

Online gambling for sports and casino games in CT begins Tuesday with a soft launch

Written by Administrator
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Online sports and casino gambling is expected to begin in Connecticut Tuesday with a 7-day, soft launch for a total of 2,250 people identified by the fantasy sports companies that have joined forces with the Connecticut Lottery Corp., and the Mohegan and Mashantucket Pequot tribes.

The soft launch includes online casino games for the two tribes and their casinos, Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods.

The Department of Consumer Protection notified the operators Friday that they can begin the weeklong soft launch starting at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

“As long as no issues arise, we have told the licensees they may move forward with the 7-day soft launch required in the regulations. Once the soft launch is complete, online gaming will open statewide,” Commissioner Michelle H. Seagull said in a written announcement.

FanDuel, DraftKings and Rush Street Interactives, which have contracted with the tribes and the lottery, will pick 750 patrons each — not necessarily first-come, first-served. That process began with Friday’s announcement.

During the soft launch, online sports wagering will be limited to certain times of the day. Those hours are 3-11 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, noon.-11:59 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, then 24-hours through the rest of the launch period.

The launch would leave one more piece of gambling expansion to be launched: In-person, retail sports wagering locations outside of Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun. The Lottery Corp. is designated as the operator of those sites around the state and is working with Sportech, which runs 11 Winners off-track betting sites in Connecticut, for most of them. Licenses are not yet granted for those locations.

As in other states with online gambling, people wagering on the Connecticut sites must be

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physically located in Connecticut. This is accomplished through GPS fencing, in which anyone outside the state will be excluded.

The state expects to reap \$30 million in the first year, eventually ramping up to an estimated \$100 million a year, by taxing online sports betting at 13.75 percent, and online casino games at 18 percent, rising to 20 percent after five years. The Lottery Corp. will not pay a tax because all of its revenues after expenses move to the state's general fund.

The news comes about a week after the soft launch of in-person sports betting at the two casinos owned by the tribes. The lottery is still awaiting approval of as many as 15 retail sites, spokeswoman Tara Chozet said Friday.

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