

# BINGO

## Do I need a licence?

Information for people who operate in the bingo sector

Regulation of the gambling industry in Great Britain is changing. From 1 September 2007, new legislation comes into force that places new responsibilities on gambling operators. Anyone who wishes to run a gambling business in Great Britain and certain other key staff must be licensed by the Gambling Commission.

This leaflet is designed to help you identify whether or not you need to apply for a licence. It explains which activities require a licence and the different types of licence that are available.



**GAMBLING  
COMMISSION**

## Why are licences being introduced?

The new arrangements have been introduced to regulate gambling in the public interest. In essence, this means:

- keeping crime out of gambling;
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

We are making sure this happens through a system of licence conditions and codes of practice.

## Will I need a licence?

If you plan to provide facilities for betting, gaming or participating in a lottery you will require a licence. You might be providing these facilities remotely (for example through the internet or telephone)<sup>1</sup>, or on premises, including tracks.

There are three different types of licence:

- operating,
- personal, and
- premises.

You will need an **operating licence** if you provide facilities for gambling; and/or manufacture, supply, install, repair or adapt a gaming machine or gambling software in Great Britain.

In addition to an operating licence, you are also likely to need some **personal licences** for people within your organisation, unless you are classified as a small-scale operator and therefore may be exempt. You are generally classed as a small-scale operator if you have three or less people that occupy a qualifying position as named on your licence. Further details are provided in the Commission's separate leaflet on the small-scale operator exemption. In the meantime if you would like to know more, please see our website or contact the enquiries team on 0121 230 6666.

There are two types of personal licence:

- a **personal management licence** for individuals in certain management positions; and
- a **personal functional licence** for people who carry out certain functions.

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<sup>1</sup> Gambling is 'remote' when people use technology such as the internet, phone, TV, radio or any other kind of electronic or other communicative device to participate.

You will need a **premises licence** where you are providing gambling services to the public from fixed premises rather than remotely. The local licensing authority where the premises are situated is responsible for ensuring that premises are approved for gambling.

Your business may need all three types of licence, ie operating licence, premises licence and personal licence. This leaflet focuses on operating licences. Further details on personal licences are provided in the Commission's separate guidance on personal licences.

## I operate in the bingo sector, which type of operating licence will I need?

If you operate commercial bingo you will need to apply for an **operating licence**. The type of licence you require will depend on whether your activities are non-remote or remote.

### Non-remote bingo operating licences

You will need to apply for a **non-remote bingo operating licence** if you provide bingo games in a club or location open to the public and where the game is played on the same site.

You will also need an **ancillary remote operating licence** if you currently or plan to provide facilities for playing bingo on premises by means of remote communication. This, for example, may include use of electronic bingo terminals and/or other similar equipment or participation in the National Game.

Non-remote bingo operators will also be required to apply for a premises licence from the local licensing authority.

### Remote bingo operating licences

You will require a **remote bingo operating licence** to provide facilities for bingo in respect of remote gambling or by means of remote communication. This would include, for example, providing internet-based bingo games for people to play.

### Combined bingo operations

If your application combines non-remote and remote activities, separate licences will be issued to the same operator covering activities authorised under the non-remote operating licence and, separately, the activities authorised under the remote operating licence.

## When should I apply for my operating licence?

If you are an existing or a new operator, you should aim to submit your application as soon as possible. Existing operators who submit a valid application to us before 27 April 2007 will be able to continue to operate from 1 September 2007 until they receive their new operating licences.

## How do I apply for a licence?

You need to apply to the Gambling Commission for operating licences and personal licences. We are now accepting operating and personal licence applications. Copies of the licence application forms, along with guidance notes to help you fill in the forms, are available on our website or by calling us on 0121 230 6666. The forms are available in both hard copy and electronic formats.

**To ask for a form, or for further information and advice:**

- email us on [enquiries@gamblingcommission.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@gamblingcommission.gov.uk)
- or call our enquiry line on 0121 230 6666.

**When you apply for a form, please state whether you would prefer an electronic copy of the interactive form or a paper copy.**

If you need a premises licence, you will need to apply to your local licensing authority. They will also be able to provide you with information about their application procedures.

## How much will the licence cost?

For operating licences you will need to pay a one-off application fee and an annual fee for each licence. The size of the fee depends on the type of licensed gambling activities you operate or intend to operate. More information about the fee structure for operating licences is available on our website at [www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk) or phone 0121 230 6666.

A personal management licence costs £330 and a personal functional licence costs £165 (and a further fee is payable every five years).

## Further information

This leaflet provides a summary for people who operate in the bingo sector. Other leaflets are available for the following sectors: adult gaming centres, betting, casinos, family entertainment centres, gaming machines, gambling software, lotteries, pool betting.