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Subject: Class II Games: Punch Boards, Tip Jars, and Instant Bingo

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) defines punch boards, tip jars and instant bingo as class II gaming, if played in the same location as bingo. See 25 U.S.C. § 2703(7)(A)(i). This bulletin is intended to provide tribes with guidance as to the general parameters of such games.

PUNCH BOARDS

A "punch board" is generally made out of wood or thick cardboard containing hundreds or thousands of holes, each filled with a rolled up or folded slip of paper. Each slip of paper has a number or combination of symbols printed on it. The holes are covered with a foil or paper seal to prevent premature winner identification. A player purchases a "punch" (a metal stylus) which entitles him to "punch out" the hole of choice, thereby revealing the rolled up or folded slip of paper. If the number or symbols found on the slip of paper matches one of the pre-determined winning combinations, the player is awarded the corresponding prize.

TIP JARS

A "tip jar" is a game similar to a raffle. Players buy folded or sealed pieces of paper dealt from large glass jars in hopes of winning prizes. The pieces of paper conceal numbers or symbols that may entitle the purchaser to winnings immediately after opening the ticket. Tip jars were named at a time when the betting slips were tipped out of bags into glass jars or fish bowls. Jars are not necessarily needed. The tickets can be spread out in a pile or pinned on a board.

INSTANT BINGO

"Instant bingo" is a game of chance modeled after traditional bingo. The instant bingo tickets are made of paper products, the face of which is covered or otherwise hidden from view to conceal the numbers and letters. A player purchases an instant bingo ticket randomly selected from prepacked cards.

The pulltab version of instant bingo, also called "break-open" bingo, has numbers or symbols that are concealed behind perforated window tabs. A participant removes paper slips acting as concealing flaps, thereby revealing numbers or symbols which can then be compared with the winning combinations printed on the reverse of card.

In the scratch off version of instant bingo the player first scratches off the caller's card. Then scratches off the numbers that match those on the "player's cards." The player has four cards to play and potentially win from. The player wins if the numbers on the player's cards complete horizontal, vertical or diagonal line; or all four corners. Prizes won are listed on the ticket.

For additional information, contact Barry Brandon or Penny Coleman at (202) 632-7003.