

Division of Gaming Enforcement proposes regulations for sports betting PressOfAtlanticCity.com

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The state Division of Gaming Enforcement proposed sports-betting regulations Monday that may lead to adoption of the rules by early fall, officials said.

But while crafting of the regulations is moving forward, what remains to be seen is whether any casinos will move forward in implementing sports betting in light of a federal prohibition.



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Casinos companies that operate in other states in addition to New Jersey would likely be wary of going against the federal government, especially in light of their legal exposure in other jurisdictions, said Tony Rodio, president and chief executive officer of Tropicana Casino and Resort.

Rodio, who was speaking on behalf of Tropicana and not the Casino Association of New Jersey, which he also leads, said that without further understanding of whether the federal ban will be repealed or overturned, he could not see Tropicana investing in sports-betting infrastructure.

“Until there is some sort of clarification ... I can’t imagine anyone who would go ahead,” he said.

Proposed regulations set out requirements for sports pool licensing, restricting it to casinos and racetracks or a joint venture of both. Applying for a license would cost \$50,000 and a resubmission fee of \$50,000 over five years. Half of the fees will go toward prevention, education and treatment programs for compulsive gamblers.

Rodio, who supports the legalization of sports betting, said he believes the regulations, once finalized, would allow New Jersey to argue that the Professional Amateur Sports Protection Act should be overturned. The federal act limits sports wagers to four states: Nevada, Delaware, Oregon and Montana.

“New Jersey as a state will now having standing to challenge the law,” Rodio said.

It was unclear whether a casino or racetrack would need to go forward with implementing sports betting for there to be a challenge to the federal law.

Atlantic City lawyer Lloyd Levenson said opponents of sports betting might be the first to file a challenge to New Jersey’s law, seeking an injunction. If that were to happen, he said he believed New Jersey would prevail.

“One way or another, there’s going to be sports betting in New Jersey,” he said.

Carl Golden, a senior contributing analyst at the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Richard Stockton College, said he was unsure whether the new regulations would give New Jersey much of an edge considering that other states were interested in offering sports betting.

“There is a case to be made if the regulations are there. You do have a bit of a head start, but that head start is only

good if it's legal to do it," he said.

The Division of Gaming Enforcement issued a statement that said it believed casinos and racetracks are interested in sports wagering.

"We anticipate that they will participate in the 60-day public comment period before making any determination or expressing formal interest," the division said in the statement.

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