WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §19-23-8

§19-23-8. Consideration of application for license or permit; issuance or denial; contents of license or permit; grounds for denial of application; determination of racing dates; license or permit not transferable or assignable; limitation on license; validity of permit.

(a) The Racing Commission shall promptly consider any application for a license or permit, as the case may be. Based upon such application and all other information before it, the Racing Commission shall make and enter an order either approving or denying the application. The application may be denied for any reason specified in subsection (b) of this section. If an application for a license is approved, the Racing Commission shall issue a license to conduct a horse or dog race meeting and shall designate on the face of the license the kind or type of horse or dog racing for which the same is issued, the racing association to which the same is issued, the dates upon which the horse or dog race meeting is to be held or conducted (which may be any weekdays, or week-nights, including Sundays), the location of the horse or dog racetrack, place or enclosure where the horse or dog race meeting is to be held or conducted, and other information as the Racing Commission shall consider proper. If an application for a permit is approved, the Racing Commission shall issue a permit and shall designate on the face of the permit such information as the Racing Commission considers proper.

(b) The Racing Commission may deny the application and refuse to issue the license or permit, as the case may be, which denial and refusal is final and conclusive unless a hearing is demanded in accordance with the provisions of §19-23-16 of this code, if the Racing Commission finds that the applicant individually, if an individual, or the partners or members, if a partnership, firm, or association, or the owners and directors, if a corporation:

(1) Has knowingly made false statement of a material fact in the application or has knowingly failed to disclose any information called for in the application;

(2) Is or has been guilty of any corrupt or fraudulent act, practice, or conduct in connection with a horse or dog race meeting in this or any other state;

(3) Has been convicted, within 10 years prior to the date of the application, of an offense which under the law of this state, of any other state, or of the United States of America, shall constitute a felony: *Provided*, That the Racing Commission shall apply §19-23-8(g) and §19-23-8(h) of this code in determining whether an applicant’s prior criminal convictions bear a rational nexus to the license or permit being sought;

(4) Has failed to comply with the provisions of this article or any reasonable rules of the Racing Commission;

(5) Has had a license to hold or conduct a horse or dog race meeting or a permit to

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participate therein denied for just cause, suspended, or revoked in any other state;

(6) Has defaulted in the payment of any obligation or debt due to this state under the provisions of this article;

(7) Is, if a corporation, neither incorporated under the laws of this state nor qualified to do business within this state;

(8) In the case of an application for a license, has failed to furnish bond or other adequate security, if the same is required by the Racing Commission under the provisions of §19-23-7 of this code;

(9) In the case of an application for a permit, is unqualified to perform the duties required for the permit sought; or

(10) In the case of an application for a permit, is, for just cause, determined to be undesirable to perform the duties required of the applicant.

(c) In issuing licenses and fixing dates for horse or dog race meetings at the various horse racetracks and dog racetracks in this state, the Racing Commission shall consider the horse racing circuits and dog racing circuits with which the horse racetracks and dog racetracks in this state are associated or contiguous to and shall also consider dates which are calculated to increase the tax revenues accruing from horse racing and dog racing.

(d) A license issued under the provisions of this article is neither transferable nor assignable to any other racing association and may not permit the holding or conducting of a horse or dog race meeting at any horse or dog racetrack, place, or enclosure not specified thereon. However, if the specified horse or dog racetrack, place, or enclosure becomes unsuitable for the horse or dog race meeting because of flood, fire, or other catastrophe, or cannot be used for any reason, the Racing Commission may, upon application, authorize the horse or dog race meeting, or any remaining portion thereof, to be conducted at any other racetrack, place, or enclosure available for that purpose, provided that the owner of the racetrack, place, or enclosure willingly consents to the use.

(e) No type of horse racing or dog racing shall be conducted by a licensee at any race meeting other than that type for which a license was issued.

(f) Each permit issued under the provisions of this section shall be for a period of one year, unless approved otherwise by the commission. Effective January 1, 2012, each permit shall be renewed according to the following schedule: Permits issued to persons whose date of birth is January 1 through and including April 30 shall be renewed no later than April 30 of each year; permits issued to persons whose date of birth is May 1 through and including August 31 shall be renewed no later than August 31 of each year; and permits issued to persons whose date of birth is September 1 through and including December 31 shall be renewed no later than December 31 of each year. Each permit shall be valid at all horse or

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dog race meetings during the period for which it was issued unless it be sooner suspended or revoked in accordance with the provisions of this article. A permit issued under the provisions of this article is neither transferable nor assignable to any other person.

(g) The Racing Commission may not disqualify an applicant from an initial license or permit because of a prior criminal conviction that remains unreversed unless that conviction is for a crime that bears a rational nexus to the activity requiring a license or permit. In determining whether a criminal conviction bears a rational nexus to a profession or occupation, the Racing Commission shall consider at a minimum:

(1) The nature and seriousness of the crime for which the individual was convicted;

(2) The passage of time since the commission of the crime;

(3) The relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity, and fitness required to perform the duties and discharge the responsibilities of the profession or occupation; and

(4) Any evidence of rehabilitation or treatment undertaken by the individual.

(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary, if an applicant is disqualified from a license or permit because of a prior criminal conviction, the commissioner shall permit the applicant to apply for an initial license or permit if:

(1) A period of five years has elapsed from the date of conviction or the date of release from incarceration, whichever is later;

(2) The individual has not been convicted of any other crime during the period of time following the disqualifying offense; and

(3) The conviction was not for an offense of a violent or sexual nature: *Provided*, That a conviction for an offense of a violent or sexual nature may subject an individual to a longer period of disqualification from licensure, to be determined by the commissioner.

(i) An individual with a criminal record who has not previously applied for a license or permit may petition the Racing Commission at any time for a determination of whether the individual's criminal record will disqualify the individual from obtaining a license or permit. This petition shall include sufficient details about the individual's criminal record to enable the Racing Commission to identify the jurisdiction where the conviction occurred, the date of the conviction, and the specific nature of the conviction. The Racing Commission shall provide the determination within 60 days of receiving the petition from the applicant. The Racing Commission may charge a fee to recoup its costs for each petition.

(j) The Racing Commission shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code which establish the criteria for the approval or denial of a license or permit.

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