

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Streamline the Beano Laws

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 17 MRSA §314, 2nd ¶, as amended by PL 1997, c. 684, §1, is further amended to read:

The fee for such a license to any nonprofit organization is ~~\$12.00~~\$12 for each calendar week, or portion thereof, that the amusement is to be operated, or the license may be issued for a calendar month for a fee of ~~\$36.00~~\$36 or a calendar year for a fee of \$400. A special per-game license may be issued to any qualified nonprofit organization for the purposes of operating a game of "beano" or "bingo" for a fee of ~~\$5.00~~\$5. The special per-game license may not be issued more than 6 times to any one organization in a calendar year. All license fees must be paid to the Treasurer of State to be credited to the General Fund. A license is not assignable or transferable. Nothing contained in this section may be construed to prohibit any volunteer fire department or any agricultural fair association or bona fide nonprofit charitable, educational, political, civic, recreational, fraternal, patriotic, religious, veterans' organization or auxiliary of any of them from obtaining licenses for a period not to exceed 6 months on one application. No more than one license may be issued to any organization for any one period. ~~No more than one~~A licensee may not operate or conduct ~~a more than one~~ game of "beano" or "bingo" on the same premises on the same date.

Sec. 2. 17 MRSA §317, first ¶, as amended by PL 1999, c. 74, §2, is further amended to read:

The Chief of the State Police has the power to adopt rules, not inconsistent with law, that are necessary for the administration and enforcement of this chapter and for the licensing, conduct and operation of the amusement commonly known as "Beano" or "Bingo" and for the permitting and operation of commercial beano halls. The Chief of the State Police has the power and authority to regulate, supervise and exercise general control over the operation of such amusement and commercial beano halls, including, but not limited to, the payment of prizes and the use of equipment. Any rule adopted by the Chief of the State Police concerning the value of prizes that may be awarded must include a provision that no single prize may exceed ~~\$400~~\$500 in value and that no more than \$1,400 in total prizes may be awarded on any one occasion. In establishing such rules, which are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A2-A~~, the Chief of the State Police must, in addition to the standards set forth in other provisions of this chapter, use the following standards setting forth conduct, conditions and activity considered undesirable:

Sec. 3. 17 MRSA §324-A, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. I, §10 and affected by Pt. X, §2, is amended to read:

2. Games of chance before "beano." A person may not conduct a lottery or other game of chance during the period of one hour before the conduct of any "beano" game at the specific location of the "beano" game, except that the following lotteries may be conducted during the period of ~~one hour~~2 hours before the conduct of "beano" games.

A. Lottery tickets issued by the State Liquor and Lottery Commission may be sold when a valid license certificate issued by the commission is properly displayed.

B. Raffle tickets may be sold in accordance with chapter 14.

C. Lucky seven or similar sealed tickets may be sold when that game of chance is licensed by the Chief of the State Police and when a valid license certificate is properly displayed. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section and section 312, lucky seven games may be conducted during the period beginning 2 hours before and ending 2 hours after a "beano" game.

Notwithstanding any other rule, lucky seven or other similar sealed tickets may be sold that have a sale value of \$1 or less.

Sec. 4. 17 MRSA §329, first ¶, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 353, §1, is amended to read:

A person conducting or assisting in the conduct of beano may assist a player by playing that player's cards while the player takes a restroom, smoking or refreshment break. This section does not apply to the conduct of high-stakes beano.

Sec. 5. Rules. By July, 1, 2007, the Chief of the State Police shall amend the rules of the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police, Chapter 3, which are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, pertaining to the conduct of beano. The amended rules must provide:

1. That seats for a beano game may be reserved for parties of 10 or more players;
2. That a player may purchase a fixed number of beano cards at the beginning of the game to be randomly generated by the computer and distributed to the player during the course of the beano game;
3. That a small fee may be charged for the use of an electronic dauber for playing beano;
4. That a licensee may electronically change the games on the beano dauber;
5. That the cost per beano card may be determined based on the retail value of individual games; and
6. That a licensee may charge a fee for exchanging electronic daubers or previously purchased but unplayed beano cards.

SUMMARY

This bill amends current law to allow different organizations to conduct beano games at the same location on the same day and extends the time at the beginning of beano games when games of chance may be sold. This bill also allows beano workers to assist players by marking their beano cards when the players have to leave their seats. It increases the prize limit on individual games to \$500. Finally, this bill directs the Chief of the State Police to make certain changes to the rules pertaining to the conduct of beano games, including permitting the licensee to reserve seats at a beano game for parties of 10 or more and to charge a fee for the use of electronic beano daubers.