

# Fact Sheet

GAMBLING FACT SHEET 10

## HOUSIE

Under the Gambling Act 2003, housie can be a class 1, class 2 or a class 3 gambling activity, depending on the level of money involved.

- Class 1 has a limit of \$500 on both the total turnover and on the total value of the prizes payable in any one session. A society may not conduct more than one session per day.
- In class 2 gambling total turnover per session exceeds \$500 and may be up to \$25,000, and the total value of prizes per session exceeds \$500 and may be up to \$5,000. For housie, where a minimum of 70% of turnover must be returned as prizes, the effective maximum turnover for a class 2 session is \$7,143 (because 70% of \$7,143 = \$5,000, which is the maximum total value of prizes allowed in the session).
- Class 3 gambling covers gambling where the total value of prizes for a session is more than \$5,000. Class 3 housie requires a licence. For class 1 and class 2 housie, no licence is required.

In addition to the provisions in the Gambling Act 2003 that relate to class 1, class 2 or class 3 gambling, housie must also comply with the Gambling Act (Housie) Game Rules 2004 (referred to in this document as the “Housie Rules”). The Housie Rules apply to all housie, whether it is class 1, class 2 or class 3 gambling.

### HOUSIE RULES – MAIN POINTS TO NOTE:

#### COORDINATORS

For any housie session (whether class 1, class 2 or class 3) there must be a person appointed as the coordinator, to control the session. For class 2 and class 3 housie, this person must be the same person as the ‘organiser’ that the Act requires. The coordinator must ensure that each game or session of housie under his or her control is conducted in accordance with the Act and the Housie Rules. The coordinator must be present at all times during the conduct of the housie session.

#### CALLERS

The coordinator must appoint a person to act as caller in a game or session of housie. More than one person may call in a session, but there must be a designated caller for each game. The coordinator may also act as caller.

The functions of a caller are to randomly select the numbers for a game of housie (this can be by operating a random selection device) and, except where the numbers are automatically announced by a random selection device, announce to the participants the numbers that are selected. The caller may perform other functions relating to the conduct of a game or session of housie as determined by the coordinator.

The coordinator may also appoint a person or persons to assist the caller in a game or session of housie.

#### SELECTION OF GAME NUMBERS

The Housie Rules do not prescribe how the numbers for a game of housie must be selected, but they require the selection process to be random. The coordinator has the responsibility for ensuring this.

Societies do not need authorisation from the Department to use a random selection device, but they must ensure that any device they use is truly random and incapable of selecting the same number twice in any one game.

#### HOUSIE CARDS

The Housie Rules allow flexibility over the design of housie cards. There is no requirement to use the numbers 1-90, nor for cards to have exactly fifteen numbers arranged in a certain pattern. Societies may use traditional cards and play housie in the traditional way, but this is not a requirement. They may, for instance, prefer to use the numbers 1-75, or 1-100, and use cards with ten, or some other number of numbers. A session of housie could include a variety of games.

All housie cards used in any one game of housie must be similar. Cards contain the same number of numbers to be marked or covered, arranged in a similar pattern, they must be from the same card series (except when a card series is exhausted), and must be numbered consecutively. All cards in a card series must be the same colour, have the same serial number, and may not contain two or more cards with the same combination of numbers.

Session cards (that is cards that may be used throughout a session, with the numbers covered, rather than marked) may be used for class 1 and class 2 housie, but not for class 3 housie.

#### PRICE OF CARDS

The Housie Rules do not prescribe the price of housie cards. Societies are free to determine the price of cards for each game of housie, so long as they stay within the prescribed session turnover limits for the relevant class of gambling.

## PRIZE MONEY

The Housie Rules do not limit the prize money that is payable for a game of housie. Societies are free to determine the prizes payable for each game, so long as they stay within the prescribed session prize money limits for the relevant class of gambling.

The rules stipulate that a minimum of 70% of the total money collected from the sale of housie cards in a session of housie must be paid out by way of prizes for all the games in that session.

All prizes must be paid out in cash immediately at the conclusion of the game. Before paying out any prize, the coordinator must announce that the prize is about to be paid out, and that no further claim to a prize in that game will be accepted after payment has been made.

## CONDUCT OF GAME OR SESSION OF HOUSIE

The Housie Rules contain various rules about the conduct of a game or session of housie, including:

- No housie card may be used in any game or session of housie unless it is sold at the venue where, and on the day when, the game or session is to be conducted
- No housie card may be reserved for any person who is not present if another person wishes to buy it and pays for it
- No charge may be made for attending a game or session of housie
- No housie card for a game of housie may be sold once that game has commenced
- Any housie card sold for a game or session of housie must not be sold for any other game or session
- All the numbers announced in a game of housie must be displayed until the completion of that game
- Prior to the commencement of a game, the coordinator or caller must announce to all participants full details of the game being played, including the serial number and colour of the card series being used for that game and details of the prizes available for the game.

## COORDINATOR AND CALLER NOT TO PLAY

A coordinator or a caller may not purchase a card for, or play in, any game of housie in which he or she is acting as the coordinator or caller or assisting the caller.

## PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING WINNERS

The Housie Rules set out a procedure that must be followed to determine the winner of a game of housie. If a participant believes that he or she has won a series or part series, he or she must announce this to the other participants and to the coordinator. The coordinator or caller (or an assistant) must then verify:

- That the participant's card belongs to the correct card series for that game
- That the numbers on that participant's card relating to the part series or series correspond to numbers already selected in that game and announced by the caller
- That the part series or series was won on the number last announced
- That the numbers on the winner's card relating to the part series or series are announced to all participants.

If a participant incorrectly announces that he or she has completed a part series or series in a game, the housie card in question may no longer be played in that game.

If 2 or more participants complete a part series or series on the same number, the prize must be shared equally between them, irrespective of the order in which the participants announce that they have won.

## NO RESTRICTION ON DAYS OF WEEK OR HOURS OF DAY THAT HOUSIE MAY BE PLAYED

The Housie Rules do not restrict the days of the week or the hours of the day when housie may be played.

## DISPLAY OF RULES AND LICENCE

The coordinator of a game or session of housie must ensure that an up-to-date copy of the Housie Rules (and for class 3 housie a copy of the licence) is displayed in a conspicuous place on the premises at which the housie is being conducted.

There must also be displayed, in a conspicuous place close to where the housie cards are sold, a sign containing the following:

- The name of the society
- The name and a contact address of the coordinator
- The authorised purpose for which the gambling is conducted, stated specifically
- The cost of each housie card
- The number of housie cards offered for sale in each game of housie.

## BANKING

Every society or individual that conducts housie must maintain a bank account that is to be used exclusively for the purpose of banking the proceeds from the housie. Within five days of a game or session of housie, the coordinator must deposit all the money collected from the sale of cards, less prizes paid, in that game or session. All expenses related to the conduct of housie, including any remuneration paid to callers, must be paid by cheque drawn on the cheque account. A society may not authorise any coordinator or caller to withdraw any money from the cheque account.

## RECORDS AND AUDITING

Every society or individual conducting a game or session of housie must, during the course of each game of housie, keep a record of:

- The date on which the game was conducted
- The serial number printed on the housie cards sold
- The card numbers of the housie cards sold or, in the case of game cards that are sold in game books, the game book numbers of the game books sold
- The number of housie cards sold
- The total money collected from the sale of housie cards
- The amount or amounts paid out as prizes.

The society or individual must also keep all invoices and receipts for expenses incurred in the conduct of each game or session of housie, must keep all bank statements, and must maintain full and complete records of all payments or of the application of funds to authorised purposes.

All of these records must be kept for a minimum of 12 months and must be provided on request to the Department of Internal Affairs for inspection or audit within 14 days of being requested, together with any other information that the Department may require. They must also be provided, on request, to a gambling inspector, pursuant to section 333 of the Act.

## BREACHES OF THE RULES

Any breach of the Housie Rules is an offence under the Gambling Act 2003, and the Department of Internal Affairs may prosecute offenders for illegal gambling. For class 3 housie, the Department may also choose to cancel or suspend a licence. In the future, the Department may create infringement offences for breaches of certain housie rules. This would allow the Department to impose fines for breaches of the rules, as an effective, fast, low-cost alternative to prosecution.

The Housie Rules and the Gambling Act 2003 are available on the DIA website [www.dia.govt.nz](http://www.dia.govt.nz)

Hard copies of the Housie Rules are also available from the Department on request. If you require further information please write to us at Department of Internal Affairs, PO Box 805, Wellington, or call us on 0800 257 887.