



GAMBLING CONTROL COMMISSION

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**TO: All Remote Caller Bingo License and Work Permit Holders
All Licensed Bingo Card-Minding Device Manufacturers and Distributors**

RE: EXTENSION OF LICENSES AND WORK PERMITS

This is to advise you that the California Gambling Control Commission (Commission), on June 16, 2011, approved the extension of all remote caller bingo licenses and work permits, and all bingo card-minding device manufacturer and distributor licenses. The expiration dates for those licenses and work permits in effect on June 30, 2011, have been extended to May 31, 2012.

TERMINATION OF THE REMOTE CALLER BINGO PROGRAM:

The Commission's current funding authority for the Remote Caller Bingo Program, which is a loan from the Gambling Control Fund, and limited-term positions expire on June 30, 2011. Without that funding authority and those positions, the Commission cannot perform work related to the Remote Caller Bingo Program after that date. The Commission is not authorized under State law to use other funding sources to cover program costs. Due to the lack of funding, the Commission will be required to terminate its activities related to the Remote Caller Bingo Program effective July 1, 2011.

PENDING LEGISLATION:

SB 340 has been introduced by Senator Lois Wolk to allow for the continuation of the Remote Caller Bingo Program as a streamlined program regulated at the local level, just as traditional bingo is now regulated. If this bill becomes law, local jurisdictions would have the authority to approve and regulate remote caller bingo but would not be required to do so. SB 340, as amended on June 14, 2011, would eliminate the role of the Commission in the regulation of remote caller bingo, including the licensure of remote caller bingo, the approval of remote caller bingo equipment, and the approval of bingo card-minding devices. Commission staff have worked with Senator Wolk's office and other stakeholders to amend SB 340 to ensure continuity of remote caller bingo games during the transition to a locally regulated program by allowing the local licensing entity to recognize, until June 1, 2012, existing Commission-issued licenses, work permits, and approvals in effect on June 30, 2011. Interested parties are encouraged to monitor the status of the bill at www.leginfo.ca.gov.

EXISTING LICENSES AND WORK PERMITS:

After the Commission's funding authority for remote caller bingo ends on June 30, 2011, organizations, businesses and individuals that hold Commission-issued licenses and permits as of that date may continue to operate under the authority of those licenses or permits until their expiration, or, until the effective date of SB 340, if it becomes law, whichever is sooner. If SB 340 becomes law, the local jurisdiction(s) within which the license or permit holder operates may exercise their authority pursuant to the law to authorize continued operations of any license, work permit, or approval issued by the Commission and effective on June 30, 2011, but would be responsible for regulatory oversight and enforcement. Commission staff have contacted the jurisdictions in which remote caller bingo games are currently authorized and have been played to advise them of this impending change so they can make the necessary changes in their programs to ensure local oversight continues in an appropriate manner.

If a license or permit were to expire prior to the effective date of SB 340, the holder would no longer be authorized to engage in any activity which requires licensure, a work permit or approval. In an effort to avoid the potential disruption of the operation of remote caller bingo games, the Commission, at its June 16, 2011 meeting, adopted a staff recommendation to extend all licenses and permits in effect on June 30, 2011, to May 31, 2012. The recognitions of nonprofit organizations as being eligible to conduct remote caller bingo games do not expire; therefore, extensions are not necessary or applicable to those recognitions issued by the Commission.

CARD-MINDING DEVICES:

Due to the previously described lack of funding, the Commission will also be required to terminate its activities related to the approval of bingo card-minding devices effective July 1, 2011. SB 340, in addition to the provisions related to remote caller bingo, will eliminate the Commission's oversight responsibilities for the approval of bingo card-minding devices and the licensing of bingo card-minding device manufacturers and distributors. Penal Code section 326.5 would no longer require Commission-approval of card-minding devices and the regulation of their use in bingo games would return to the discretion of the local jurisdictions. As with the other licenses, the Commission, at its June 16, 2011 meeting, adopted a staff recommendation to extend all card-minding manufacturer and distributor licenses in effect on June 30, 2011, to May 31, 2012. Since card-minding device approvals do not expire, extensions are not necessary.

QUESTIONS:

Questions concerning termination of the program may be directed to James B. Allen, Bingo Program Manager, either by telephone at (916) 263-4024, or by e-mail at jallen@cgcc.ca.gov.