

# Bingo Guide for Beginners

This guide is to assist nonprofit organizations in understanding the operation of bingo. This is only a guide and most items in the rules are not covered. It is important to read and become familiar with the Bingo Rules. A complete set of rules can be found at [www.michigan.gov/cg](http://www.michigan.gov/cg)

The bingo rules prohibit raffle drawings during a licensed bingo event.

## Definitions

“Ball” means a ball used in the game of bingo, similar to a ping-pong ball with a minimum size of 1 ¼ inches in diameter. The balls are typically numbered 1 through 75.

“Bingo books” means a specific number of different colored bingo sheets all containing the same number of faces (also known as “on”) bound together.

“Bingo card” or “Card” means a hard bingo card, disposable bingo card, or any other bingo card approved in writing by the bureau.

“Bingo receptacle” means a container, which is either hand operated or mechanically operated, such as a cage, holder, or blower, which holds the bingo balls used in bingo games.

“Carnival style bingo” means a bingo occasion in which the players are continuously entering and leaving the bingo occasion and paying for their bingo cards at various times throughout the bingo occasion.

“Chairperson” means a worker who is a member for at least 6 months, in charge of and responsible for the conduct of the licensed gaming event.

“Charity game ticket” means a ticket commonly referred to as a break-open ticket or pull-tab.

“Cut” means the direction in which a sheet of faces will be cut from the master sheet (square, horizontal, or vertical).

“Face” means the individual bingo card containing 24 numbers plus the free space in the middle.

“Last number called” means the last number drawn from the bingo receptacle, shown to not less than 2 players, and completely called.

“Master board” means a board that has holes typically numbered 1 through 75. As the bingo balls are drawn from the bingo receptacle, they are placed on, or in, the board with the number of the ball matching the number on the board.

“Michigan progressive jackpot” means a bingo game conducted in conjunction with a licensed large bingo occasion, where the value of the prize is carried forward to the next bingo occasion if no player bingos in the predetermined number of allowable calls.

“On” means the number of faces per sheet. A 6-on would have 6 faces per sheet.

“Principal officer” means the highest-ranking person in the organization.

“Up” means the number of sheets that are used to make a book. For example, 9-up indicates that the book has 9 sheets of bingo paper.

## **Special Bingo**

- 4 special bingo licenses per calendar year
- \$25 allows up to 7 consecutive dates on one license
- Cannot exceed \$1,100 per game and \$3,500 per day in total prizes
- A qualified organization must submit a Special Bingo License Application for each event it plans to conduct.
- A 50/50 carnival style bingo is popular at festivals and fairs. The organization has a set price per bingo card. Typically, a percentage of the card sales is paid out as prizes.
- An organization may choose any price or “buy-in per person” to participate in the bingo event. The organization can choose any theme or location. Cash or merchandise prizes can be awarded to players.

Special bingo licenses also allow for the sale of charity game tickets, commonly referred to as break-open or pull-tab tickets. Charity game tickets offer extra cash prizes to players, are fun, easy and help increase profit for the event.

The Michigan progressive jackpot bingo game cannot be played under the special bingo license.

## **Large Bingo (Annual)**

- No limit on the number of licenses per calendar year
- Same day, time, and location each week
- \$150 for the license year
- License renewed annually
- Cannot exceed \$1,100 per game and \$3,500 per day in total prizes

Large bingo licenses also allow for the sale of charity game tickets, commonly referred to as break-open or pull-tab tickets. Charity game tickets offer extra cash prizes to players, are fun, easy and help increase profit for the event.

The Michigan progressive jackpot bingo game can only be played under a Large bingo license and the prize is not subject to the \$3,500 prize limitation.

### **Small Bingo (Annual)**

- No limit on the number of licenses per calendar year
- Same day, time, and location each week
- \$55 for the license year
- License renewed annually
- Cannot exceed \$25 per game and \$300 per day in total prizes

Small bingo licenses also allow for the sale of charity game tickets, commonly referred to as break-open or pull-tab tickets. Charity game tickets offer extra cash prizes to players, are fun, easy and help increase profit for the event.

The Michigan progressive jackpot bingo game cannot be played under the small bingo license.

### **Charity Game Tickets**

- 15% profit built into each box
- Average player spends more money on tickets than bingo
- Players reinvest winnings for more tickets
- May be sold in conjunction with a licensed bingo at no additional cost
- Provides entertainment before bingo and between games
- Prizes not included in the bingo prize limits
- Variety of price points, box sizes and themes available
- Sold anywhere on the licensed location

Charity game tickets may only be purchased from a licensed supplier. For a list of suppliers, visit our website at [www.michigan.gov/cg](http://www.michigan.gov/cg).

### **House Rules and Game Program**

- The organization must establish and adhere to its house rules and game program for the conduct of its bingo occasion.
- The house rules and game program must provide essential information for players, including prices and prize amounts.
- Organizations shall post or print their house rules and bingo program.
- Any change shall be announced and published at least one week in advance before its effective date.

- House rules cannot conflict with the act, rules, or directives of the bureau.

The house rules and game program must comply with Rule R432.21314 House Rules and R432.21315 Bingo Game Program.

### **Workers**

- The chairperson is responsible for providing oversight and management of the event.
- Workers are prohibited from purchasing, playing, or accepting as a gift, charity game tickets offered for sale by the licensee at any time during the day they are working or assisting.
- Workers are prohibited from accepting tips.
- All workers must sign a Workers Service Record whether paid or unpaid.
- An individual may only be compensated for being one of the following for each day of the bingo occasion: chairperson, recordkeeper, or worker.

Visit our website at [www.michigan.gov/cg](http://www.michigan.gov/cg) to obtain the most current Worker Compensation Schedule.

### **Bingo Game Play**

- The licensee shall post the bingo license in a conspicuous place.
- A person must be at least 18 years of age to work or play bingo.
- Pre-game, all balls must be verified by two bingo players and names recorded.
- Provide enough workers for sufficient floor coverage.
- Announce the game name, color of card, winning combination, and prize.
- Each ball drawn shall be shown so that two or more players can see the number on the ball before the number is called.
- Once the ball is called it must be placed into the master board.

### **Bingo Game Verification**

- The player shall bingo on the last number called.
- The player must make his or her bingo known to the caller or worker before the next number is completely called.
- Once bingo is heard by a worker or caller, the game shall stop for verification of the bingo card.

- A worker shall call the numbers that appear on the winning card back to the caller.
- The caller shall verify all balls called back are in the master board.
- When a single prize paid to a player is \$100 or more, the card(s) shall be taken to another table for verification.

### **Internal Controls – Bingo**

The chairperson should implement internal controls over bingo to help the game run efficiently and to detect errors or theft. The following are minimum internal game controls:

- Workers should be issued paper by the chairperson or record keeper.
- All bingo game sales must be recorded.
- Conduct a monthly inventory of disposable bingo cards for annual licensees.
- Verify all invoices match inventory received.
- Use preprinted, sequentially numbered verification slips, if applicable.
- Secure and limit access to all bingo paper, charity game tickets, cash, and supplies.
- Ensure all bingo and charity game ticket proceeds are deposited within 2 business days.
- Proceeds must be deposited into the organization's bank account.

### **Internal Controls – Charity Game Tickets**

The chairperson should implement additional internal controls over the charity game ticket sales to include:

- Workers should be issued tickets by the chairperson or record keeper.
- Worker's name, serial number, and ticket name must be recorded.
- Tickets games sold with the same serial number should only be issued to one seller.
- Workers will sell tickets and redeem prizes for the tickets they are selling.
- Each worker shall deface winning charity game tickets immediately when redeemed.
- Workers shall verify serial numbers of tickets to ensure they were sold by that license.
- Unsold tickets, cash, and winning tickets must be turned in by the worker.
- Chairperson must balance unsold tickets, cash and winning tickets turned in by worker.

- All winning tickets must be destroyed after they have been balanced.

### **Game Records**

- An organization must complete bureau issued game records.
- All game records must be maintained in a current and accurate manner and must be onsite for all bingo games.
- Annual bingo licensees must complete the bingo game records electronically in Excel. All bingo game records can be downloaded from [www.michigan.gov/cg](http://www.michigan.gov/cg).
- Special bingo licensees must either complete the All Bingo Game Records or the Special Bingo Accountability form depending on their game program. The Special Bingo Accountability form is to be used for 50/50 or Carnival Style Bingo.

A financial statement is used to report sales, prizes, and other expenses exclusive for the event. Financial statements are due by the 10th day of the month following the final event date. Annual bingo licenses report on a quarterly basis. The financial statement must be signed by the principal officer.

### **Record Retention**

Bingo game records and all financial records must be maintained for the current year plus three years.

Financial records for all accounts where proceeds were deposited or transferred must be provided and include all the following:

- Bank statements
- Bank issued check images
- Validated deposit slips
- Invoices and receipts
- Financial statements