



City of Nanticoke
Pennsylvania

15 E Ridge St, Nanticoke, PA 18634 Phone: (570) 735-2800 Fax: (570) 258-0909

January 10th, 2026

Re. Guidance on Skill Machines for Nanticoke Business Owners

To Nanticoke Business Owners and Property Operators:

The City of Nanticoke recently adopted zoning amendments in mid-2025 to clarify how *skill games* and other *betting or gambling uses* are regulated within the City. As these devices continue to appear in a variety of commercial settings, this letter is intended to provide clear guidance to ensure compliance with the updated ordinance.

Under the amended ordinance, **Skill Games** are defined as electronic gaming devices that accept monetary input and offer potential cash payouts or prizes. While these devices resemble traditional slot machines, they incorporate skill-based components that influence gameplay outcomes and require active player engagement beyond mere chance.

A **Betting or Gambling Use** includes any lawful gambling activity and/or the operation of skill games.

This definition **does not** include:

- State Lottery programs
- Activities regulated under Pennsylvania’s “Small Games of Chance” laws

Those activities remain regulated under the rules applicable to the principal use of the property.

Zoning Regulations Applicable to Skill Games and Betting/Gambling Uses (Section 500-802.47)

A. Principal Use

A betting or gambling use **as a principal use** is permitted **only** in the **I-1 General Industrial District**.

Any business intending to **operate more than four devices**, or to establish gaming as its primary business activity, must be located within the I-1 District and will require appropriate zoning approvals.

B. Accessory Use

A betting or gambling use **as an accessory use is permitted for all non-residential uses**, subject to the following limitations:

- A maximum of **four (4) devices**—including skill games—may be installed on the premises.
- If a machine contains **multiple player stations**, each station counts as a separate device.
 - For example, a two-station machine counts as two devices toward the four-device limit.
- **No zoning permit is required** for an accessory betting or gambling use, provided the business remains within the four-device limit and complies with all other applicable regulations.

Businesses are responsible for ensuring that the number of devices on-site does not exceed the allowable limit of four.

If your business has four or fewer skill games, you are compliant with the Nanticoke Zoning Ordinance.

If your business or organization has over four skill games, you are advised to reduce the number of devices on site to four or less.

Alternatively, you may apply to the zoning hearing board for a use variance for a betting or gambling use.

C. Qualified Attendant Requirement

For both principal and accessory uses, a **qualified attendant must be present on-site at all times** during the facility's hours of operation. This requirement is intended to ensure proper oversight, security, and compliance with state and local regulations.

This requirement is already met in instances such as a shop clerk, bartender, or barber working as they normally would on site. It meant to stop problem scenarios where no supervision is present, or facilities are being remotely monitored and accessed.

Next Steps for Businesses

If you currently operate skill games or are considering adding them to your establishment, please review the above requirements carefully. **Businesses exceeding the four-device accessory limit or operating without proper oversight may be subject to enforcement action.**

If you have questions about your device counts or compliance obligations, please contact the Zoning Office at zoning@nanticokecity.com or (570) 735-2800 ext 116. We are available to assist you in determining the appropriate path forward.

Thank you for your cooperation and for your continued investment in the City of Nanticoke.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Ritsick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "R".

Ted Ritsick, Zoning Officer