

# **Commercial Bingo Rules of Play and House Rules**



Revision Date: August 2024

## Revision History

Date	Revised Section	Version #
August 2024	1.1.12 2.1.1: l) and t) 3.1.1: n) and v)	1.1

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# Introduction

In accordance with the Commercial Bingo Handbook (CBH), facility licensees must comply with the following AGLC Standard Rules of Play. Facility licensees must also establish and maintain facility licensee rules of play and house rules consistent with those outlined in this document. The CBH may be accessed on AGLC's website at [aglc.ca](http://aglc.ca).

# Section 1: AGLC Standard Rules of Play

- 1.1.1 Only bingo games where a ball is randomly selected using a blower from 75 ping pong type balls will be licensed. Each ball is printed with a letter from the word BINGO, and a number from “1” to “75” as follows:

<u>B</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>O</u>
1	16	31	46	61
to	to	to	To	To
15	30	45	60	75

- 1.1.2 Before an event begins, the caller, bingo chairperson or paymaster, and a player must check the bingo equipment to ensure:
- the bingo equipment is operating properly, including the blower, as the manual drawing of balls from the blower is strictly prohibited;
  - all 75 bingo balls are in play; and
  - there are no duplicate balls.
- 1.1.3 Only players in attendance at the event may participate in the bingo program.
- 1.1.4 Only players with proof of purchase may play. Proof of purchase must be visible at all times. The facility licensee or licensed charity may request this proof before allowing a player to continue to play or to claim a prize.
- 1.1.5 Only cards bought or issued at the event may be played.
- 1.1.6 Before a game is played, the caller must announce the type of game being played.
- 1.1.7 To call a ball, the caller must:
- turn the ball in the cradle/chute to clearly display the letter- number combination on the TV monitors;
  - announce the letter and number on the ball; and
  - remove the ball from the cradle/chute and place it into the corresponding hole in the ball pocket tray.
- 1.1.8 A ball is considered “called” when the complete letter and number combination of the ball has been announced by the caller. If there is a dispute regarding balls called, the master board (ball pocket tray) in front of the caller will prevail. The flashboards are an aid to the game and are not an official record of the numbers called.

- 1.1.9 Any time video/audio equipment or recordings are not working, the following procedures must be followed:
- a) the caller must show the face of the ball, including the letter and number, to the players;
  - b) a volunteer worker must be present on the stage to verify the letter and number of each ball as it is drawn and called;
  - c) the volunteer will complete a Ball Verification Sheet as the balls are called, which must be kept as part of the event records; and
  - d) the caller must sign the Ball Verification Sheet to certify it is correct.
- 1.1.10 A new ball must not be drawn from the cradle/chute until:
- a) the previous ball has been called; and
  - b) the called ball has been placed in its corresponding hole in the ball pocket tray.
- 1.1.11 The licensed facility's house rules or its rules of play must not require that players have the last number called to win a prize for a bingo game or bingo scheme. That is, a player may declare bingo for a winning pattern after other numbers have been called during the game in play. Exceptions to this rule may exist for progressive bingo games and schemes (see CBH Subsections 5.1.12 g) and h)).
- 1.1.12 When bingo and/or bingo event pull ticket wins are declared, it is a player's responsibility to make themselves heard by the caller to stop the game, and the caller must:
- a) stop play by announcing a bingo and/or bingo event pull ticket win has been declared and that no more numbers will be called;
  - b) where the blower is turned off to verify a bingo, the ball next in line in the cradle/chute (i.e., the next number to be called) must remain there and be the next number called;
  - c) announce the type of game and/or bingo event pull ticket being checked;
  - d) announce the number of bingos and/or bingo event pull tickets recognized, their approximate location in the hall, and ask (the first time) if there are any other bingos and/or bingo event pull tickets to be verified;
  - e) ask (a second time) whether there are any more bingos and/or bingo event pull tickets and pause (at least three to four seconds) to recognize any;
  - f) announce the number of bingos and/or bingo event pull tickets which have been recognized, state that only these bingos and/or bingo event pull tickets that are eligible for prizes and that the game is closed and verify the declared bingo(s) and/or bingo event pull ticket(s) as stated in Subsections 1.1.12 to 1.1.17;
  - g) if a player declared a bingo and/or a bingo event pull ticket win and the bingo and/or bingo event pull ticket was determined not to be valid, the caller must re-open the game and/or bingo event pull ticket and, prior to calling another number, ask if any other player has a bingo and/or bingo event pull

ticket win to declare. This includes a player whose bingo and/or bingo event pull ticket win may have been initially disqualified due to a late declaration of their bingo and/or bingo event pull ticket win; and

- h) where there is a discrepancy on a declared bingo, and the player's eligibility to win depends upon the number of balls called, the caller must, with the assistance of a neutral player or licensed charity volunteer, count the number of balls in the ball pocket tray to verify that the number of balls in the ball pocket tray match the number of balls displayed on the flashboard as being called:
  - i) if the number of balls in the ball pocket tray match the number of balls displayed on the flashboard and are within the required number of balls to win the specified prize, the prize will be awarded to the winner(s); and
  - ii) if the number of balls in the ball pocket tray does not match the number of balls displayed on the flashboard and required to win the prize, the player(s) must be given the option to verify the number of balls in the ball pocket tray, which must prevail in determining whether or not a prize has been won.

1.1.13 All paper and e-dauber bingos must be verified through the EMS verification module. The verification call-back process must be conducted as follows:

- a) Seller/Checker:
  - i) identifies the declared bingo(s) to the caller;
  - ii) for paper regular games, must verbally give the caller the card number(s), and card colour or level;
  - iii) for paper special games, the seller/checker must verbally give the caller the card face number(s); and
  - iv) for e-dauber cards, must verbally give the caller the card face number(s);
- b) the caller must enter the card number(s) into the verifier so that the card face(s) may be displayed on the TV monitors; and
- c) all verified bingo cards must be displayed on the TV monitors for at least three seconds for players to view.

1.1.14 In the exceptional circumstance where the EMS verification module cannot be used (e.g., due to an equipment failure), a manual call back must take place. The verification procedures to be used must be identified in the facility licensee's house rules. The procedures must include:

- a) for all paper games, the checker must provide the caller with the colour and series number of the bingo card, then take the bingo card and put it in front of a player at another table who will assist in verifying that the numbers called back by the caller form the winning pattern on the player's card, thereby validating the declared bingo;
- b) for all e-dauber games, the checker will provide the caller with the card pay level as indicated on the e-dauber card and then, assisted by a neutral player

(at the location of the e-dauber unit), will verify that the numbers called back by the caller form the winning pattern on the player's e-dauber bingo card face, thereby validating the e-dauber bingo; and

- c) if the prize value of the game exceeds \$500 or where there is a pre-call, the bingo card(s) must be checked by the bingo chairperson, paymaster or a hall advisor or assistant hall advisor.
- 1.1.15 The series number must be visible and readable on a declared winning paper card or the bingo must be rejected.
- 1.1.16 For any game in which the single bingo prize is \$500 or more, the seller/checker must take the paper card(s) to the caller's station or the cash cage for verification by the caller or hall advisor. The caller/hall advisor must inspect the card(s) for any obvious signs of tampering and/or alterations prior to the prize being awarded. The winner(s) must be required to sign (provide their signature and print their name, address and phone number) on the back of the paper card or on the back of the printed card for e-dauber wins.
- 1.1.17 For all progressive games, when the progressive prize is won and eligibility of the winner(s) confirmed, the bingo chairperson (or designate) must present the cheque and/or cash representing the progressive prize to the winner(s); if the prize is cash, then it must be physically counted in front of the winner. The winner(s) must be required to sign (provide their signature and print their name, address and phone number) on the progressive prize pool control sheet or on a separate receipt confirming the winning player(s) has received the prize. The event advisor must also ensure that, if a cheque with the prize amount is awarded, the cheque number and amount are recorded on the progressive prize pool control sheet.
- 1.1.18 Cards may be used for a single game, or for two or more successive games in a series.
- a) called balls must remain in the ball pocket tray until the final game in a series is completed; and
  - b) after all bingos are checked and verified, the caller must clearly state the game series is closed and return the balls to the blower.
- 1.1.19 Two of the most common issues that arise during the process of declaring a bingo are described here, with resolutions:
- a) **Issue:** The caller did not acknowledge a declared bingo and proceeded to call another number.  
**Resolution:** the next number called is valid. The player who had a bingo on the previous number may declare bingo again, however, may have to share the prize if another player declared a bingo on the next number which was called.
  - b) **Issue:** Multiple bingos were declared, but for some reason, the caller did not acknowledge one of the bingos.  
**Resolution:** the caller must clarify with the usher and other players in the vicinity whether the player's bingo was declared on time. Once clarified, the



caller must refer the matter to the bingo chairperson, who must decide (in consultation with the advisor) whether the player will receive a portion of the prize.

Note: If a complaint is registered with AGLC regarding a bingo chairperson's decision about a declared bingo, that decision may be subject to review by AGLC. If it is determined that the complaint is valid, the facility licensee, on behalf of the licensed charity, must pay the player the amount owing as directed by AGLC.

## Section 2: Facility Licensee Rules of Play

- 2.1.1 Facility licensee rules of play must address, but are not limited to, the following:
- a) listing of the regular games played during the event, including game payouts (per game) and minimum and maximum pay levels;
  - b) detailed explanation of how each special game is played (i.e., number of game parts played within the special game, rule(s) of the game, procedure for multiple winners including, where applicable, minimum payouts, and the prize breakdown);
  - c) where applicable, whether each game is available on paper, on e-daubers, or both;
  - d) rules that govern the operation of e-daubers and play using e-daubers, if applicable;
  - e) for all games with consolation prizes or pre-call games:
    - i) whether another number has to be called prior to the game card pattern being recognized, if the game card pattern was not declared within the pre-call (e.g., a 49th number has to be called prior to recognizing a full card, if the full card was not declared within the 48 number pre-call);
    - ii) when a late bingo is called on any game involving a consolation prize, whether the player can receive the consolation prize without another number being called;
    - iii) how the main prize and consolation prize are calculated when it appears the consolation prize will be of higher value than the main prize;
    - iv) on any pre-call game, if the pre-call game was not won during the pre-call, whether any other numbers have to be called before the game can be won;
    - v) if bingo is declared during the bonanza pre-call, rules of play must specify what happens to unmarked cards from the bonanza. This may include allowing five to ten minutes for players to mark their cards for the consolation prize or to offer a refund on any unmarked cards; and
    - vi) for special events, which may include guaranteed prize payouts, establish alternate rules of play;
  - f) the card prices and colours of regular games and special games, as well as the drop-in price of each regular game series/page (one price level only) and each special game;
  - g) minimum payout, as well as amounts for each regular or special games card price;
  - h) details on discount pricing and package pricing;
  - i) details regarding partial event sales, including:
    - i) how the event will be divided;
    - ii) whether existing players can purchase additional cards and/or schemes for the portion of the event being played; if so, how their original receipt

- is handled and how the Loonie Pot scheme participation may be affected; and
- iii) the price of partial event cards and which regular games, special games and other prize schemes that the partial event patrons are eligible to play;
  - j) details on the linked game, if offered;
  - k) how partial event sales will be calculated into the overall regular game prize payout;
  - l) requirements for valid bingos, the formula or method by which multiple winners are awarded both cash and non-cash prizes, and if any cash in lieu option exists on merchandise prizes;
  - m) whether or not two games can be won at the same time, or does another number have to be called prior to the second game being recognized (keeping in mind the affect these rules may have on the Loonie Pot scheme or progressive games);
  - n) whether or not games can be won out of order (keeping in mind the affect these rules may have on the Loonie Pot scheme or progressive games);
  - o) details on door prize draws or other giveaways and promotions;
  - p) details on Loonie Pot/Pot of Gold schemes and other schemes connected to the game of bingo (e.g., King Queen, Gold Ball, Lucky Number, Player of the Event, other prize(s) connected to a bingo game/scheme, second element of chance games, etc.);
  - q) rules of play for the progressive game or scheme must be approved by AGLC prior to being implemented and address the following:
    - i) price of cards or cost to participate;
    - ii) details on how the bingo game/scheme is played and how the prize will be awarded;
    - iii) prize payout including a breakdown of the event payout between the progressive contribution and the main/consolation prize (if applicable);
    - iv) details on how the prize pool progresses (e.g., evening to evening, afternoon to afternoon, afternoon to evening);
    - v) details on capping of the prize pool(s) (see CBH Subsection 5.1.12 b)) and on the method of playing off the main pool once the cap is reached; and
    - vi) normal course of play for bingo games and schemes versus playoffs or playoff days (including whether playoffs or playoff days may differ from the normal course of play and how they may differ);
  - r) details on free games (see CBH Subsection 5.2.6);
  - s) details on the distribution of free cards (see CBH Subsection 5.2.7) and
  - t) details on how players will be able to access the video bingo (v-bingo) Rules of Play and program.

## Section 3: Facility Licensee House Rules

- 3.1.1 The facility licensee must have house rules regarding, but not limited to, the following:
- a) what time the doors and cashiers open, and what time the early birds and regular games start;
  - b) age limit for paid staff, concession staff and volunteers to be in the licensed facility considering whether the licensed facility offers:
    - i) only paper bingo cards (minors allowed);
    - ii) offers paper cards and KENO (minors allowed); or
    - iii) offers paper cards and e-daubers (no minors allowed; minimum age is 18 years);
  - c) minimum purchase of regular game cards;
  - d) minimum account play deposit required (if applicable) for play using an e-dauber;
  - e) if U.S. currency will be accepted and how it will be exchanged. The exchange rate must be within one per cent of the bank rate for buying U.S. cash and must be clearly posted;
  - f) that receipts or bingo cards are not transferable from one player to another player;
  - g) what time the attendance reading is taken to determine regular game payouts and the time at which attendance prize payout will be announced by the caller before starting regular games;
  - h) that players may not claim a prize for any game or scheme without valid proof of purchase;
  - i) the policy regarding players caught playing more cards than they paid for;
  - j) that only cards issued by the licensed facility for that event are eligible to be played and be recognized for prizes;
  - k) the games that drop-in players and players playing a portion of the event are eligible to play;
  - l) the policy on players playing the wrong series or colour of cards;
  - m) how cards for the visually impaired (Braille bingo cards) are sold and verified;
  - n) cancellation policy for partial or full bingo events, for all event types, including video bingo (e.g., for cancelled events, low attendance, equipment malfunction, etc.);
  - o) the policy on workers and/or volunteers playing bingo cards (paper or on e-dauber) for a player temporarily absent;
  - p) the policy on players found cheating;
  - q) house rules applicable to the use of e-daubers. The licensed charity must:
    - i) ensure that an e-dauber player is limited to the use of one e-dauber unit at any time during its event; and

- ii) inform players who use an e-dauber (e.g., with poster, tent card, instruction card, etc.) about how to use the e-dauber, including how to activate the unit to daub the player's card faces as numbers are called by the caller (e.g., by pressing a button on the unit to daub the card faces as appropriate).
- r) days of operation;
- s) number and types of events per day;
- t) hours of operation for each event; and
- u) the policy on volunteers and registered gaming workers playing bingo in the licensed facility, in compliance with CBH Subsections 4.4.3 c) and 4.4.4 a); and
- v) details on how player account balances are cashed out.