

GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS RAFFLE GUIDANCE

The Texas Senate Bill 766 proposed by Brother and Senator Jeff Wentworth was signed into law by Governor Rick Perry on May 9, 2005. Brother and Representative Warren Chisum sponsored the Bill in the House. Under this new law, Masonic Lodges can legally hold raffles. However, Lodges which have raffles must comply with all of the applicable laws and regulations (State and Local). The Civil Law Committee will revise the Grand Lodge laws to comply with this legislation. The minimum requirements for charitable raffles as set forth in Chapter 2002 of the Texas Occupations Code are:

1. There can only be two (2) raffles per year; a year is deemed to be from January 1 to December 31; and raffles cannot overlap, i.e., you cannot sell raffle tickets for two raffles at the same time;
2. All proceeds from the sale of charitable tickets must be spent for the charitable purpose of the organization;
3. There can be no paid advertising to promote the raffle, i.e., television, radio, or newspaper;
4. There can be no statewide raffles;
5. There can be no offers to sell raffle tickets for a statewide raffle;
6. There can be no compensation to any person for directly or indirectly organizing or conducting a raffle or for selling or offering to sell tickets to a raffle;
7. Only members of the non-profit organization can sell raffle tickets;
8. Each raffle ticket must contain the name of the organization conducting the raffle; the address of the organization or of a named officer of the organization; the ticket price; and a general description of each prize having a value of more than \$10.00;
9. A prize offered may not be money;
10. A prize may not exceed \$50,000.00 in value;
11. A prize may not consist of one or more lottery tickets;
12. A prize has to be in the possession of the organization, or the organization must post a bond with the county clerk in which the raffle is to be held.

A violation of any of these provisions would constitute a violation of the Texas Penal Code, and authorize criminal penalties. As a corporation, the Grand Lodge of Texas could be assessed criminal penalties in the way of fines. Additional information as to the legal aspects of “Charitable Raffles” can be downloaded from the Texas Attorney General’s Office at www.oag.state.tx.us