

1.What law governs the conduct of Bingo?

The Pennsylvania Bingo Law (the Law), 10 P.S. §§301-308.1, was passed in 1981. The Law allows certain nonprofit associations, known as “Associations”, to conduct Bingo for the purpose of raising funds for “Charitable” and “Civic” purposes.

2.Who can apply for and be granted a Bingo License?

A license cannot be granted to an individual. Only an “association” as defined in the Bingo Law, 10 P.S. §§301-308.1, can apply. Members of interested associations should refer to §303 of the Law which can be viewed or downloaded from this site, to see if their association is eligible for licensing.

3.How long is a license valid?

All licenses are valid for one year from date of issue. An association applying for a three consecutive day license must specify the dates they intend to conduct bingo and an association granted a three consecutive day license cannot apply for and be granted any other bingo license for one year from the date of issue of the three consecutive day license.

4.Can an eligible association permit its license to be used by another association to play bingo?

No, only the association in whose name the license is issued may conduct bingo.

5.Can anyone from the association bring the application and documentation to the Treasurer’s Office?

Yes, as long as they are a “bona fide member” of the association as defined by the Law and the application has been completed in its entirety, is signed by the President (Executive Officer) or Secretary of the association and the application is notarized.

6.Will documentation that must accompany a license application be returned?

No, it will be filed by the Treasurer with the application and becomes public information.

7.Must the association provide the documentation listed on Page 2 of the application each time application is made for a license.

Provided there have been no changes to the documentation and no lapse in the license, the documentation does not have to be provided unless specifically asked for by the County Treasurer's Office. However, an application must be prepared each time a license is renewed. The completed, signed and notarized application, along with those records that the association is required to keep concerning its conduct of bingo, must be brought to the County Treasurer’s Office for review.

8. Who investigates violations of the Bingo Law?

The district attorney is responsible for investigating violations of the Law, however, any State, county or local law enforcement official is empowered to investigate violations of the Law.

9. Where can bingo be played?

Bingo, with one exception, may only be played at the association's "licensed premises" (regular place of business, or other location specifically listed on the association's application for license). Each association must list its "licensed premises" on its license application. An association may conduct bingo at the association's exposition, carnival or fair site for a period not to exceed ten days.

10. Are there age restrictions on who can play bingo?

Yes. No person under 18 years of age shall be permitted to play bingo unless accompanied by an adult.

11. Must an association maintain records concerning its conduct of bingo?

Yes. §305 (c) (7) of the Law states: "Each association shall keep written records of the moneys and merchandise collected and distributed for each day they conduct bingo. These records shall indicate the total proceeds collected, the total prize money distributed, the total value of all merchandise awarded as a prize and the amount of moneys paid as rentals or wages and to whom such rentals or wages were paid. All prizes awarded having a value greater than \$250 shall be specifically described in the association's records". In addition, §305 (c) (8) of the Law states: "Each association shall deposit with a financial institution all proceeds for each day's bingo game in an account in the association's name. This deposit shall be made before any of the proceeds may be used for any other purpose, except for payment of prize money and compensation to members employed in the operation of the game".

12. Are there limitations on what an association may use the proceeds of bingo for?

Yes. The Law permits the proceeds to be used for only "charitable purposes" or "civic purposes" as defined in §303 of the Law.

13. Are there limits on prizes?

Yes there are very specific prize limits. §305 (c) (3) of the Law states: "Prizes awarded shall not exceed a value of \$500 for any one game of bingo, except for jackpot games which shall not exceed a value of \$4,000 for one such game. In addition, no more than \$8,000 in prizes shall be awarded in any calendar day".

14. Are there limits on how often an association can conduct bingo?

No. According to House Bill 411 there are no longer any limits to how often a licensed association may hold bingo.