

Organising



for a good cause

Organising bingo is a popular way of raising funds for a good cause. However as bingo is a form of gambling there is a need for safeguards and other regulations. These regulations are all set out in the Gambling Act 2005 and are the responsibility of the Gambling Commission.

The Gambling Act 2005

The Gambling Act 2005 allows organisations that wish to provide bingo for charitable or other non-commercial purposes to do so without needing any licence, permit or registration as "exempt gaming under Part 14 of the Act."

There are two types of exempt non-commercial gaming that Bingo can be organised as, which are **non-commercial prize gaming** and **non-commercial equal chance gaming**.



Gaming is non-commercial if no part of the proceeds is for private profit or gain.

Non-commercial prize gaming

In this type of gaming the prizes that can be won are put up in advance, and are not dependent on the number of players taking part or the amount of money staked. This is commonly known as "prize bingo" and usually involves playing for prizes that have been donated, such as teddy bears, boxes of chocolates and other similar small items.

There are no statutory limits on stakes, prizes, participation fees or other charges for non-commercial prize gaming. In addition, no licence, permit or other form of permission is required to operate this kind of gaming, provided that the statutory conditions are complied with.

The conditions for non-commercial prize gaming, are as follows:

- All players must be told for what purpose the money raised from the gaming is going to be used (this must be something other than private gain), and the profits must be applied for that purpose.
- The non-commercial event cannot take place on premises (other than a track) which hold a premises licence under the Gambling Act 2005 (such as a betting office or an adult gaming centre).
- The gaming must be non-remote gaming. In other words, the authorisation can only apply to gaming which takes place at events, on premises, and for gaming in person.

Non-commercial equal chance gaming

Equal chance gaming is gaming where the chances are equally favourable to all participants and players are not competing against a bank. This includes games such as bingo.

In non-commercial equal chance gaming, the charitable funds are usually raised through an entrance fee, participation fee, or through other payments related to the gaming.

The conditions for non-commercial equal chance gaming, are as follows:

- All players must be told for what purpose the money raised from the gaming is going to be used (this must be something other than private gain), and the profits must be applied for that purpose.
- The gaming must also comply with regulations made, limiting:
- The maximum payment each player can be required to make to participate in all games at an event to £8.
- The aggregate amount or value of prizes in all games played at an event to £600, although where an event is the final one of a series in which all of the players have previously taken part, a higher prize fund of up to £900 is permitted.
- The non-commercial event cannot take place on premises (other than a track) which hold a premises licence under the Gambling Act 2005 (such as a betting office or an adult gaming centre)
- The gaming must be non-remote gaming. In other words, the authorisation can only apply to gaming which takes place at events, on premises, and for gaming in person.



General offences

Whether running bingo as non-commercial prize gaming or non-commercial equal chance gaming, a person commits an offence under section 301 of the Act if he or she uses any part of the profits from the gaming for purposes other than the specified non-commercial purpose. This includes permitting the profits to be used for other than the specified non-commercial purpose.

Profits means the total amounts paid by way of stakes, or accruing to the person organising the gaming directly in connection with it minus amounts deducted by the person organising the gaming in respect of the provision of prizes, or other reasonable costs incurred in organising the gaming or providing facilities for the gaming.

Further Information

For further information on organising bingo to raise money for a good cause, contact Worcestershire Regulatory Services by email at wrsenquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk or by phone on 01905 822799.

Alternatively you can contact the Gambling Commission's enquiries team on 0121 230 6666 or visit their website below:

www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

