Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 481—Chapter 105
"Registered Amusement Devices"

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 99B.2

State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code chapter 99B and Executive Order 10

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

October 22, 2025 8:30 a.m.	Ledges Conference Room 6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100 Des Moines, Iowa

Information on virtual participation will be posted to the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing's website prior to the hearing.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date of the public hearing. Comments should be directed to:

Amy Oetken
Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing
6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Phone: 515.672.4929
Email: amy.oetken@dia.iowa.gov

Purpose and Summary

This proposed rulemaking repromulgates Chapter 105 and implements Iowa Code section 99B.2 in accordance with the goals and directives of Executive Order 10 (January 10, 2023). Iowa Code section 99B.2 provides that the Department may adopt rules to carry out the provisions of the chapter and may include descriptions of books, records, and accounting requirements; methods of displaying costs and explanations of games and rules; and definitions of unfair or dishonest games, acts, or practices.

This rulemaking implements the aforementioned Iowa Code section by setting forth standards for registered amusement devices to ensure that the devices are fair and honest.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**

- **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**

The owners of registered amusement devices will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking by obtaining an appropriate device and then registering that device. Manufacturers, distributors, or owners must register as well. Those registration fees are set out by statute.

- **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**

Persons who use the registered amusement devices will benefit from the proposed rulemaking because the devices will be fair and honest. The members of the industry will benefit from standards that are clear and easily understood.

2. **Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:**

- **Quantitative description of impact:**

The costs related to the proposed rulemaking are related to obtaining an appropriate device and registering the device. The fee for registration is set by statute and is not directly incurred by the rulemaking.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

The proposed rulemaking promotes fair play and transparency with registered amusement devices. The rulemaking further ensures that amusement devices are located in businesses that are appropriate to promote fair play and transparency.

3. **Costs to the State:**

- **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**

Costs to the Department include costs to administer this chapter, including costs to issue registrations, educate registrants, investigate complaints, and enforce regulations. These types of registrations account for a small percentage of registrations or licenses issued by the division. These costs are statutorily required to achieve the goals of Iowa Code chapter 99B.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

There is no anticipated effect on State revenues.

4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**

There are no specific financial costs to implement or enforce this rulemaking outside of any costs associated with the Department's statutory duties identified. The costs of this rulemaking are directly associated with the Department's general functions. This rulemaking does not add to the costs of the Department or public in excess of general functions. The benefits include clear and consistent implementation of applicable Iowa Code provisions.

5. **Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:**

There is no less costly or intrusive method for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking. The registration fees are set by statute. Other states regulate amusement devices including Idaho, Missouri, Tennessee, and Texas. Nebraska requires manufacturers of amusement devices to pay a licensing fee of $5,000 and $100 per device up to $5,000 for distributors.

6. **Alternative methods considered by the agency:**

- **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**

See response to 5, above.

- **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**

See response to 5, above.

Small Business Impact

If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.
- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking's compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.
- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?

Iowa Code chapter 99B does not allow for exemptions or different standards for small businesses. The statutory fees are the same no matter the size of the business. The necessity for consistency and fairness in amusement devices is the same whether the organization is small or large. Notwithstanding, if a small business identifies a portion of the rulemaking that is overly burdensome and the goals can be accomplished in a manner that would reduce the impact of the rulemaking to the organization, the Department's established waiver process could be utilized.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind 481—Chapter 105 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 105
REGISTERED AMUSEMENT DEVICES

481—105.1(10A,99B) Definitions. The definitions in Iowa Code section 99B.51 and rule 481—104.1(10A,99B) are incorporated by reference in this chapter. In addition, the following definitions apply to the possession and use of registered amusement devices.

"Counting mechanism" means an appliance that tallies the volume of business of an individual amusement device.

"Distributes" means to deliver, to provide or to otherwise make available in Iowa amusement devices required to be registered in accordance with these rules.

"Operation" means that a registered amusement device is made available for use by the public or made available for use on the premises of a charitable organization.

"Person" means a person as defined by Iowa Code section 4.1.

"Premises" means a location where one or more registered amusement devices is available for public use.

"Registered amusement device" means an electrical or mechanical amusement device in operation subject to registration by the department pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.53 and includes both the external and internal components.

"Responsible party" means the owner of the amusement device.

"Security mechanism" means an appliance that prevents a person from operating an electrical or mechanical amusement device by not allowing the acceptance of money until action is taken by the owner or owner's designee to allow the person to operate the device.

481—105.2(99B) Registered amusement devices. Each registered amusement device shall only be located on premises as described in Iowa Code section 99B.53.

105.2(1) Any change in the registered amusement device constitutes a new registered amusement device for which registration is required. The word "change" does not include repairs or replacement of parts that do not change or alter the operation of the device as originally registered.

105.2(2) If the amusement device needs to be repaired, the owner may repair it without losing the registration position or buying a new registration tag. A repair constitutes any change to a device as long as the type of game and the number of devices in a location is not changed. If the repairs or replacement parts alter the operation of the device as originally registered, the device must be reregistered before being made available for operation. If an amusement device needs to be replaced

because it is defective, it must be replaced with the same game in order to keep the registration position.

105.2(3) Reserved.

105.2(4) An amusement device registration position becomes available under the following circumstances:

a. When a distributor or owner:

(1) Is going out of business,

(2) Fails to renew a registration by the renewal due date, or

(3) Has an electrical or mechanical device seized by law enforcement and the seizure is upheld through a forfeiture hearing.

b. When an amusement device is replaced with a new amusement device that has a different game.

c. When any other legal order has been issued that pertains to violations of Iowa Code chapter 99B, 123, or 123A.

105.2(5) Premises with a Class "B" or Class "E" retail alcohol license shall post a sign near a registered amusement device stating that a person must be 21 years of age or older to operate the registered amusement device and the premises shall ask for ID prior to disengaging the security mechanism.

105.2(6) Reserved.

105.2(7) If the department, or the department's designee, determines that a registered amusement device is not in compliance with the requirements of this chapter or any other provision of Iowa law, the device may be subject to seizure, and any registration associated with the device, including the registration of the manufacturer, distributor, or owner, may be revoked or suspended.

105.2(8) Situations that constitute advertising and promoting as restricted by Iowa Code section 99B.53(12) include but are not limited to posted signs, newspaper/magazine advertisements, radio and television advertisements, word of mouth and Internet posting.

105.2(9) If there is no amusement device registration availability, a person may be included on a waiting list for an amusement device registration position.

a. A person shall appear on the waiting list only once for a single registration position.

b. A person may be added to the waiting list by sending an email to gmms@dia.iowa.gov or by calling or writing the department at Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing, Social and Charitable Gambling Unit, 6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0083; 515.281.6840.

c. The department will maintain the waiting list in chronological order.

d. When a registration position becomes available, the department will notify the first person on the waiting list of the amusement device registration availability by mail or email. If multiple positions become available, the department may notify as many persons on the waiting list as there are available positions.

e. The person on the waiting list shall have ten days from the time the notification was sent to submit a registered amusement device application and the fee.

f. If the person does not submit the registration application, fee and proof of purchase within ten days, the person shall forfeit the position on the waiting list and be removed from the waiting list.

105.2(10) An initial amusement device registration shall only be allowed at a location that has a Class "C," special Class "C," Class "D," or Class "F" retail alcohol license issued pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 123.

105.2(11) If a person purchases an amusement device that is registered with the department, the registration tag, if available, must be removed from the purchased amusement device and returned to the department or the department notified in writing within ten calendar days of the change in ownership. The purchased device will be removed from the inventory of the original owner, thus creating a registration position on the waiting list. The purchaser must apply for a registration position on the waiting list for the device.

105.2(12) An amusement device that is registered with the department and located in a warehouse may be placed in a location that has a Class "C," special Class "C," Class "D," or Class "F" retail alcohol license issued pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 123. Such a device may also be used as a replacement device.

105.2(13) The registration application for all new amusement devices must be accompanied by the receipt, invoice, or bill of sale containing the seller's name, company name, and address, transaction date, motherboard serial number, and name of the game.

105.2(14) Devices shall not allow for more than one player. Each playing position constitutes one amusement device.

481—105.3(99B) Prohibited registered amusement devices. The following devices are prohibited:

1. Amusement devices registered in violation of statutory or regulatory requirements governing such devices.
2. Registered amusement devices that are prohibited by rule 481—104.3(99B).
3. Any registered amusement device designed or adapted to facilitate gambling.

481—105.4(99B) Prizes. Prizes may be awarded for use of a registered amusement device in conformance with rule 481—104.4(99B).

481—105.5(99B) Registration by a manufacturer, distributor, or an owner that operates for profit. A person engaged in business in Iowa as a manufacturer, a distributor, or an owner that operates for profit shall be registered with the department prior to engaging in business in Iowa. A person shall register under each of the categories that applies to the business to be conducted in Iowa and pay the designated fee for each category of registration as set forth in Iowa Code section 99B.56.

105.5(1) Reserved.

105.5(2) Registration forms are available from the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing, Social and Charitable Gambling Unit, 6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50321; or by telephone at 515.281.6840.

105.5(3) If registration information changes, the person shall notify the department in writing of the changes within ten calendar days.

105.5(4) Registration fees are nonrefundable.

481—105.6(99B) Registration of registered amusement devices. Each owner of an amusement device subject to registration by the department pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.53 shall obtain a registration before the amusement device is available for operation. A registration issued pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 99B is required to offer a registered amusement device for use.

105.6(1) Reserved.

105.6(2) In the event a registration position is not open, the distributor's or owner's name may be placed on the department's waiting list. The distributor or owner will be notified by the department when a position is available. Upon the distributor's or owner's completion of the application form and payment of the required fee, the department will issue a registration tag valid for one year from the date of issuance.

a. Application forms are available from the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing, Amusement Devices, 6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50321. The application form shall contain all information required by the department.

b. Prior to placement of the amusement device for public use, the registration tag shall be prominently displayed on the front of the registered amusement device in such a manner as to be clearly visible to the general public.

c. Any changes to the information provided on the application, including but not limited to changes in ownership, registered amusement device location, and the cessation of business in this state, shall be reported to the department in writing or electronically within ten calendar days of the occurrence of any of the above events.

d. Registration fees are nonrefundable.

105.6(3) A new registered amusement device must be obtained from a manufacturer that is registered with the department pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.56. A registered amusement device that has been placed on location and used may be obtained from a manufacturer, distributor or owner that is registered with the department pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.56. A distributor or owner that ceases, for any reason, to be registered pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.56 may sell any registered amusement devices in the distributor's or owner's possession within 12 months from the date registration ceases. For all amusement devices new to the purchaser, proof of purchase, which includes the seller's name, company name, and address, must accompany the application for registration of the machine.

105.6(4) Reserved.

105.6(5) Each electrical or mechanical amusement device required to be registered pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.53 shall include on the amusement device a counting mechanism.

a. The department of inspections, appeals, and licensing or the department of public safety will notify the distributor, owner, or qualified organization in advance to have access to the information provided by the counting mechanism.

b. The counting mechanism shall be at least six digits in length; and cumulatively count the total amounts inserted in the device during game play. If the mechanism being used tallies in dollars and cents, at least six digits must be used for the dollar amount. The counting mechanism shall not be able to be reset.

c. The counting mechanism shall be equipped with a battery backup, or an equivalent, and accurately maintain all required information for 30 days after power is discontinued from the device.

105.6(6) The owner of the registered amusement device shall exercise due diligence in ensuring that the amusement device complies with these rules and all laws governing such devices. Upon request by the department or the department's designee, any manufacturer or distributor registered with the department, or any owner of a registered device, shall permit the inspection of any amusement device and make available for inspection all records, documents, and agreements pertaining to the amusement device.

481—105.7(99B) Violations. Failure to comply with the limitations imposed on the use and possession of registered amusement devices in Iowa Code chapter 99B may result in the following:

1. Conviction for illegal gambling may result under the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 725.
2. Suspension or revocation of a retail alcohol license may result under the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 123.
3. Property may be forfeited under the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 809.
4. Violation of any laws pertaining to gambling may result in suspension or revocation of a registration as prescribed in Iowa Code section 99B.55.
5. Unless otherwise prescribed in Iowa Code section 99B.55, a registration may be revoked upon the violation of any gambling law, rule or regulation, including Iowa Code chapter 99B, 481—Chapter 104, or this chapter.
6. A registration may be revoked if the registrant or an agent of the registrant engages in any act or omission that would have permitted the department to refuse to issue a registration under Iowa Code chapter 99B.

481—105.8(10A,99B) Appeal rights. Decisions to refuse to issue a registration or to revoke a registration by the department may be appealed in accordance with the procedures set out in 481—Chapter 9. The refusal to issue a registration or the notice of revocation will be in writing and state the specific grounds for the action. When an appeal is received, the status of the registration is governed by the following standards:

105.8(1) No registration will be issued when a new application is denied.

105.8(2) A previously issued registration remains effective until a final agency decision is issued.

481—105.9(10A,99B) Procedure for denial, revocation, or suspension of a registration.

105.9(1) The department may revoke, suspend, or deny a registration issued pursuant to Iowa Code section 99B.56 for cause following 30 days' written notice delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service and an opportunity for hearing pursuant to 481—105.8(10A,99B).

105.9(2) If the registrant has not requested a hearing within the prescribed time period, the department may affirm, modify or set aside the department's proposed action in the department's final written decision.

105.9(3) The department may suspend a registration prior to a hearing if the director determines that the public integrity of the registered activity is compromised or that there is a risk to public health, safety, or welfare.

105.9(4) The department may rescind the notice of revocation, suspension, or denial at any point prior to hearing when the department becomes satisfied that the reasons for revocation, suspension, or denial have been or will be removed.

105.9(5) The department will send by certified mail, return receipt requested, or serve personally upon the applicant or registrant a copy of the department's final decision.

105.9(6) If the department finds cause for denial of a registration, the applicant shall not reapply for registration of an amusement device for two years.

105.9(7) If the department finds cause for revocation or suspension, the department shall suspend or revoke the registration for a period not to exceed two years.

105.9(8) In addition to the suspension or revocation, a registrant that allows an individual under the age of 21 to operate an electrical or mechanical amusement device may also be fined for a scheduled violation pursuant to Iowa Code section 805.8C(4) and 805.8C(5).

481—105.10(99B) Annual verification of device location. Each distributor or owner that owns amusement devices shall, with the annual distributor or owner registration, verify all device locations.

481—105.11(99B) Criteria for approval or denial of a registration.

105.11(1) The department will consider the responsible person's history of compliance with Iowa Code sections 99B.51 through 99B.58 and other gambling laws and rules in determining whether to approve or deny an application for registration of an amusement device, a manufacturer, a distributor, or an owner.

105.11(2) The department will deny a registration application if the registration does not comply with Iowa Code section 99B.52 and the following:

a. The applicant owes back taxes or fees to the state of Iowa.

b. An amusement device registration availability position is not available.

c. For any other reason, the department deems denial of the registration appropriate.

105.11(3) The period for refusal to issue a registration shall not exceed two years.

481—105.12(10A,99B) Suspension or revocation of a registration. If the responsible party violates the law, including Iowa Code chapter 99B, 481—Chapter 104, this chapter, or any other laws or administrative rules, the registrant's registration may be suspended or revoked.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 99B.1, 99B.2 and 99B.51 through 99B.58.