



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2915.081 Illegally operating as distributor of bingo supplies.

Effective: October 9, 2021

Legislation: House Bill 110

(A) No distributor shall sell, offer to sell, or otherwise provide or offer to provide bingo supplies to another person, or modify, convert, add to, or remove parts from bingo supplies to further their promotion or sale, for use in this state without having obtained a license from the attorney general under this section.

(B)(1) The attorney general may issue a distributor license to any person that meets the requirements of this section. The application for the license shall be on a form prescribed by the attorney general and be accompanied by the annual fee prescribed by this section. The license is valid for a period of one year, and the annual fee for the license is five thousand dollars.

(2) Upon applying for or renewing a license under this section, an applicant shall file with and have approved by the attorney general a bond in which the applicant shall be the principal obligor, in the sum of fifty thousand dollars, with one or more sureties authorized to do business in this state. The applicant shall maintain the bond in effect as long as the license is valid; however, the liability of the surety under the bond shall not exceed an all-time aggregate liability of fifty thousand dollars. The bond, which may be in the form of a rider to a larger blanket liability bond, shall run to the state and to any person who may have a cause of action against the principal obligor of the bond for any liability arising out of a violation by the obligor of any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted pursuant to this chapter.

(C) The attorney general may refuse to issue a distributor license to any person to which any of the following applies, or to any person that has an officer, partner, or other person who has an ownership interest of ten per cent or more and to whom any of the following applies:

(1) The person, officer, or partner has been convicted of a disqualifying offense as determined in accordance with section 9.79 of the Revised Code.

(2) The person, officer, or partner has made an incorrect or false statement that is material to the



granting of a license in an application submitted to the attorney general under this section or in a similar application submitted to a gambling licensing authority in another jurisdiction if the statement resulted in license revocation through administrative action in the other jurisdiction.

(3) The person, officer, or partner has submitted any incorrect or false information relating to the application to the attorney general under this section, if the information is material to the granting of the license.

(4) The person, officer, or partner has failed to correct any incorrect or false information that is material to the granting of the license in the records required to be maintained under division (F) of section 2915.10 of the Revised Code.

(5) The person, officer, or partner has had a license related to gambling revoked or suspended under the laws of this state, another state, or the United States.

(6) The attorney general has good cause to believe that a person, officer, or partner has committed a breach of fiduciary duty, theft, or other type of misconduct related to a charitable organization that has obtained a bingo license issued under this chapter.

(D) The attorney general shall not issue a distributor license to any person that is involved in the conduct of bingo on behalf of a charitable organization or that is a lessor of premises used for the conduct of bingo. This division does not prohibit a distributor from advising charitable organizations on the use and benefit of specific bingo supplies or prohibit a distributor from advising a customer on operational methods to improve bingo profitability.

(E)(1) No distributor shall sell, offer to sell, or otherwise provide or offer to provide bingo supplies to any person, or modify, convert, add to, or remove parts from bingo supplies to further their promotion or sale, for use in this state except to or for the use of a charitable organization that has been issued a license under section 2915.08 of the Revised Code or to another distributor that has been issued a license under this section. No distributor shall accept payment for the sale or other provision of bingo supplies other than by check or electronic fund transfer.

(2) No distributor may donate, give, loan, lease, or otherwise provide any bingo supplies or



equipment, or modify, convert, add to, or remove parts from bingo supplies to further their promotion or sale, to or for the use of a charitable organization for use in a bingo session conditioned on or in consideration for an exclusive right to provide bingo supplies to the charitable organization. A distributor may provide a licensed charitable organization with free samples of the distributor's products to be used as prizes or to be used for the purpose of sampling.

(3) No distributor shall purchase bingo supplies for use in this state from any person except from a manufacturer issued a license under section 2915.082 of the Revised Code or from another distributor issued a license under this section. Subject to division (D) of section 2915.082 of the Revised Code, no distributor shall pay for purchased bingo supplies other than by check or electronic fund transfer.

(4) No distributor shall participate in the conduct of bingo on behalf of a charitable organization or have any direct or indirect ownership interest in a premises used for the conduct of bingo.

(5) No distributor shall knowingly solicit, offer, pay, or receive any kickback, bribe, or undocumented rebate, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, in return for providing bingo supplies to any person in this state.

(F)(1) No distributor shall knowingly sell, offer to sell, or otherwise provide or offer to provide an electronic instant bingo system to any person for use in this state, or install, maintain, update, or repair an electronic instant bingo system, without first obtaining an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement to the person's distributor license issued under this section. An applicant for a distributor license under this section may apply simultaneously for an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement to that license. Any individual who installs, maintains, updates, or repairs an electronic instant bingo system also shall hold an appropriate and valid occupational license issued by the Ohio casino control commission under Chapter 3772. of the Revised Code.

(2) An applicant for an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement shall submit the application on a form prescribed by the attorney general and shall submit one complete set of fingerprints directly to the superintendent of the bureau of criminal identification and investigation for the purpose of conducting a criminal records check. The applicant shall provide the fingerprints using a method the superintendent prescribes pursuant to division (C)(2) of section 109.572 of the Revised



Code and shall fill out the form the superintendent prescribes pursuant to division (C)(1) of that section. Upon receiving an application for an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement, the attorney general shall request the superintendent, or a vendor approved by the bureau, to conduct a criminal records check based on the applicant's fingerprint impressions in accordance with division (A)(18) of that section. The applicant shall pay any fee required under division (C)(3) of that section.

(3) The attorney general shall not issue an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement to an applicant unless the attorney general has received the results of the criminal records check described in division (F)(2) of this section. The attorney general shall not issue an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement to an applicant if the applicant, any officer or partner of the applicant, or any person who has an ownership interest of ten per cent or more in the applicant has violated any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted by the attorney general under this chapter or has violated any existing or former law or rule of this state, any other state, or the United States that is substantially equivalent to any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted by the attorney general under this chapter.

(4) An electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement issued under this section shall be valid for the period of the underlying distributor license.

(G) The attorney general may suspend, place limits, restrictions, or probationary conditions on, or revoke a distributor license or an electronic instant bingo distributor endorsement, for a limited or indefinite period of time at the attorney general's discretion, for any of the following reasons:

(1) Any reason for which the attorney general may refuse to issue the license or endorsement;

(2) The distributor holding the license or endorsement violates any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted by the attorney general under this chapter;

(3) The distributor or any officer, partner, or other person who has an ownership interest of ten per cent or more in the distributor is convicted of either of the following:

(a) A felony under the laws of this state, another state, or the United States;



(b) Any gambling offense.

(H) The attorney general may adopt rules for the application, acceptance, denial, suspension, revocation, limitation, restriction, or condition of a distributor license or endorsement, and to enforce any other provisions of this section, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

(I) The attorney general may impose a civil fine on a distributor licensed or permitted under this chapter for failure to comply with any restrictions, limits, or probationary conditions on its license, or for failure to comply with this chapter or any rule adopted under this chapter, according to a schedule of fines that the attorney general shall adopt in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

(J) Whoever violates division (A), (E), or (F) of this section is guilty of illegally operating as a distributor. Except as otherwise provided in this division, illegally operating as a distributor is a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of a violation of division (A), (E), or (F) of this section, illegally operating as a distributor is a felony of the fifth degree.