

Illinois Gaming Board set guidelines for casinos to reopen

Written by Administrator
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Gamblers might be allowed back around the craps tables at Illinois casinos this summer for their shot at rolling a lucky seven — as long as they stay six feet apart.

But blowing on the dice for good luck? No dice, in the age of COVID-19.

And forget the buffet line.

A week after casinos beckoned gamblers back through their doors on the Las Vegas strip — and a week before they do likewise across the border in Indiana — Illinois gambling regulators issued a set of guidelines Tuesday for casinos to resume operations after the coronavirus forced them to fold for nearly three months and counting.

The Illinois Gaming Board's plan doesn't say exactly when the state's 10 casinos will get the green light. Instead, each has to submit a plan outlining how operators will deep-clean their facilities, outfit employees with protective equipment and keep gamblers safely distanced, among other hurdles to get regulatory approval to reopen.

But a few customary industry perks are off the board from the get-go, per the Gaming Board.

Those include buffets, table game tournaments, valet parking, poker rooms and any “promotions that require patrons to cluster and/or that cannot be conducted in compliance with current 6 foot social distancing requirements.”

Illinois' guidelines mirror many of those set in Nevada, the international gambling capital that welcomed gamblers back at 12:01 a.m. June 4 after its own unprecedented coronavirus shutdown. Gaming interests are scrutinizing the Sin City reopening as a key barometer of how comfortable people in the coronavirus era will be about returning to an industry built on big crowds and high-touch surfaces.

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