

Transition Process Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. As an operator, am I responsible for notifying the Commission after proclamation of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021?

A. Yes. Upon commencement of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021, a person who presently owns or operates a gaming establishment or a gaming machine, subject to the provisions of the Liquor Licences Act or the Registration of Clubs Act.

2. Q. Is there a time period as an operator to notify the Commission that I am operating a gambling establishment?

A. Yes, there is a time period. Further to the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021, a person who, upon commencement of the Act, owns or operates a gaming establishment or a gaming machine, subject to the provisions of the Liquor Licences Act or the Registration of Clubs Act, shall within three (3) months of the commencement of this Act or such further period as the Minister may, by Order, prescribe –

- a) Notify the Commission of the existence and operation of his existence and operation of his establishment and machines; and
- b) Provide proof of existence and operation as the Commission may prescribe.

3. Q. Can I continue to operate upon notifying the Commission?

A. Yes, until such time as the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission makes a decision regarding your registration, and / or application for a license , you shall continue to operate your gaming establishment or gaming machine in accordance with Section 53(3) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission Act 2021.

4. Q. Are there consequences for operators who fail to notify the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of their gaming establishment or machines during the transition period?

A. Yes, there are consequences. Under Section 53(4) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021, if an operator fails to register/ notify the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of the existence or operation of a gaming establishment or gaming machine during the transition period, the Commission is required to immediately report the matter to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. This indicates that non-compliance may lead to investigation and possible criminal enforcement action.

5. Q. Can I start new gambling business activities after the proclamation of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021?

A. No, under Section 53(5) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021, an application for a licence to operate a gaming establishment, must first be submitted to the

Commission. The entity is not allowed to operate at the commencement of this Act, until the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission has made its decision with respect to such application. At this time the Gambling Control Commission is allowing existing operators to register/ notify their existence with us. All new entities will be required to apply for a license once the commission has commenced this process following the transition period.

6. Q. Am I applying for a licence?

A. No, you are not applying for a licence at this stage. This is the transitional phase where you are registering with the Gambling Control Commission to notify us of your existence. It's a preliminary step, where an active entity must first notify the Commission in accordance with Section 53 of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021. Such notification allows the Commission to be aware of your operations, but it does not yet involve a formal application for a licence.

7. Q. Is there a registration/ notification period for transition?

A. Yes, there is. Within three (3) months of the commencement of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021 or such further period as the Minister may, by Order, prescribe as mandated under Section 53 (1) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021. This includes:

- Notification via online registration with the Commission to notify us of the existence and operation of the establishment and machines.
- Proof of existence and operation as the Commission may prescribe.

8. Q. Will I be charged to submit this notification?

A. No, you will not be charged to submit this notification. This is currently part of the transition phase in accordance with Section 53(1)(a) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021, where individuals and entities involved in gambling activities are required to register/ notify the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago. This registration/ notification process is intended solely to gather necessary information during the regulatory transition and does not carry a fee at this stage.

9. Q. Will I get a confirmation email of my notification?

A. Yes, you will receive confirmation of your notification. Once your submission has been successfully completed, a confirmation email from email address info@gcc.org or notification via the web portal will be sent to acknowledge receipt. This serves as official verification that your notification has been received by the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission during the transition phase.

10. Q. What if I own more than one location, is there a separate registration/ notification per location?

A. Yes, if you own more than one location, you are required to submit a separate registration form/ notification for each location. This is necessary to ensure that the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission has accurate and complete information about all operational sites, as each location may differ in terms of activities, staffing, and compliance requirements. Submitting individual registrations/ notifications helps the Commission effectively regulate and monitor gambling operations across all premises in accordance with the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021.

11. Q. If I do not get confirmation, should I email the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission?

A. Yes, it is advisable to email the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission at _____@gcc.org if you do not receive a confirmation email. This ensures that your submission has been received and is being processed.

13. Q. If I do not register with/ notify the Commission of my gambling establishment during the transitionary period, will I be fined?

A. Yes, if you do not submit your registration/ notification during the transition period, you may be subject to fines and other penalties. All active gambling establishments must register/ notify the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago of their existence and provide proof of operations within the three (3) month period as outlined in Section 53 of Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act 2021.

Failure to do so shall result in the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago immediately reporting the matter to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS). It is mandatory to complete the registration/ notification process promptly to avoid any penalties and ensure your operations remain compliant with regulations.

16. Q. Do I need to submit supporting documents or is completing the application form sufficient?

A. Yes, during the transitional notification process, applicants are required to complete the designated registration/ notification form. Supporting documentation, such as XXXX etc. is required to validate the information provided.

Please refer to the application guidelines for a full list of specific documentation requirements.

17. Q. Will this transitional registration/ notification allow me to continue operating my business?

A. Yes, completing the transitional notification process allows your existing business to remain operational while the full licensing framework is being implemented in accordance with the Section 53(3) of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021. However, you must comply with all conditions outlined by the Commission during this interim period.

18. Q. Will I have to eventually apply for an actual licence?

A. Yes, After submitting a notification of operation to the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, you will be guided via email in due course to apply for the appropriate licence/s.

To ensure compliance, it's advisable to submit your licence application promptly upon receipt of email from the Commission. This allows sufficient time for the Commission to process your application, which includes assessments such as background checks, financial evaluations, and reviews of your operational plans.

19. Q. Is applying for a licence similar to registering a business name with the Companies Registry?

A. No, these are two separate processes with different purposes. Registering a business name with the Company Registry (under the Ministry of Legal Affairs) is required for all businesses and serves to legally establish your business entity in Trinidad and Tobago.

On the other hand, applying for a licence with the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago is specifically for individuals or companies seeking to operate within the gambling and gaming sector.

If you plan to operate a gambling-related business, you must first register your business with the Company Registry and then apply for the appropriate licence from the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago. Both steps are essential but serve different legal and regulatory functions.

20. Q. How is this different from registering for a business with the Ministry of Legal Affairs?

A. Registering a business with the Ministry of Legal Affairs is the first step for anyone wishing to operate a business in Trinidad and Tobago. It involves legally establishing your business name or incorporating a company, and it applies to all industries.

However, if you intend to operate a gambling-related business (such as a casino, betting shop, or online gaming platform), you must *also* apply for a licence from the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago. This is a separate and more detailed process that involves regulatory vetting, background checks, financial disclosures, and compliance with anti-money laundering and responsible gambling standards.

In short, business registration with the Ministry of Legal Affairs gives your business legal status, while licensing with the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago gives you the legal authority to operate within the gambling sector. Both are required for gambling operators.

21. Q. Will this registration/ notification apply to all types of gambling activity such as amusement, betting shops, private clubs, and casinos (private members club)?

A. Yes, this notification applies to all operators within the Amusement, Betting and Casino sectors.

22. Q. What about online or mobile-based operations? Does the registration cover this as well?

A. No, the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission is legislated to licence land-based gambling ONLY. As such, remote gambling licence is currently unavailable and is a criminal offence if found to be conducting remote gambling.