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GAMBLING CONTROL COMMISSION

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September 14, 2022

To: All Interested Parties

Re: **Cardroom License Moratorium Ending Effective January 1, 2023**

Currently, pursuant to [Business and Professions Code section 19962](#), local jurisdictions cannot pass ordinances that either authorize legal gambling, or amend their existing ordinances in a way that would constitute an [expansion of gambling](#).

Pursuant to [Business and Professions Code section 19963](#), the California Gambling Control Commission (Commission) cannot issue a State Gambling License for a new gambling establishment that was not licensed prior to December 31, 1999 or did not have an application on file with the Department of Justice (Department) prior to September 1, 2000.

Collectively, these statutes form a moratorium on the expansion of controlled gambling, which has been in effect for more than two decades.

Historically, the Legislature extended this moratorium on the expansion of gambling. However, a bill to extend the moratorium did not pass by the end of the 2022 legislative session. As a result, the existing moratorium, as currently constituted by Business and Professions Code sections 19962 and 19963, expires on January 1, 2023.

Despite the expiration of the moratorium, existing Cardrooms seeking to increase their authorized permanent tables, or individuals seeking to own or operate a new cardroom, must be in compliance with all relevant federal, state, and local laws.

Local ordinances limit the number of permanent gaming tables or gambling establishments allowed in their jurisdiction. Any application or request submitted must not exceed the gaming allowances provided by the local jurisdiction.

The Commission cannot approve a request for an increase in authorized tables, or approve an application for a State Gambling License to own or operate a new Cardroom, without the corresponding local jurisdiction having already enacted a gambling ordinance or expanded their existing gambling ordinance in compliance with [Business and Professions Code section 19860](#), [Business and Professions Code section 19960](#), and [Business and Professions Code section 19961](#).

For local jurisdictions seeking to enact a new gambling ordinance or expand an existing ordinance, there are instances in which an election must be held to approve the new or expanded ordinance pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 19960 and Business and Professions Code section 19961.

Pursuant to [Business and Professions Code section 19961.1](#), any amendment to a city or county ordinance relating to gambling establishments, or the Gambling Control Act, must be submitted to the Department's Bureau of Gambling Control for review and comment before the ordinance is adopted by the city or county.

Business and Professions Code section 19860 and [Business and Professions Code section 19923](#) expressly direct the Commission to deny gambling licenses to applicants who are not in compliance with the local ordinances governing gambling.

For those considering submitting an application for a new State Gambling License, applicants must be found suitable by the Commission, and part of that suitability includes the applicants obtaining all relevant approvals from the local jurisdiction in which they plan to own and operate a Cardroom.

Before submitting a request for additional authorized permanent tables, or an application for a State Gambling License, consult your local jurisdiction. Confirm that your local jurisdiction has a gaming ordinance that is in compliance with Business and Professions Code sections 19860, 19960, and 19961, and that your request does not violate the local ordinance. The Commission cannot grant approvals to applicants who are not in compliance with the local ordinance.

The Commission has updated the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page on its website, under the "Cardroom" subcategory, with new information and guidance regarding the moratorium.

If you have any questions, please call the Commission at (916) 263-0700 or email comments@cgcc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



STACEY LUNA BAXTER
Executive Director