

TIPS AND GUIDELINES FOR CHARITABLE BINGO

Charitable bingo is permitted under state law so long as the games are licensed by the Texas Lottery Commission (“TLC”) and meet specific guidelines for operation. Before any charitable bingo activities are held, you must apply for and receive a temporary license. A temporary license is valid for four hours during any one day.

Information and forms for a temporary license can be downloaded from: http://www.txlottery.org/export/sites/bingo/Applicants/Temporary_License/. You may apply for up to six temporary licenses in one calendar year. For each application, the TLC charges a \$25.00 licensing fee. The TLC requires that applications be filed at least thirty (30) working days prior to your scheduled bingo activities. The license should be conspicuously displayed during the bingo activities. You must also file a Texas Bingo Occasion Report and, for any prize valued at more than \$5, collect and remit a 5% prize fee.

A bingo game can only take place on premises (1) owned by the parish, (2) owned by a governmental agency when there is no charge to the parish for use of the premises, (3) leased or used only by the parish, or (4) leased or owned by a TLC licensed commercial lessor.

All bingo games must be conducted and prizes awarded on the days and within the times specified on the license to conduct bingo. Persons younger than 18 years of age may not play bingo unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. The following information shall be available to all participants: (A) the games to be played; (B) the order in which the games will be played; (C) the patterns needed to win; (D) the prizes to be paid for each game; (E) whether the prize payout is based on sales or attendance; (F) the entrance fee and the number of cards associated with the entrance fee, if any; and (G) the price of each type of bingo card offered for sale. In addition, during the games, you must maintain and make available for review a copy of the Bingo Enabling Act (http://www.txlottery.org/export/sites/bingo/Regulations_x_Statutes/Bingo_Enabling_Act/) and the Charitable Bingo Administration Rules (http://www.txlottery.org/export/sites/bingo/Regulations_x_Statutes/Charitable_Bingo_Administrative_Rules/). The Charitable Bingo Administration Rules provide additional specific requirements and restrictions on the conduct of bingo.

Finally, the amount of a bingo prize cannot have a value of more than \$750 for a single game and you cannot offer to award on a single bingo occasion prizes with an aggregate value of more than \$2,500. If you want to award door prizes, then they may not exceed \$250 in value. In addition, you may not offer a raffle ticket as a bingo prize. If you have additional questions, then be sure to seek counsel.