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Court clears way for new charity gambling rules in Michigan

GARY HEINLEIN DETROIT NEWS LANSING BUREAU COMMENTS

Lansing — Seven of eight new state restrictions on charity gambling can go into effect now that an Ingham County judge has lifted a restraining order that had blocked them.

Ingham Circuit Judge Clinton Canady ruled this month Michigan Gaming Control Board Executive Director Rick Kalm has the authority to issue new requirements.

But Canady left in place a preliminary injunction preventing Kalm from restricting the times millionaire party licenses can be used. That means his proposed midnight curfew won't go into effect and the games can continue until 2 a.m.

New rules include a limit of three on the number of charities at each gaming site, limit the number of chips in play at a table to \$15,000 worth and disallow the use of poker chips as tips for dealers and others.

Kalm issued the regulations following investigations that showed rapid growth in millionaire party gaming in Michigan, with reported revenues exceeding \$380 million in the past two years alone.

The Gaming Control Board investigation uncovered hundreds of violations of the state Bingo Act, rules, or other state laws, according to a spokeswoman. Authority to regulate charity gambling was transferred to the gaming control board from the state lottery commissioner under an executive order from Gov. Rick Snyder.

Nineteen nonprofit and civic groups contested the new rules, most of which were scheduled to take effect Sept. 1. Kalm announced them July 29.

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