

Gambling Policy

Last Updated: 07/05/2018

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this policy is to outline acceptable practices pertaining to casino and gambling related activity within the Residences of Western University. The policy applies to residents, student leaders, and full-time staff.

POLICY

Student leaders may organize games of skill or chance, and may award prizes, in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Student leaders may not organize contests of a purely random nature;
- Student leaders may not award cash prizes. This includes tickets and poker chips, among others;
- Gift cards may not be awarded;
- The game of skill or chance may in no way utilize casino paraphernalia (e.g. cards, dice, roulette, poker chips, etc.);
- The prize must be proportionate to the level of skill or chance involved (i.e. not winning a laptop for guessing the number of jelly beans in a jar);
- Door prizes are permitted at events, provided that all attendees have an equal and fair opportunity to win;
- All “fundraising” type activities (i.e. a charity spelling bee) must first be approved by the Residence Manager and the Office of Residence Education and Programs;
- Residents are expected to observe Western University policies, federal laws, provincial laws, and local laws regarding games of skill or chance.

PROCEDURE

All questions regarding the **Gambling Policy** can be forwarded to the Programming Coordinator(s) in the Office of Residence Education and Programs or the Residence Manager.

MORAL RATIONALE

Addiction Services of Thames Valley (<http://adstv.on.ca/>) reports that 18-25 year olds are the largest population of people with gambling problems; therefore, Residence Life programs do not promote gambling. We have an obligation to provide educational programs about the serious problem and impact on young people. Residents’ Councils have shared this concern and provided casino nights where chips have no value, all receive a ticket for door prizes upon

arrival and Addiction and Drug Services of Thames Valley (ADSTV) are often present at a table to educate on problem gambling.

LEGAL RATIONALE

The Ontario Provincial Police Illegal Gambling Unit is advising charitable organizations, clubs, lounges, and bars that holding poker events that they may be breaking the law.

Poker events, including those for charitable or non-profit purposes, taking place at liquor-licensed establishments (excluding annual fairs and exhibitions) cannot be legally licensed by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. Liquor-licensed establishments are considered “a place kept for gain” and gambling taking place from a poker event in these establishments may be considered illegal under the Criminal Code of Canada.

An establishment wherein directly or indirectly a fee is charged to or paid by the players for the privilege of playing or participating in a poker game (including donations), may also be considered illegal under the Criminal Code of Canada. The fact that all entry fees for these poker events are returned to the players as prizes does not make the event legal.

An establishment wherein any portion of the bets or proceeds from the poker game that are paid directly or indirectly to any “keeper” (e.g. owner, occupier, person with care or management) of the establishment may also be considered illegal under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Liquor-licensed establishments found contravening the illegal gambling provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada may also be subject to penalties under the Liquor License Act of Ontario including fines and/or suspension of the license.

The Illegal Gambling Unit of Ontario is a law enforcement body and does not provide legal advice and/or legal opinions on individual scenarios. The Illegal Gambling Unit of Ontario cannot approve or authorize any social gaming event anywhere in the Province of Ontario.

We strongly caution and encourage any member of the public to consult with his/her legal counsel prior to embarking on any poker gaming events to ensure that such activity does not contravene the Criminal Code of Canada and/or the Liquor License Act of Ontario.