

Sports betting is now allowed at the Oneida Casino, will it soon be approved for the Potawatomi Casino?

Written by Administrator
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The year 2022 could be when sports betting is allowed at the Potawatomi Casino in Milwaukee.

Casino managers say they're pursuing an agreement with the state of Wisconsin.

Last year, Gov. Tony Evers approved deals to allow sports betting at two other tribal casinos in Wisconsin, including the Oneida Nation hall, just west of Green Bay.

The Oneida Casino has been around for nearly three decades, offering poker, slot machines, bingo and table games like 21.

On a recent weekday, hundreds of people wearing COVID masks gambled in the main rooms of the casino, as music played on the PA system.

One of the main gaming rooms at the Oneida Casino.

Off in a corner there were a dozen electronic kiosks offering something new at the casino: sports betting, or what's sometimes called the sportsbook.

The Oneida's chief financial officer for gaming, Chad Fuss, described the options on the kiosk touchscreen.

"On the left-hand side, you have all your major league sports, all your collegiate sports. You can make a bet on the day of a game, or you can make a bet on what's called a futures pick. So, if you want to make a bet on who's going to win the Super Bowl in February, you can make that bet also," Fuss said.

As in Nevada, or the more than two dozen other states with legalized sports betting, there is usually a point spread, an over-under, or some other betting line that gamblers have to evaluate

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before placing their bet. Wagering on in-state Division I college games is not allowed at the Oneida casino, so you can't bet on the Wisconsin Badgers, Marquette or UWM basketball. The Oneida also generally does not take bets on Division III games.

Fuss said the kiosks do not accept credit cards but take cash. A ticket will come out that registers the bet, and if you later think you're a winner, you can take the ticket to a nearby Oneida cashier who will pay you.

If gamblers who made a bet on a current game want to watch how their team is doing, Fuss pointed toward a bank of televisions on the wall.

"On a typical Sunday, you probably see for the noon game, probably at least four games, and for the afternoon game, three or four games, so they're always watching a live game, based on the bet they've made," Fuss said.

The televised action may also spur gamblers to bet on additional contests.

WUWM mainly saw young men intently placing bets during our time near the kiosks. But Fuss said older men and women wager on sports, too.

Fuss politely declined our request to interview any of the gamblers, saying the Oneida protects the privacy of its customers.

The exterior of the Oneida Casino, near Green Bay's airport.

Upstairs in his office, Fuss said sports has a big following in Wisconsin.

"We wanted to match or blend our sports fanatic with leisure gaming and really bring those two together, to give our customers and potential customers an even better experience," Fuss said.

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Fuss said the Oneida casino also offers a highly ethical and closely regulated way to bet on sports. Of course, sports betting goes on often in Wisconsin — think even of your office football or NCAA basketball pool. But for right now, the Oneida has the only legalized sports betting venue.

Evers recently signed another sports wagering deal with the St. Croix Chippewa, a plan currently under federal review.

Potawatomi Hotel and Casino

Potawatomi Hotel and Casino CEO Dominic Ortiz recently told the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce that he's interested in a new agreement too, in part to compete with sports betting in Illinois.

"We'll bring sports betting. We're going to challenge Chicago with the assets and the liveliness of the excitement we're going to bring to Potawatomi," Ortiz told MMAC members.

A casino spokesperson said the Potawatomi does not want guests to have to travel to place a sports bet.

The office of the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling, on Green Bay's east side.

Back in Green Bay, at the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling, executive director Rose Blozinski said her non-profit maintains a neutral stand on legalized gambling. But she says some people do go too far into sports betting.

"We see people who can maybe social gamble for a while, and then especially sports betting, it can maybe get out of control. They spend more money, gamble more often. We see people start to have financial problems, family, relationship problems, suicidal issues sometimes with compulsive gamblers, as well. So, these are things you always want to pay attention to," Blozinski said.

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A few other tribal casinos in the U.S. have started offering sports betting since the federal government gave its OK four years ago. Some tribes say they're holding off while determining if creating a sports betting area will be more lucrative than offering other gaming.

But national studies show that a lot of money is bet on sports, perhaps billions of dollars.

The Oneida already sense more profits. They're building a 2,000 square foot sports betting lounge at their main casino and planning to let gamblers place sports bets using an app on their phone.

Read more <https://www.wuwm.com/2022-01-07/sports-betting-is-now-allowed-at-the-oneida-casino-will-it-soon-be-okayed-for-the-potawatomi-casino>