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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- GAMBLING AND LOTTERIES

Introduced By: Senators Thompson, Murray, and Famiglietti

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Labor & Gaming

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 11-19-30 and 11-19-31 of the General Laws in Chapter 11-19
2 entitled "Gambling and Lotteries" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **11-19-30. Definitions.**

4 The following definitions apply within this chapter:

5 (a) "Charitable organization" means any benevolent, educational, philanthropic, humane,
6 patriotic, social service, civic, fraternal, police, labor, religious, eleemosynary person, and/or
7 persons holding themselves out to be a charitable organization.

8 (b) "Charitable purpose" means any benevolent, educational, humane, patriotic, social
9 service, civic, fraternal, police, labor, religious, or eleemosynary purpose, provided that no part of
10 the net earnings inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

11 (c) "Department" means the division of state police unless otherwise described.

12 (d) "Director" means the superintendent of state police or the director's designee.

13 (e) "Nonprofit organization" means an organization that operates for a purpose other than
14 generating a profit and no part of the organization income is distributed to its members, directors
15 or officers. Nonprofit organizations include churches, charities, clinics, hospitals, sports
16 organizations, condominium associations, political organizations, labor organizations, museums
17 and research facilities.

18 ~~(e)~~(f) "Permitted game of chance" means the game commonly known as "Bingo" or
19 "Beano" or substantially the same game under any other name, or a raffle or lottery or that lottery

1 commonly known as a “twenty (20) week club”.

2 **11-19-31. Registration of charitable organizations** **Registration of charitable and non-**
3 **profit organizations.**

4 (a) No charitable [or non-profit](#) organization which intends to conduct a permitted game of
5 chance within the state of Rhode Island shall conduct a game unless it shall file a registration
6 statement with the department upon prescribed forms and receives a certificate of approval.

7 (b) In addition, in order to obtain a renewal of registration, charitable organizations shall
8 file the statements required by this chapter prior to June 1st of each year.

9 (c) It shall be the duty of the president, chair, or principal officer of a charitable
10 organization to file the statements required under this chapter. These statements shall be sworn to
11 and shall contain the following information:

12 (1) The name of the organization and the purpose for which it was organized.

13 (2) The principal address of the organization and the address of any offices in this state. If
14 the organization does not maintain an office, the name and address of the person having custody of
15 its financial records.

16 (3) The place where and the date when the organization was legally established and the
17 form of its organization.

18 (4) The names and addresses of the officers, directors, and/or trustees of the organization
19 and the names and addresses of officers, staff, and/or members who receive a salary or any other
20 form of compensation, the source of which is the proceeds from the permitted games of chance
21 subject to subdivision (9) of this subsection.

22 (5) A copy of the annual financial statement of the organization audited by an independent
23 public accountant licensed by the state of Rhode Island for the organization’s immediately
24 preceding fiscal year, or a copy of a financial statement covering, in a consolidated report, complete
25 information as to all the preceding year’s fund-raising from the above-mentioned games showing
26 kind and amount of funds raised, costs and expenses incidental to it, and allocation or disbursements
27 of funds raised.

28 (6) The general purpose or purposes for which the proceeds from the game shall be used.

29 (7) The name or names under which it intends to conduct the game.

30 (8) The names of the individuals or officers of the organization who will have final
31 responsibility for the custody of the proceeds from the game.

32 (9) A listing of the names, addresses and the compensation of all individuals, directors,
33 officers, agents, servants, and/or employees of the organization who receive compensation,
34 commission, or other remuneration, directly or indirectly, from the gross receipts of such games in

1 excess of seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) annually.

2 (10) The names of the individuals or officers of the organization responsible for the final
3 distribution of the proceeds. The director or the director's designee shall examine each initial
4 application of charitable organizations for the right to conduct the above-mentioned games and
5 each renewal application of charitable organizations for the right to conduct such games and if
6 found to be in conformity with the requirements of this chapter and all relevant rules and regulations
7 it shall be approved for registration.

8 (d) The registration forms and any other documents prescribed by the department shall be
9 signed by an authorized officer, an independent public accountant, and by the chief fiscal officer
10 of the charitable organization and shall be verified under oath.

11 (e) The department shall make or cause to be made any investigation of any applicant that
12 it shall deem necessary. [No approval shall be required by any local law enforcement agency.](#) As a
13 result of its investigation and action, the department shall certify to the local police department or
14 local licensing authority its approval or disapproval of the application. No applicant shall be
15 approved if one or more of the following facts is found to exist:

16 (1) That one or more of the statements in the application are not true;

17 (2) That the applicant is or has engaged in a fraudulent transaction or enterprise;

18 (3) That the game would be a fraud upon the public;

19 (4) That game expenses during any of the three (3) years immediately preceding the date
20 of application have exceeded twenty-five percent (25%) of the total gross money or gross receipts
21 raised or received by reason of the games. In the event special facts or circumstances are presented
22 showing that expenses higher than twenty-five percent (25%) were not unreasonable, the
23 department, pursuant to rule and regulation, has the discretion to allow the higher expenses;

24 (5) That the expected cost of conducting the games for the specific year for which the
25 application will exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the total gross money or receipts to be raised
26 or received by reason of the games; or

27 (6) That the activities to be financed will be incompatible with the health, safety, or welfare
28 of the state of Rhode Island.

29 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T
RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- GAMBLING AND LOTTERIES

1 This act would allow nonprofit organizations to participate in permitted games of chance
2 upon registering with the state police on an annual basis. The nonprofit would be exempt from any
3 required background checks by local law enforcement.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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