered at a simulcasting facility to be paid to the hub facility shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection.

(8) Agreements relating to simulcast racing and wagering between a casino licensee and a casino service industry licensed pursuant to the provisions of subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92) to conduct casino simulcasting in a simulcasting facility shall be in writing, be filed with the commission, and be lawful and effective only if expressly approved as to their terms by the commission, except that any such agreements which provide for a percentage of the casino licensee's share of the parimutuel pool wagered at a simulcasting facility to be paid to the casino service industry shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection.

(9) Written agreements relating to the operation of multi-casino progressive slot machine systems between one or more casino licensees and a casino service industry licensed pursuant to the provisions of subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92), or an eligible applicant for such license, which provide for an interest, percentage or share of the casino licensee's revenues, profits or earnings from the operation of such multi-casino progressive slot machines to be paid to the casino service industry licensee or applicant shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection if the agreements are filed with and approved by the commission.

(10) A written agreement between a casino licensee and a casino service industry licensed pursuant to subsection a. of section 92 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-92), or an eligible applicant for such license, relating to the construction, renovation or operation of qualifying sleeping units, as defined in section 27 of P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-27), or of non-gaming amenities, as defined by the commission, within the limits of the city of Atlantic City, regardless of whether such qualifying sleeping units or non-gaming amenities are connected to a casino hotel facility, which provides for an interest, percentage or share of the casino licensee's revenues, profits or earnings, not to exceed 5% of the casino licensee's revenues, to be paid to the casino service industry licensee or applicant in return for the construction, renovation or operation of such qualifying sleeping units or non-gaming amenities shall not be subject to the provisions of this subsection provided that: (i) the agreement requires a capital investment, at least 10% of which shall be made by the casino service industry licensee or applicant over the term of the agreement, of not less than \$30 million, which minimum amount shall be adjusted periodically by the commission for inflation; (ii) the commission finds that the total amount of casino revenues, profits or

earnings that can be paid to the casino service industry licensee or applicant pursuant to this agreement is commercially reasonable under the circumstances; and (iii) the agreement is filed with and approved by the commission.

b. Each casino applicant or licensee shall maintain, in accordance with the rules of the commission, a record of each written or unwritten agreement regarding the realty, construction, maintenance, or business of a proposed or existing casino hotel or related facility. The foregoing obligation shall apply regardless of whether the casino applicant or licensee is a party to the agreement. Any such agreement may be reviewed by the commission on the basis of the reasonableness of its terms, including the terms of compensation, and of the qualifications of the owners, officers, employees, and directors of any enterprise involved in the agreement, which qualifications shall be reviewed according to the standards enumerated in section 86 of this act. If the commission disapproves such an agreement or the owners, officers, employees, or directors of any enterprise involved therein, the commission may require its termination.

Every agreement required to be maintained, and every related agreement the performance of which is dependent upon the performance of any such agreement, shall be deemed to include a provision to the effect that, if the commission shall require termination of an agreement pursuant to this subsection, such termination shall occur without liability on the part of the casino applicant or licensee or any qualified party to the agreement or any related agreement. Failure expressly to include such a provision in the agreement shall not constitute a defense in any action brought to terminate the agreement. If the agreement is not maintained or presented to the commission in accordance with commission regulations, or the disapproved agreement is not terminated, the commission may pursue any remedy or combination of remedies provided in this act.

For the purposes of this subsection, "casino applicant" includes any person required to hold a casino license pursuant to section 82 of P.L. 1977, c. 110 (C.5:12-82) who has applied to the commission for a casino license or any approval required under P.L. 1977, c. 110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.).

c. Nothing in this act shall be deemed to permit the transfer of any license, or any interest in any license, or any certificate of compliance or any commitment or reservation.

5. This act shall take effect on the last day of the second full month after enactment, except that the increase in the term of a casino employee or casino key employee license renewal pursuant to section 2 shall apply to employee license renewal applicants whose filing deadline occurs on or after the effective date.

Approved February 17, 2005.