Gamblers standing shoulder-to-shoulder laying bets while a crowd gathers around to see a hot dice-thrower make point after point would be a relic of the past, if proposed new health and safety benchmarks for casinos are ratified this week by the Nevada Gaming Commission.

In addition to adhering to social-distancing guidelines at and around gaming tables and slot machines, Nevada casinos in the post-coronavirus era will only be able to operate at 50% of their posted capacity under the stringent rules being considered.

They include: Blackjack tables that normally seat six players will now only accommodate three; poker tables will be limited to four players, down from the traditional maximum of nine; three players will be allowed on each side of the craps table, and for roulette, it’s just four gamblers.

Prior to reopening, casinos must also clean and disinfect all hard and soft surfaces “in accordance with guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

The commission will consider these guidelines Thursday during a special meeting to establish safety procedures to reopen properties following the COVID-19 shutdowns. Gov. Steve Sisolak hasn’t given a definitive date for casinos and other nonessential business to reopen, but said last week it wouldn’t be until after May 15 in the state’s phased approach to restarting business.

Among the set of guidelines in the board’s seven-page report, “proper social distancing” must be created between gaming machines, and casino employees should be assigned to “focus on ensuring guests do not congregate in groups.”

The board also recommends that “every other” chair in front of a gaming machine be removed. Machines, devices, chairs and other pieces of equipment are also to be “cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis,” the report dictates.

As for table game accessories, the board recommends “regular cleaning and disinfection of, without limitation, rails, chairs, dice, card shoes, shufflers, roulette wheels, Pai Gow Poker tiles,

pit podiums, discard holders and toke boxes when a new player or employee comes into contact" with a piece of equipment.

As for cards and gaming chips, the board said only that "plans should also address how licensees will disinfect" them.

"Appropriate" distancing will be required at all property eateries. Nightclubs and dayclubs will not be allowed to open until further notice, according to the report.

Gaming officials are requiring casino companies submit plans at least seven days ahead of reopening a property. Some companies — Wynn Resorts and Las Vegas Sands among them — have made detailed health and safety plans public. MGM Resorts International is expected to release a plan before the middle of the month.

A Sahara Las Vegas representative said in an email Monday that officials there are "developing an extensive list of health and safety protocols to follow that will exceed the guidance set forth by the Gaming Control Board."

Regulators are not mandating that the reports be made public.

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