



# Washington State GAMBLING COMMISSION

## FUNDRAISING EVENTS



There are many good causes that need money to fund projects and help those in need. This page outlines what you can do to raise funds as an individual, charitable or non-profit organization or commercial business.

### Individuals

Individuals cannot raise money using gambling activities, even if the money is given to charity. As an alternative:

Ask your charity to sponsor a raffle or other event and assist them in operating it

Ask for donations and give the money to charity; however, any donation, no matter what amount, must not be linked to a drawing or the chance to win a prize

Sell items and give all or a portion of the sale price to charity; however, a purchase must not be linked to a drawing or the chance to win a prize

Conduct a basket auction or essay contest

### Charitable or Non-profit Organizations

Charitable or non-profit organizations may offer several types of gambling activities to raise funds. Some gambling activities require a license; others don't.

#### **Unlicensed Gambling Activities:**

Golfing sweepstakes

Turkey shoots

#### **May or may not Require a License:**

Amusement games (crane and carnival games)

Bingo

Raffles

#### **Always Requires a License:**

Card games and card tournaments

Casino and Reno Nights

Poker runs

Pull-tabs

### Commercial Businesses

Commercial businesses may offer several types of gambling activities. The business can choose to donate all or a portion of the

money it takes in from the activity to charity. However, no gambling activity can be linked to a drawing or the chance to win an additional prize.

**Always Requires a License:**

- Amusement games (crane and carnival games)
- Card games and card tournaments
- Punchboards and pull-tabs

**Common Fundraising Questions**

**Can I raffle my house?**

Individuals cannot raffle their house and then donate all or part of the proceeds to charity. You would have to give your house to a charity for them to raffle. All proceeds from the raffle must go to the charity's stated purpose; none can go to you. Only certain charitable or non-profit organizations can offer raffles.

**Can I ask people to make a donation to my charity for the chance to win a prize?**

You can ask people to make a donation to your charity; however, you cannot link a donation to a drawing or the chance to win a prize.

**Can I use a promotion to raise money for my charity?**

No, individuals, commercial businesses and charities cannot use promotions to raise money for any reason, even to give the money to charity. Commercial businesses can offer promotions for the sole purpose of advertising their goods and services. Promotions cannot be used to raise money for the business or a charity.'

**Can I have a "casino night" fundraiser?**

Only charitable and non-profit organizations can apply for a "Fundraising Event" gambling license to offer Casino and Reno Nights to raise money for charity.

**Can I offer a card tournament to raise money?**

Charitable and non-profit organizations can apply for a license to offer card tournaments to raise money.

Commercial businesses can apply for a license to offer card tournaments for profit. They may choose to donate their profits to charity; however, the tournament cannot be linked to a drawing.

Individuals cannot offer a card tournament to raise money for charity. As an alternative, ask your charity if they qualify to offer a card tournament and help them with the tournament.

**Can I have an auction?**

Auctions are not gambling because the winner is the highest bidder; the winner is not determined by chance. This includes silent auctions and live auctions where bids are called out. Anyone can offer an auction.

**Can I offer an essay contest?**

Essay contests are not gambling, because the winner is selected based on their skill, not by chance. Anyone can offer an essay contest. See our Essay Contests handout for more information.