

## **MONTANA TAVERN TIMES**

**Casino Nights - March 1, 2012**

**By Angela Nunn**

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Casino Nights are an activity authorized to allow nonprofit organizations to raise money for charitable causes. A gambling license is not required to offer a Casino Night, but the applicant must receive a permit issued by the department prior to the event. Only one permit may be issued to an applicant each year.

In order to receive a Casino Night permit, the nonprofit organization must complete an application which is available on our website (<https://doj.mt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/11.pdf>). Along with the \$25.00 permit fee, the application must include:

- The name and address of the applicant;
- The name and address of the applicant's officers;
- The name and address of the member of the nonprofit organization responsible for managing the casino night;
- A copy of the organization's nonprofit status;
- The location, date, and time of the casino night;
- A list of the games to be conducted during the casino night;
- The intended use of the proceeds from the casino night; and
- A copy of the rules to be used to conduct the casino night.

An application for a Casino Night permit must be received by the department at least ten working days before the proposed start of the casino night in order to give staff time to review and process the request.

A Casino Night may not last more than 12 consecutive hours. A casino night may, however, be split into two separate, 6-consecutive hour sessions that may not be held on the same day but must be held in the same calendar year. The following activities may be conducted during a casino night:

- Live card games such as bridge, cribbage, hearts, Panguingue, pinochle, pitch, poker, rummy, solo, and whist. However, **no tournaments are allowed.**
- Live bingo and keno games; and
- Raffles.

A key feature of the Casino Night is that no cash or currency can be used to play the authorized games at a Casino Night. A donation or entry fee may be accepted from those wishing to attend a Casino Night and in return for their donation, the participants may be given script or imitation money in which to play the authorized games. The rules must identify the amount of the entry fee, value assigned to the imitation money, and amount to be distributed to each participant. The imitation money provided must be of greater value than the donation. As an example, an organization may decide that for every \$1.00 donation, the participants will be given \$10.00 in imitation money.

A person under age 18 may not assist in operating or managing a casino night or participate as a player in any casino night activity, except for a raffle.

Only merchandise or cash may be awarded as prizes. The value of the merchandise is not restricted to the prize limitations provided for in 23-5-312, 23-5-412, or 23-5-413, MCA. However, if cash prizes are awarded, the prizes may not exceed \$100 per game for keno, \$800 per game for bingo, and may not exceed \$300 for an individual card game.

Proceeds derived from the Casino Night, after payment of reasonable administrative expenses, may be used only for a civic, charitable, or educational purpose. Administrative expenses may not exceed 50% of the proceeds.

Within 30 days after a Casino Night is held, the nonprofit organization is required to submit a Casino Night Report Form (<https://doj.mt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/12.pdf>) to the department with the following information:

- Total receipts collected from the Casino Night;
- Total administrative expenses;
- Total value of prizes awarded;
- Total amount used for a civic, charitable, or educational purpose; and
- A description of the civic, charitable, or educational purpose for which the proceeds were used (including the name of any entity receiving proceeds).

For more information, please call our office at (406) 444-1971 or email [gcd@mt.gov](mailto:gcd@mt.gov).

(References: Title 23, Chapter 5, Part 7, MCA; Title 23, Chapter 16, Subchapter 31, ARM)