



PROFESSOR SLOTS

## Illinois 2018

# Slot Machine Casino Gambling



Illinois slot machine casino gambling includes 10 riverboat casinos and video lottery terminals at over 6,300 bars, restaurants, truck stops, and other licensed locations. Minimum and maximum legal limits are 80% and 100% over a game's lifetime. Actual payout return statistics as casino hold percentages are publicly available.

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## Introduction to Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling in 2018

Illinois slot machine casino gambling consists of ten riverboat casinos, becoming the second U.S. state to offer them. They also offer video gaming terminals (VLTs) in bars, restaurants, and other establishments if approved by their local governments.

Cook County offers pari-mutuel wagering of horse-racing, but these 5 gambling facilities do not offer slot machines or table games. Therefore, they are not racinos.

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This post continues the weekly series [Online Resource: A State-By-State Slot Machine Casino Gambling Series](#), an online resource dedicated to guiding slot machine casino gambling enthusiasts to success. Each weekly post reviews slots gambling in a single U.S. state, territory, or the federal district.

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Chicago Skyline at Night [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2018]

## Relevant Legal Statutes on Gambling in Illinois\*

The minimum gambling age in Illinois depends upon the gambling activity:

- Land-Based Casinos: 21
- Poker Rooms: 21
- Bingo: 18
- Lottery: 18
- Pari-Mutuel Wagering: 18

Pari-mutuel wagering of horse-races was approved in 1927. The Illinois Riverboat Gambling Act enacted in February 1990 legalized riverboat gambling on open water outside of Cook County. This restriction protected horse-racing in the Chicago area.

Another legal restriction applied to riverboat casinos is their hours of operation. Illinois riverboat casinos are legally required to be closed for two hours each day. In general, they are usually closed from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. However, these closed hours may be shifted by an hour depending on the specific casino.

Since 1990, Illinois has offered only ten gaming licenses for riverboat casinos. Riverboat casinos in Illinois were originally required to be able to cruise, but a new state law in 1999 allowed them to be permanently docked.

In 2009, the Illinois state legislature passed the Video Gaming Act, allowing video gaming terminals to be placed in “Licensed Retail Establishments, Truck Stops, Veteran and Fraternal Establishments”.

The Act also offered local municipalities the ability to opt-out of hosting these video gaming terminal locations. Nevertheless, it took until 2012 for the Illinois Gaming Board to provide mass approvals for these video gaming licenses to the many license applicants.

To be clear, Illinois slot machine casino gambling is partially authorized by local city governments. Doing so created a great deal of ongoing interest and consideration in the other U.S. gaming jurisdictions.

The Illinois Gaming Board hosts a website with extensive and thoroughly detailed descriptions its state gambling laws for [Riverboat Gambling](#) as well as [Video Gaming](#).

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\*The purpose of this section is to inform the public of state gambling laws and how the laws apply to various forms of gambling. This information is not intended to provide legal advice.

## Slot Machine Private Ownership in Illinois

In Illinois, it is legal to privately own a slot machine if it was manufactured 25 or more years ago.



Lake Michigan Shoreline [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2018]

## Gaming Control Board in Illinois

Illinois has five gaming control boards, each assigned to a different gambling activity:

1. [Lottery](#)
2. [Racing Board](#)
3. [Casino Gaming Association](#)
4. [Gaming Taxes](#) (e.g., Bingo)

## 5. [Illinois Gaming Board](#)

The [Illinois Gaming Board](#) regulates gaming and tax collection on riverboat casinos as well as all video lottery terminals within the state of Illinois.

It's a five-member board appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. The Board's mission is to assure integrity through oversight of gaming activities as well as licensing of manufacturers, suppliers, and services for both.



Route 66 Roadside Attraction in Odell [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2018]

## Casinos in Illinois

In early 1990, Illinois was the second U.S. state to legalize riverboat casinos. No riverboat casinos were allowed in Cook County in an attempt to protect horse-racing in the Chicago area.

Illinois has offered pari-mutuel wagering of horse-racing since 1927 as well as a state lottery since 1974. Somewhat unusually, Illinois is one of the first states to offer both of these gambling options online.

Originally, Illinois riverboat casinos were legally required to be undocked from land to offer onboard gambling. However, this requirement was updated in 1999 to instead allow gambling to be offered while permanently docked.

In 2009, the Illinois state legislature allowed video gaming terminals to be placed in bars, restaurants, veteran establishments, fraternal organizations, and truck stops. Applicants for these VLT machines are required to get approval from both the state as well as their local government.

Riverboat casinos were launched, so to speak, in September 1991 with the Alton Belle. Illinois riverboat casinos exist in East St. Louis, Aurora, twice in Joliet, Metropolis, East Peoria, East Dubuque, and Rock Island.

Each riverboat is legally authorized to have up to a total of 1,200 gaming machines including positions available at table games. The Illinois Gaming Board assumes each craps table offers 10 positions while all other table and keno offer 5 gaming positions.

In 2005, the Illinois state legislature established an admissions tax of \$2 or \$3. Admission is \$2 at Jumer's Casino Rock Island and \$3 at all the other riverboat casinos.

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## List of Casinos in Illinois

The largest casino in Illinois is [Hollywood Casino Joliet](#) in Joliet, having over 1,100 gaming machines and 25 table games.

The second largest casino in Illinois is [Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino](#) in East Peoria, having over 1,100 gaming machines and 21 table games.

Illinois' ten riverboat casinos include:

1. [Argosy's Alton Belle Casino](#) in Alton located 158 miles south of Peoria and across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, Missouri.
2. [Casino Queen](#) in East St. Louis located 165 miles south of Peoria and across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, Missouri.
3. [Grand Victoria Casino Elgin](#) in Elgin located 42 miles west of downtown Chicago.
4. [Harrah's Joliet](#) in Joliet located 45 miles southwest of downtown Chicago.
5. [Harrah's Metropolis](#) in Metropolis located at the southernmost tip of Illinois or 167 miles southeast of St. Louis, Missouri.
6. [Hollywood Casino Aurora](#) in Aurora located 42 miles west of downtown Chicago.
7. [Hollywood Casino Joliet](#) in Joliet located 45 miles southwest of downtown Chicago.
8. [Jumer's Casino & Hotel](#) in Rock Island located 101 miles northwest of Peoria on the Mississippi River border to Iowa.
9. [Par-A-Dice Casino](#) in East Peoria located 2.5 miles northwest of Peoria.
10. [Rivers Casino](#) in Des Plaines located 20 miles northwest of downtown Chicago.

## List of Tribal Casinos in Illinois

Illinois has no federally-recognized American Indian tribes. Therefore, there can't be any Illinois tribal casinos.



Water Tower in Rosemont [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2018]

## Other Gambling Establishments

By the end of 2017, 6,359 locations in Illinois offered video lottery terminals. In total, there were 28,271 active VLT gaming machines. Given Illinois' ten riverboat casinos are limited to 1,200 slot machines each, these additional VLTs would equate to another 24 casinos of similar size.

As an alternative to enjoying Illinois slot machine casino gambling, consider exploring casino options in a nearby state.

Illinois is bordered by:

- North: [Wisconsin Slots](#)
- Northeast (across the southern tip of Lake Michigan): [Michigan Slots](#)
- East: [Indiana Slots](#)
- Southeast: [Kentucky Slots](#)
- West: [Iowa Slots](#) and [Missouri Slots](#)

Each of the links above will take you to my state-specific blog for that bordering state to Illinois.

Note that Indiana has an important role as a neighboring state with regards to Illinois slot machine casino gambling. Notably, Indiana has positioned its casinos only a few miles from the Illinois riverboat casinos.

As Indiana casinos are subject to their own state's gaming regulations, they have the legal advantage of being open 24 hours per day while Illinois casinos are closed two hours per day.

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## Payout Returns in Illinois

Illinois has established a minimum payout return limit of 80% during the lifetime of a game for slot machines. Further, they have also established a maximum payout percentage of 100%.

Each year, the annual actual payout return statistics for riverboat casinos are provided on the Illinois Gaming Board [Annual Reports](#) website.

For your convenience, the overall payout returns statistics from 2017 for electronic gaming devices (EGDs) at Illinois ten riverboat casinos are as follows:

- Argosy's Alton Belle Casino: 90.96%
- Casino Queen: 92.46%
- Grand Victoria Casino Elgin: 90.96%
- Harrah's Joliet: 92.05%
- Harrah's Metropolis: 89.33%
- Hollywood Casino Aurora: 90.70%
- Hollywood Casino Joliet: 92.13%
- Jumer's Casino & Hotel: 90.20%
- Par-A-Dice Casino: 91.03%
- Rivers Casino: 90.13%

The overall payout returns from 2017 for electronic gaming devices (EGDs) at Illinois ten riverboat casinos shows the highest payout return was at Casino Queen at 92.46% while the lowest in 2017 was Rivers Casino at 89.33%. That's a significant difference.

It's well worth noting that each annual report also offers actual payout returns for each slot machine denomination from \$0.01 to \$100.

In addition, the Illinois Gaming Board's website has [Riverboat Gambling Monthly Reports](#). These can be a little bit more difficult to decipher but provide useful monthly information.

For instance, they provide hold percentages for each casino and for each slot machine denomination for that month. Rather than looking at an annual average, these additional reports provide statistics for just last month.

However, the payout return statistics in these reports are offered as casino hold percentages rather than return percentages, where  $\text{Return}\% = 100\% - \text{Hold}\%$ .



Chicago Art Institute Street View [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2018]

## Our Illinois Slots Facebook Group

Are you interested in sharing and learning with other slots enthusiasts in Illinois? If so, join our new [Illinois slots community on Facebook](#). All you'll need is a Facebook profile to freely join this closed Facebook Group.

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There, you'll be able to privately share your slots experiences as well as chat with players about slots gambling in or near Illinois. Come join us!

## Summary of Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling in 2018

Illinois slot machine casino gambling includes ten riverboat casinos and video gaming at over 6,300 bars, restaurants, and other licensed non-casino locations.

Minimum and maximum legal limits for slot machines are 80% and 100%, respectively, over the lifetime of the game.

Actual payout return statistics in the form of casino hold percentages are publicly available on the Illinois Gaming Board website as annual and monthly averages. The 2017 annual average payout return statistics for each riverboat casino was provided above.

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## Annual Progress in Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling

Video lottery terminal locations increased from 5,726 at the end of 2016 to 6,359 locations by the end of 2017. This resulted in an increase of 633 locations for an additional terminal income of

\$164.9 million or a 17.6% increase.

Archive: [Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2017](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqIpLBHfXNfQlSMLqMDZuoG6LpaFgsoA>

Professor Slots Video on Illinois Slot Machine Casino Gambling in 2018

## Other State-By-State Articles from Professor Slots

- [Online Resource: State-By-State Slot Machine Casino Gambling Series](#)
- Previous: [Idaho Slot Machine Casino Gambling in 2018](#)
- Next: [Indiana Slot Machine Casino Gambling in 2018](#)