

CASINOS— PROTECTING YOUR GUESTS

Managing Hospitality Risk



WHAT'S AT RISK?

Casino and gaming facilities present tremendous challenges when it comes to protecting guests. Whether a casino is stand-alone or part of a hotel with thousands of rooms, they share the elements of a large gathering of people, fast action, liquor service, and the presence of huge amounts of cash—all of which “raise the stakes” in safety and security.

A variety of crimes must be considered and planned for. Just to name a few, casinos must take into account:

- Protection for big winners
- Burglary of rooms and pickpockets on the gaming floor
- Parking lot altercations
- Detainment and use of force when handling patrons by security personnel
- Intoxicated and/or unruly patrons
- Concealed weapons inside the casino
- Employee theft or collusion
- Underage gambling and drinking
- Prostitution

WHAT ARE YOUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS?

Most gaming operations are overseen by special state gaming commissions. Every casino or gaming operator must follow the letter and spirit of the laws imposed in their state, or risk losing their license to operate. Because of the commission's requirements, gaming

operations are often directed to implement extremely thorough and structured hiring procedures. In addition, state gaming commissions typically require that there be armed, plainclothes state police officers on the casino floor (while most casino's own security officers are unarmed). Beyond specific rules and regulations, casinos, under common law, must provide a safe and secure environment free from unreasonable hazards or risk, and will be held to an unusually high standard in this regard.

HOW CAN YOU BETTER PROTECT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

For some suggestions designed to assist you in developing sound policies and procedures for your organization, please turn this document over and review the attached checklist.

For more information about this and other hospitality risk management topics, please contact:

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Checklist: Protecting Your Guests

- All gaming facilities should be provided with CCTV to strategically monitor gaming, cashiers area, counting rooms, and public areas including escalators, entry doors, and stairways. These should be monitored 24/7.
- Contact between the surveillance facility and the floor should be uninterrupted, with security personnel watching the games for the rate of play and the amount played. They must also be alert to a dealer who may be compromised or tempted to collude with a player or players.
- Employee background and pre-employment screening should include drug, credit, criminal and reference checks.
- A briefing sheet should be provided to guests at check-in and/or in their room, advising them of common sense steps they can take to avoid becoming the victims of theft or scams.
- High-roller guests, carrying cash out of the hotel, should be offered a security escort, particularly if they are traveling in their own vehicle. Electronic transfer should be offered as an option.
- Protection of the names and addresses of hotel and casino guests should be a high priority. Computers should be password protected. No one, who has not been authorized to do so, should be allowed to give away or sell data regarding hotel guests.
- Reported thefts of items from rooms, such as jewelry, cash or other valuables, should prompt a quick check of maid carts, linen closets, and other storage areas.
- Housekeeping supervisors should be alert for missing keys, and should also watch out for people inspecting maid carts. Housekeeping passkeys should be attached to the room attendants' bodies or clothing, never left on carts.
- Security personnel levels and camera surveillance activity should be increased for special events that are likely to attract crowds, money, and items of value. Focus should be placed on check-in, valet, and shopping areas.
- Casino and gaming security personnel should be trained in CPR and basic first aid. With proper training and policies, the use of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) for the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest, may be prudent.
- Daily shift reports should be completed by security, noting anything out of the ordinary or anything calling for action of some kind. Any incidents should be specifically documented to include time and date, narrative of what happened, contact information for witnesses, amount of loss if known, time police were notified if applicable, date and author's signature.
- When an incident occurs which has potential for liability to the organization, the original tape should be kept on file, unless it must be turned over to law enforcement agencies, in which case a complete copy is kept. These files of taped records are kept in case of legal action against the company, and to provide information should surveillance or other staff be called upon to testify in criminal or civil proceedings.