

**Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency
Standard Rules - Poker**

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Chapter 1 - Definitions.

A. In this chapter the following terms have the meaning indicated.

B. Terms Defined.

(1) “All-In” means when a player bets all of his funds remaining on the Poker table, does not have funds to continue betting in a round of play but still retains the right to contend for that portion of the pot in which the player has already placed a bet.

(2) “Bet” means when a player places value chips, tournament chips or plaques into the pot during a betting round.

(3) “Betting round” means a complete betting cycle in which all players have called, folded or gone All-In.

(4) “Blind Bet” means a mandatory bet in Hold ’Em or Omaha Poker which a player sitting in a specific betting position shall be required to place prior to any cards being dealt.

(5) “Burn card” means a card taken from the top of a deck which is not in play, is discarded face down and its identity remains unknown.

(6) “Button” means an object that is moved clockwise around the table to determine the betting and dealing sequence.

(7) “Call” means when a player places a bet in an amount equal to the immediately preceding bet.

(8) “Check” means when a player waives the right to initiate the betting in a betting round but retains the right to place a bet if another player initiates the betting.

(9) “Common card” means a card that is dealt, in any game of Stud Poker, face up if there are insufficient cards left in the deck to deal each player a card individually and which can be used by all players at the showdown.

(10) “Community card” means a card that is dealt face up and can be used by all players to form the best possible Poker hand.

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(11) “Draw” means in any game of Draw Poker, when a player exchanges the cards held in his hand for an equal number of new cards from the deck.

(12) “Fold” means the withdrawal of a player from a round of play by refusing to make an equal bet during a betting round and discarding his hand of cards.

(13) “Forced Bet” means a bet that is required to start the first betting round in Seven-Card or Five-Card Stud Poker.

(14) “Fouled hand” means a hand that either has an improper number of cards or has come into contact with other cards in a way as to render it impossible to determine accurately which cards are in the hand.

(15) “Half-Kill option” means in the game of Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, when one player wins an entire qualifying pot, the betting limits are increased by 1/2 the posted table betting limits for the next hand and remain in effect until a pot is split between one player winning the high hand and another player winning the low hand or until a pot does not equal or exceed the qualifying pot.

(16) “High hand” means a game of Poker in which the highest ranking hand, in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings, wins the pot.

(17) “High Hand Jackpot payout” means the total of the contribution amounts collected during a qualifying period which is payable to a player upon the occurrence of a Qualifying High Hand.

(18) “High-Low Split” means a form of Poker in which there is a winner for both the highest and lowest ranking hands.

(19) “High-Low Split Eight or Better” means a version of High-Low Split Poker in which a winning low hand may not contain pairs or any card ranked above an 8.

(20) “Hole card” means any card dealt face down to a player.

(21) “Kill option” means in the game of Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, when a player wins an entire qualifying pot, the betting limits are twice the posted table betting limits for the next hand and remain in effect until a pot is split

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between a player winning the high hand and another player winning the low hand or until a pot does not equal or exceed the qualifying pot.

(22) “Low hand” means a game of Poker in which the lowest ranking hand, in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings, wins the pot.

(23) “Opening bet” means the first bet in a round of play.

(24) “Pot” means the amount that is awarded to the winning player or players at the conclusion of a round of play and is equal to the total amount bet by the players during the round of play, less any rake extracted under Chapter 17 - Poker Revenue and, if applicable, any amount contributed to a Bad Beat or High Hand Jackpot payout fund in accordance with Chapter 15 - Bad Beat Payout — Procedure or Chapter 16 - High Hand Jackpot Payout — Posting Rules; Contributions; Payout Amount; Procedure.

(25) “Protected hand” means a hand of cards that a player is physically holding or has placed under one or more chips or plaques.

(26) “Qualifying High Hand” means a high hand held by any player or players during a qualifying period which may result in a High Hand Jackpot payout if offered by the facility operator in accordance with Chapter 16 - High Hand Jackpot Payout — Posting Rules; Contributions; Payout Amount; Procedure.

(27) “Qualifying period” means a duration of time, as specified in the facility operator’s Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19, during which a facility operator offers the High Hand Jackpot payout.

(28) “Qualifying pot” means in the game of Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, a pot which equals or exceeds an amount established by the facility operator which triggers the increase in the minimum and maximum bets when the Kill or Half-Kill option is used.

(29) “Raise” means when a player bets an amount greater than the immediately preceding bet in that betting round.

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(30) “Round of play” means one complete cycle of play during which all cards have been dealt, all bets have been placed and the winner of the pot is determined and paid in accordance with this chapter.

(31) “Showdown” means the revealing of the hands of each player to determine who shall win the pot.

(32) “Side pot” means a separate pot formed when one or more players are All-In.

(33) “Table stakes” means a player’s currency, value chips, tournament chips and plaques on the table that are available for betting during a round of play.

(34) “Up card” means in a game of Stud Poker, any card dealt face up to a player.

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Chapter 2 - Poker Tables.

A. Poker shall be played on an oval table which has places for up to ten players and a dealer.

B. The layout for a Poker table shall be submitted to the Commission and approved under COMAR 36.05.03.16 and contain at least:

(1) The name or logo of the facility operator; and

(2) A holding area located to the right of the dealer or in another location approved under COMAR 36.05.02.16 designated for the collection of the Poker rake prior to final placement of the rake in the drop box.

C. Decks of cards used for the play of Poker shall be kept on the Poker table in a location approved by the Commission under COMAR 36.05.02.16, and may be part of the table inventory container.

D. Each Poker table shall have a drop box for the Poker rake and a tip box attached to it on the same side of the table as, but on an opposite side from, the dealer, as approved by the Commission under COMAR 36.05.03.16.

E. The Commission may approve an alternative location for a tip box when a card shuffling device or other table game equipment prevents the placement of the drop box and tip box as required under §D of this chapter.

F. If a facility operator offers a Bad Beat or High Hand Jackpot payout at a designated Poker table, a transparent locked box or container shall be attached on the same side of the table as the drop box and be used to hold the pot contributions that fund the Bad Beat or High Hand Jackpot payout.

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Chapter 3 - Cards; Number of Decks.

A. Cards.

- (1) Poker shall be played with one deck of cards.
- (2) The cards of a deck shall be identical in appearance.
- (3) A deck shall contain one cover card.
- (4) Two decks of cards with different color backs shall be maintained for use at a Poker table at all times.
 - (a) A deck shall be continuously alternated in and out of play.
 - (b) Each deck shall be used for every other round of play.
 - (c) Unless an automated card shuffling device is being used in accordance with §B of this chapter, while one deck of cards is in use, the other deck shall be stored in the area designated under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables.

B. If an automated card shuffling device is being used, one deck shall be shuffled and stored in the automated card shuffling device while the other deck is being used to play the game.

C. The two decks of cards that are alternated in and out of play shall be changed at least every 24 hours and rotated with other decks under COMAR 36.05.02.15.

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Chapter 4 - Opening a Table for Gaming.

A. After receiving two decks of cards at the table, the dealer shall inspect each deck for any defects, and the floorperson or above shall verify the inspection.

B. After the cards are inspected, the cards shall be spread out face up, according to suit and in sequence, on the table for visual inspection by the first two players seated at the table.

C. After the first two players seated at the table have had an opportunity to visually inspect the cards, each deck shall separately be turned face down on the table, mixed thoroughly by a washing of the cards, stacked, and shuffled as required under Chapter 5 - Shuffling and Cutting the Cards.

D. If an automated card shuffling device is not being used, one of the decks shall be shuffled and cut in accordance with Chapter 5 - Shuffling and Cutting the Cards and the other deck shall be placed in the area designated under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables.

(1) A facility operator may also mix, shuffle and cut only the deck intended for immediate use and place the other deck in the area designated under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables.

(2) Upon rotation of the decks of cards as required under Chapter 3 - Cards; Number of Decks, the other deck shall be mixed, shuffled and cut in accordance with Chapter 5 - Shuffling and Cutting the Cards.

E. If the decks of cards received at the table are preinspected and reshuffled under COMAR 36.05.02.16, §§A—D of this chapter do not apply.

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Chapter 5 - Shuffling and Cutting the Cards.

A. Process. Unless the cards were preshuffled after each round of play has been completed or when directed by the floorperson or above, immediately prior to commencement of play the dealer shall shuffle the cards, either manually or by use of an automated card shuffling device, so that the cards are randomly intermixed.

B. Upon completion of the shuffle, the dealer or device shall place the deck of cards in a single stack.

C. After the cards have been shuffled and stacked, and the dealer or device places the deck in a single stack, the dealer shall:

(1) If the cards were shuffled using an automated card shuffling device, deal the cards in accordance with Chapter 7 - Poker Overview; General Dealing Procedure;

(2) If the cards were shuffled manually or were preshuffled, cut the deck by placing the cut card on the table; and

(3) Take at least half the deck and place it on the cut card and place the remaining cards on top of the stack.

D. After the cards have been cut and before any cards have been dealt, a floorperson or above may require the cards to be recut if the floorperson determines that the cut was performed improperly or in any way that might affect the integrity or fairness of the game.

E. If there is no gaming activity at the Poker table which is open for gaming, each deck of cards at the table shall be spread out on the table face up.

F. After the first two players who arrive at the table are afforded an opportunity to visually inspect both decks, the procedures in Chapter 4 - Opening a Table for Gaming and this chapter shall be completed.

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Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings.

A. Other than low hand Poker, from highest to lowest, the rank of the cards used in Poker is: ace, king, queen, jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2.

B. Notwithstanding §A of this chapter, an ace may be used to complete a straight flush or a straight formed with a 2, 3, 4 and 5, but may not be combined with any other sequence of cards.

C. All suits are equal in rank.

D. The permissible five-card high hands, from highest to lowest rank, are:

(1) A royal flush, which is a hand consisting of an ace, king, queen, jack and 10 of the same suit;

(2) A straight flush, which is a hand consisting of five cards of the same suit in consecutive ranking, with king, queen, jack, 10 and 9 being the highest ranking straight flush and ace, 2, 3, 4 and 5 being the lowest ranking straight flush;

(3) A four-of-a-kind, which is a hand containing four cards of the same rank regardless of suit, with four aces being the highest ranking four-of-a-kind and four 2s being the lowest ranking four-of-a-kind;

(4) A full house, which is a hand consisting of a three-of-a-kind and a pair, with three aces and two kings being the highest ranking full house and three 2s and two 3s being the lowest ranking full house;

(5) A flush, which is a hand consisting of five cards of the same suit;

(6) A straight, which is a hand consisting of five cards of consecutive rank, regardless of suit, with an ace, king, queen, jack and 10 being the highest ranking straight and an ace, 2, 3, 4 and 5 being the lowest ranking straight;

(7) A three-of-a-kind, which is a hand containing three cards of the same rank, regardless of suit, with three aces being the highest ranking three-of-a-kind and three 2s being the lowest ranking three-of-a-kind;

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(8) Two pairs, which is a hand containing two pairs, with two aces and two kings being the highest ranking two pairs and two 3s and two 2s being the lowest ranking two pairs; and

(9) One pair, which is a hand containing two cards of the same rank, regardless of suit, with two aces being the highest ranking pair and two 2s being the lowest ranking pair.

E. From highest to lowest, the rank of the cards used in low hand Poker is: ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, jack, queen and king.

F. The ranking of a five-card low hand is the inverse of the rankings for a five-card high hand as set forth under §D of this chapter, except that straights and flushes may not be considered for purposes of determining a winning hand at low hand.

G. When comparing two hands that are of identical rank under §D or F of this chapter, or which do not contain the hands authorized for that game, the hand that contains the highest ranking card as provided under §A or E of this chapter, which is not in the other hand shall be considered the higher ranking hand.

H. If the hands are of identical rank after the application of this chapter, the hands will be considered tied and the pot shall be divided equally among the players with the tied hands.

I. A hand shall be ranked according to the cards actually in a player's hand and not by the player's opinion or statement of the hand's value.

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Chapter 7 - Poker Overview; General Dealing Procedure.

A. Poker shall be conducted in a separate area of the facility designated in COMAR 36.03.11.05.

B. Poker shall be played with no less than two players.

C. Except as otherwise authorized in this chapter, a dealer may not participate in the play or outcome of a Poker game.

D. A player shall bet on the cards that the player holds in his or her hand.

(1) A player's bet shall be placed by the dealer in the designated area of the table known as the pot.

(2) A player may be required to place an Ante or Blind Bet prior to receiving a card.

(3) After each round of cards is dealt, a betting round shall be conducted during which a player shall decide whether to continue contending for the pot by calling or raising the bet of the other players.

(4) If specified in its Rules Submission, a facility operator may use a countdown display approved by the Commission at each betting position on the table in front of each player which sets time limits on player decisions to fold, stand, or bet.

E. The object of Poker is for a player to win the pot.

(1) By making a bet that no other player elects to call; or

(2) Depending on the type of Poker being played, by having the highest ranking high hand, the highest ranking low hand or both the highest ranking high and low hands in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings.

(3) If two or more players remain in contention for a pot after all cards have been dealt and the final betting round has been completed, there shall be a showdown among those players to determine which player has the winning hand.

F. A dealer shall use the following procedures when dealing a Poker game:

(1) The dealer shall place the stacked deck of cards in either hand.

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- (a) After the dealer has chosen which hand holds the cards, the dealer shall continue to use that hand whenever holding the cards during that round of play.
- (b) The cards held by the dealer shall be kept in front of the dealer at all times and as level with the Poker table as possible.
- (c) If during a round of play the dealer sets down the deck to handle a transaction, the dealer shall place a marker button on top of the deck until the transaction has been completed.
- (2) The dealer shall verbally or physically describe the action that is occurring at the Poker table with regard to the conduct of the game, and shall instruct a player as to the player's various turns to act and options.
- (3) All burn cards required under this chapter shall be kept separate from the pile of discarded cards.
- (4) The dealer shall:
 - (a) Count the entire deck of cards at least once every 5 rounds of play to determine if 52 cards are present; or
 - (b) Utilize an automated card shuffling device, submitted to the Commission's independent certified testing laboratory and approved under COMAR 36.03.12.05 which counts the number of cards in the deck after the completion of each shuffle and indicates whether 52 cards are present.
- (5) The dealer may count the stub in the games of Hold 'Em Poker and Omaha Poker.
- (6) If a count of the deck or stub indicates that the number of cards in the deck is incorrect, the deck shall be removed from the table.
- (7) At the completion of a round of play, the dealer shall award the pot to the winning player or players after a showdown, or to the last remaining player if all other players have folded.
- (8) Prior to pushing the pot to the winner and collecting the winning hand, the dealer shall:

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- (a) Collect the cards from all losing players and count them to determine that the proper number of cards has been returned;
- (b) Award all side pots;
- (c) Collect the rake under Chapter 17 - Poker Revenue; and
- (d) Collect an amount required to be contributed to a Bad Beat or High Hand Jackpot payout fund under Chapter 15 - Bad Beat Payout — Procedure or Chapter 16 - High Hand Jackpot Payout — Posting Rules; Contributions; Payout Amount; Procedure.

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Chapter 8 - Placing Bets; Minimum and Maximum Bets.

A. Only a player who is seated at a Poker table may receive cards and participate in a betting round.

B. A player may participate in the betting during a round of play in accordance with the following requirements:

(1) A player may bet only with the table stakes that were already on the Poker table in front of the player when the round of play commenced.

(2) A player may add to the player's table stakes only between rounds of play and, except as provided in §B(6) of this chapter, may not remove any of the player's table stakes from the Poker table at any time during a round of play.

(3) Currency that is available for use by a player may be utilized in accordance with this chapter to initiate, call or raise a bet if the currency is expeditiously converted into value chips, tournament chips or plaques by the dealer.

(4) A player shall have an amount of currency, value chips, tournament chips or plaques available on the Poker table prior to the start of the round of play that is sufficient to make any Ante, Blind or Forced Bet required by the Poker game being played and at least one bet at the posted table minimum.

(5) A player who satisfies the requirements in §B(4) of this chapter, but depletes his or her funds on the Poker table prior to the completion of a round of play, shall be deemed All-In as follows:

(a) An All-In player shall retain a financial interest in the outcome of the round of play, but is eligible to win only the amount of the pot to which the player contributed;

(b) An All-In player shall continue to receive all cards to which the player would normally be entitled; and

(c) Betting shall continue unimpeded among the other players by generating a separate side pot which only those players shall be eligible to win.

(6) If a player indicates an intent to temporarily leave a Poker table during a round of play without relinquishing his seat at the table, at the player's request a floorperson or above shall:

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(a) Determine the amount of the player's table stakes prior to the player's departure from the table and verify that the amount of the player's table stakes have not been changed upon the player's return to the table; or

(b) Maintain the player's table stakes on the table surface using a nontransparent cover until the player's return.

C. If it is a player's turn to act, the player's verbal statement of "fold", "check", "call" or "raise", or a player's announcement of a specific bet within the rules of the Poker game being played and the minimum and maximum betting limits for the Poker table, shall be binding on the player.

D. A player who announces a bet or raise of a certain amount but places a different amount of value chips, tournament chips or plaques in the pot shall to correct the bet or raise to the announced amount in accordance with the instructions of the dealer.

E. A player shall be considered to have placed a bet if the player:

(1) Pushes value chips, tournament chips or plaques forward to indicate the intent to place a bet.

(2) Places value chips, tournament chips or plaques at a sufficient distance from the player and towards the pot to make it obvious that the value chips, tournament chips or plaques are intended as a bet.

(3) Places currency into the pot to be exchanged for chips in accordance with §B(3) of this chapter.

F. A player may not make a bet and thereafter attempt to increase the amount of the bet unless the player:

(1) Indicates at the time the bet is being made that the bet is not yet complete; or

(2) Puts the proper amount of value chips, tournament chips or plaques into the pot to call a bet and also indicates his intention to raise.

G. Subject to the posted table betting limits, a player who announces "raise" must state the amount the player is raising or put all of the chips in the pot at once.

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H. A dealer shall ensure that no player touches any of the value chips, tournament chips or plaques once they are placed into the pot.

I. Unless a raise has been verbally announced by a player, the player who puts a single value chip or tournament chip into the pot that is larger than required is assumed to have only called the preceding bet and to be awaiting change from the dealer.

J. A facility operator shall post a sign specifying any restrictions on the maximum number of raises that may be permitted for any round of betting and the minimum and maximum bets in effect at each Poker table.

(1) If all players at a Poker table agree to increase the minimum bet at the table, the minimum bet posted at the table need not be followed.

(2) Unless specifically posted to the contrary, a player may raise after the player has previously checked in a betting round.

K. A facility operator shall include in its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 any restrictions on:

(1) The maximum number of raises that may be permitted for a round of betting;

(2) Provisions specifying the maximum amount that the minimum bet may be increased; and

(3) How the dealer will determine that all of the players have agreed to the increased minimum bet amount.

L. If specified in its Rules Submission, a facility operator may offer to players the option of Running it twice.

(1) To qualify to run it twice:

(a) The table cannot be a tournament table;

(b) Only two players can be in the pot with live hands;

(c) One of the players must be all-in;

(d) Both players must agree to run it twice;

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(e) The players must notify the dealer of the request to run it twice before the river card has been dealt;

(2) After the dealer verifies the players request to run it twice, the cards are dealt as follows:

(a) The remaining community cards are dealt to the board, burning a card before each up card.

(b) The first set of community cards dealt are slid forward and left on the table.

(c) The dealer then deals another set of community cards including either:

(i) The Flop

(ii) The turn and river, or

(iii) The river.

(3) Each player shall form a hand from the community cards, and the winner of the pot shall be:

(a) The player with the highest ranking hand formed using the first set of community cards shall receive half of the pot; and

(b) The player with the highest ranking hand formed using the second set of community cards shall receive half of the pot.

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Chapter 9 - Permissible Poker Games; Announcement of Available Games and Seats.

A. A facility operator may offer the following types of Poker games:

- (1) Seven-card Stud, including High, Low, High-Low Split and High-Low Split Eight or Better;
- (2) Hold 'Em, including High;
- (3) Omaha, including High, High-Low Split Eight or Better;
- (4) Five-Card Draw, including High and Low;
- (5) Five-Card Stud, including High; and
- (6) Other Poker games approved by the Commission.

B. A facility operator may not offer or permit the playing of a Poker game which is not authorized by this chapter.

C. A facility operator may announce, in the areas where Poker tables are located, the particular types of available Poker games, the table minimum and maximum bets that are being offered and the availability of any vacant seats at a Poker table.

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Chapter 10 - Seven-Card Stud Poker; Procedure for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Seven-card Stud High, Seven-card Stud Low, Seven-card Stud High-Low Split or Seven-card Stud High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than eight players may participate in a Seven-card Stud Poker game.

(1) A player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of an Ante bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. Starting with the first player to the dealer's left and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal two rounds of cards face down and one round of cards face up to each player.

D. After each player has been dealt three cards in accordance with §C of this chapter, the first betting round shall commence with one player making a Forced Bet.

(1) The amount of a Forced Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted at the Poker table.

(2) A player who is required to place a Forced Bet shall be determined by comparing the up card of each player.

(3) If two or more up cards are of the same rank, the up cards shall be ranked by suit with the highest to lowest ranked suits in the following order: spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs.

(4) A Forced Bet shall be made by the player with the:

(a) Lowest ranked up card for Seven-card Stud High Poker;

(b) Highest ranked up card for Seven-card Stud Low Poker;

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(c) Highest ranked up card for Seven-card Stud High-Low Split Poker, and to determine the highest ranked up card, an ace shall be ranked below a two; and

(5) Lowest ranked up-card for Stud High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, and to determine the lowest ranked up-card, an ace shall be considered the highest ranking card.

E. Following the placement of a Forced Bet, starting with the player to the left of player who placed the Forced Bet and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, each subsequent player may fold, call or raise the bet.

F. After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

G. Upon completion of the first betting round, a dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and then, starting with the first remaining player to the dealer's left, deal a fourth card face up to each player who made or called the last bet.

H. The next betting round shall commence as follows:

(1) For Seven-card Stud High, Seven-card Stud High-Low Split or Seven-card Stud High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, the player with the highest ranking high hand showing shall be required to bet or check;

(2) For Seven-card Stud Low, the player with the highest ranking low hand showing shall be required to bet or check; and

(3) If the highest ranking hand showing is held by two or more players, the player closest to the left of the dealer shall be required to bet or check.

I. Following the initial bet or check required under §G of this chapter, proceeding in a clockwise rotation each subsequent player may fold, call, raise or, if the preceding players have not made a bet, check.

(1) After a bet has been made, the next player in a clockwise rotation may fold, call or raise.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round is complete.

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J. The dealer shall then deal two additional rounds of cards face up and one round of cards face down to each player who made or called the last bet.

(1) Before dealing each round of cards, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck.

(2) Notwithstanding §J(1) of this chapter, if insufficient cards remain in the deck to give each remaining player either a sixth or seventh card, the top card of the deck shall be burned and a common card shall be dealt face up in the center of the table.

(3) If there is one, or no, card remaining in the deck when a common card is to be dealt, the dealer shall shuffle the burn cards, burn a card and then deal the common card.

(4) The dealing of a round of cards or, if applicable, a common card under this subsection, shall be followed by a betting round conducted in accordance with §§G and H of this chapter.

K. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot.

L. Each player remaining in the game shall form a five-card Poker hand from the seven cards dealt to the player, and the winner of the pot shall be:

(1) In Seven-card Stud High Poker, the player with the highest ranking five-card high hand;

(2) In Seven-card Stud Low Poker, the player with the highest ranking five-card low hand; and

(3) In Seven-card Stud High-Low Split Poker or Seven-card Stud High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker:

(a) The player with the highest ranking five-card high hand and the player with the highest ranking five-card low hand, subject to §M(1) of this chapter, shall divide the pot equally.

(b) If a pot cannot be divided equally, the excess amount, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

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(c) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking high hand, the high hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(d) If the high hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high card by suit.

(e) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking low hand, the low hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(f) If the low hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the lowest ranking low hand Poker card by suit.

(g) For purposes of this section, the cards shall be ranked by suit from highest to lowest as follows: spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs.

M. Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker.

(1) A winning low-hand may not contain a pair, a three-of-a-kind or a four-of-a-kind or a 9, 10, jack, queen or king;

(2) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement of §M(1) of this chapter, the entire pot shall be awarded to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

(3) A player may form two different hands of five cards each out of the player's seven available cards, enabling that player to contend for both the high hand and low hand share of the pot.

(4) A player may use the same five-card grouping under §M(3) of this chapter to make a high hand and a low hand, including:

(a) A hand consisting of a 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 qualifies as a straight for purposes of the high hand and as a high ranking low hand; and

(b) A hand consisting of five cards of the same suit, none higher than an 8, qualifies as a flush for purposes of the high hand and as a high ranking low hand.

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(5) An ace may be used concurrently as a low hand card to make up a low hand and as a high card to make up a high Poker hand.

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Chapter 11 - Hold 'Em Poker; Procedure for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Hold 'Em Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter and play Hold 'Em Poker only to determine a winning high hand.

B. No more than ten players may participate in a Hold 'Em Poker game.

(1) A player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of an Ante bet shall be specified in a facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the Poker table.

C. A button shall be used to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which a player shall bet in accordance with following procedures:

(1) At commencement of play, the button shall be placed in front of:

(a) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(b) The player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt.

(2) Thereafter, the button shall rotate around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

D. Before a cards is dealt, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(1) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

(2) The amount and number of a required Blind Bet shall be specified in a facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

E. The player to the left of the player who placed a Blind Bet may place a Straddle Bet, if a Straddle Bet is offered by the facility operator.

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(1) The rules governing the placement of a Straddle Bet and the amount of a Straddle Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at a Poker table.

(2) No more than one Straddle Bet may be made during a round of play.

F. Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal two rounds of cards face down to each player so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

G. After each player has been dealt two cards in accordance with §E of this chapter, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player who was required to place a Blind Bet, or the player who placed a Straddle Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call or raise the bet.

(1) The option to raise shall also apply to a player who made a Blind Bet or Straddle Bet.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

H. The dealer shall then burn the top card of the deck and proceed to deal three community cards face up in the center of the table.

(1) The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the next betting round and may bet or check.

(2) If preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check, a subsequent player may, in clockwise rotation, fold, call, or raise.

(3) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

I. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fourth community card face up in the center of the table, and begin and complete the next betting round as required by §G of this chapter.

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J. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fifth and final community card face up in the center of the table, and begin and complete the final betting round as required by §G of this chapter.

K. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot.

(1) Each player remaining in the game shall form the highest ranking five-card high hand using any of the two cards dealt to the player and the five community cards.

(2) The winner of the pot shall be the player with the highest ranking five-card high hand.

(3) If the highest ranking five-card high hand that each of the remaining players can form is comprised of the five community cards, all players remaining in the round of play shall share equally in the pot.

(4) If the pot cannot be divided evenly among the players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, may be given to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

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Chapter 12 - Omaha Poker; Procedure for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Omaha High or Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than ten players may participate in an Omaha Poker game.

(1) Each player who participates in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of an Ante bet, and a Kill or Half-Kill option, shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. A button shall be used to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which players shall bet in accordance with following procedures:

(1) At commencement of play, the button shall be placed in front of:

(a) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(b) The player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt.

(2) Thereafter, the button shall rotate around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

D. Before any cards are dealt, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(1) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

(2) The amount and number of all Blind Bets required shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

E. If a Straddle Bet is offered by a facility operator, the player to the left of the player who placed a Blind Bet may place a Straddle Bet.

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(1) The rules governing the placement of a Straddle Bet and the amount of a Straddle Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

(2) No more than one Straddle Bet may be made during a round of play.

F. Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal four rounds of cards face down to each player, so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

G. After each player has been dealt four cards in accordance with §E of this chapter, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player or players who were required to place a Blind Bet or the player who placed a Straddle Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call or raise the bet.

(1) The option to raise shall also apply to a player who made a Blind Bet or Straddle Bet.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

H. The dealer shall then burn the top card of the deck and proceed to deal three community cards face up in the center of the table.

(1) The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the next betting round and may bet or check.

(2) Each subsequent player may, in clockwise rotation, fold, call, raise or, if preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check.

(3) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

I. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fourth community card face up in the center of the table, and commence and complete the next betting round shall be commenced and completed as required under §H of this chapter.

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J. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fifth and final community card face up in the center of the table, and commence and complete the final betting round as required under §G of this chapter.

K. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot.

(1) Each player remaining in the game shall form a five-card hand using two of the four cards dealt to the player and three of the five community cards.

(2) The winner of the pot shall be:

(a) In Omaha High Poker, the player with the highest ranking five-card high hand.

(b) In Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker:

(3) The player with the highest ranking five-card high hand and the player with the highest ranking five-card low hand, subject to §K(1) of this chapter, shall divide the pot equally.

(4) If a pot cannot be divided equally, the excess amount, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

(5) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking high hand, the high hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(6) If the high hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high card by suit or to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

(7) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking low hand, the low hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(8) If the low hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the lowest ranking low hand Poker card by suit or to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

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(9) For purposes of this subsection, the cards shall be ranked by suit the highest to lowest rank suit as follows: spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs.

L. In Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker:

(1) A winning low hand may not contain a pair, a three-of-a-kind or a four-of-a-kind or a 9, 10, jack, queen or king.

(2) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement in §L(1) of this chapter, the entire pot shall be awarded to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

(3) A player may form two different hands of five cards each, enabling that player to contend for both the high hand and low hand share of the pot.

(4) A hand shall consist of any three of the community cards and any two of four cards dealt to the player.

(5) A player may use the same five-card grouping to make a high hand and a low hand.

(6) An ace may be used concurrently as a low hand card to make up a low hand and as a high card to make up a high hand.

M. In Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, the facility operator may use either the Half-Kill or Kill option.

N. If a facility operator elects to use either option, the facility operator shall indicate which option is being used in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and post on a sign at each Omaha Poker table which option is being used and the minimum value of a qualifying pot.

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Chapter 13 - Five-Card Draw Poker; Procedure for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Five-Card Draw High or Five-Card Draw Low Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than eight players may participate in a Five-Card Draw Poker game.

(1) A player who participates in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of an Ante bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. A button shall be used to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which players shall bet in accordance with following procedures:

(1) At commencement of play, the button shall be placed in front of:

(a) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(b) The player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt.

(2) Thereafter, the button shall rotate around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

D. Starting with the first player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal five rounds of cards face down to each player, so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

E. After each player has been dealt five cards in accordance with §D of this chapter, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(1) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

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(2) The amount and number of all Blind Bets required shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

F. Following the placement of the required Blind Bets, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player or players who were required to place a Blind Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call or raise the bet.

(1) The option to raise shall also apply to a player who made a Blind Bet.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

G. Upon completion of the initial betting round, each player remaining in the round of play shall have an opportunity to draw new cards.

(1) This process shall be accomplished one player at a time starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner.

(2) Each player may keep his original hand or discard as many cards as he chooses.

(3) The dealer shall replace each discarded card with a new card dealt from the deck as follows:

(a) Prior to the first player receiving any new cards, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck.

(b) If insufficient cards remain in the deck for each player remaining in the round of play to draw new cards, the discard pile shall be reshuffled and used for this purpose.

(c) The cards to be discarded by a player who has not yet requested new cards may not be included as part of the reshuffled cards.

H. The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the final betting round and may bet or check.

(1) Each subsequent player may, in clockwise rotation, fold, call, raise or, if preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check.

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(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

I. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot as follows:

(1) In Five-Card High Poker, the player with the highest ranking five-card high hand;
and

(2) In Five-Card Low Poker, the player with the highest ranking five-card low hand.

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Chapter 14 - Five-Card Stud Poker; Procedure for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. Five-Card Stud Poker shall be played only to determine a winning high hand, and a facility operator that offers Five-Card Stud Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than eight players may participate in a Five-Card Stud Poker game.

(1) Each player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of an Ante bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. Starting with the first player to the dealer's left and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal one round of cards face down and one round of cards face up to each player.

D. After each player has been dealt two cards in accordance with §C of this chapter, the first betting round shall commence with one player making a Forced Bet.

(1) The amount of the Forced Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted at the Poker table.

(2) A player required to place the Forced Bet shall be determined by comparing the up card of each player.

(3) The player with the lowest ranked up card shall be required to make a Forced Bet.

(4) In the event that two or more up cards are of the same rank, the up cards shall then be ranked by suit with the highest to lowest spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs.

E. Following the placement of the Forced Bet, each subsequent player, starting with the player to the left of the player who placed the Forced Bet and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may bet, fold, call or raise the bet, and after the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

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F. Upon completion of the first betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and then, starting with the first remaining player to the dealer's left, deal another round of cards face up to each player who made or called the last bet, commencing the next betting round as follows:

(1) The player with the highest ranking hand showing shall be required to bet or check.

(2) If the highest ranking hand showing is held by two or more players, the player closest to the left of the dealer shall be required to bet or check.

G. Following the bet or check required under §F of this chapter, each subsequent player, proceeding in a clockwise rotation, may fold, call, raise or, if the preceding players have not made a bet, check.

(1) After a bet has been made, the next player in a clockwise rotation may fold, call or raise.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round shall be considered complete.

H. The dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and then deal two additional rounds of cards face up to each player who made or called the last bet, with each round followed by a betting round conducted in accordance with §§F and G of this chapter.

I. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot.

J. The winner of the pot under §I of this chapter shall be the player with the highest ranking five-card high hand.

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Chapter 15 - Bad Beat Payout — Procedure.

A. If specified in its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19, a facility operator may offer a Bad Beat payout for one or more Bad Beat hands, which shall be made from a separate fund created from pot contributions required at tables where a Bad Beat payout is offered and paid in accordance with the procedures established under this section.

B. A facility operator shall post at each Poker table that offers a Bad Beat payout notice advising players of eligibility for the Bad Beat payout. The facility operator shall display the current amount of the Bad Beat payout and post in a conspicuous location within the Poker room the Bad Beat payout rules which shall include:

(1) The maximum contribution amount that will be collected from each pot to fund the Bad Beat payout and the method of calculation for any contribution amount.

(2) The minimum pot amount required before the contribution to the Bad Beat payout is collected.

(3) Qualifying Bad Beat requirements and payouts.

C. A facility operator shall extract from each pot at a Poker table designated for participation in a Bad Beat payout a prescribed contribution to the Bad Beat payout.

(1) The contribution amount shall be collected in accordance with the Bad Beat payout rules as specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

(2) After the dealer has extracted the rake, the amount from each pot to be contributed to a Bad Beat payout shall be determined, segregated from the pot and deposited into the Bad Beat payout box.

(3) Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, a facility operator may, upon amending its Bad Beat payout rules, terminate collection of Bad Beat contributions at any time in accordance with §I of this chapter.

D. At least once each gaming day and upon notice to a Commission compliance representative, a facility operator shall count the accumulated contents of each Bad Beat payout box at a closed Poker table, the main cage or a satellite cage, in accordance with the facility operator's approved internal controls, as follows:

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(1) If the counting of the contents of a Bad Beat payout box occurs at a closed Poker table, the counting shall be performed by a Poker dealer in the presence of a floorperson or above and recorded by the surveillance department.

(a) Documentation of the count shall be prepared and signed by both the dealer and the floorperson or above who witnessed the count.

(b) The contents of the Bad Beat payout box shall then be placed in a locked container along with documentation of the count and transported to the main cage or satellite cage by a security department employee.

(2) If the counting of the contents of a Bad Beat payout box occurs in the main cage or a satellite cage:

(a) A floorperson or above shall account for all locked Bad Beat payout boxes transported from the Poker tables to the cage.

(b) A security department employee shall transport the Bad Beat boxes to the main cage or satellite cage for counting.

E. After each Bad Beat payout box or locked container is delivered to the main cage or satellite cage, a cashier shall:

(1) Count the contents of a box; or

(2) If the contents of a box were previously counted by Poker room personnel and combined in a locked container for transport, verify the aggregate count.

F. The accounting department shall maintain the official record of the amount of daily contributions to the Bad Beat payout.

G. The Poker shift supervisor shall verify each Bad Beat Poker hand prior to awarding the Bad Beat payout. Upon verification, the Poker shift supervisor shall:

(1) Post a sign or otherwise provide visible notice that the applicable Bad Beat payout display amount is pending adjustment due to a Bad Beat payout.

(2) Notify a representative from the security department or accounting department to deliver to the Poker table the applicable amount of the Bad Beat payout.

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H. The accounting department shall prepare a Bad Beat payout distribution in cash or a recognized cash equivalent in accordance with the facility operator's approved internal controls. Notwithstanding §G(2) of this chapter, a facility operator may elect to pay a Bad Beat payout at the main cage or satellite cage.

I. No less than once a day and immediately upon notification of a Bad Beat verification by the Poker shift supervisor, an accounting department employee shall:

(1) In the presence of a floorperson or above, adjust each Bad Beat payout amount displayed in the Poker area to reflect the current Bad Beat payout amount.

(2) Verify that the amount of any Bad Beat payout maintained by the accounting department corresponds to the amount being displayed to players.

J. A Bad Beat payout may not be offered at a Poker table until a facility operator has submitted internal controls and the Commission has approved procedures for discontinuing any Bad Beat payout, which shall address the method by which pot contributions will be terminated or transferred to other Bad Beat payouts to ensure that all payout amounts are paid to Poker players

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Chapter 16 - High Hand Jackpot Payout — Posting Rules; Contributions; Payout Amount; Procedure.

A. If specified in its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19, a facility operator may offer a High Hand Jackpot payout for a Qualifying High Hand made during a qualifying period, and a High Hand Jackpot payout shall be:

- (1) Made from a separate fund created from pot contributions required at tables where a High Hand Jackpot payout is offered; and
- (2) Paid in accordance with the procedures established under this chapter.

B. A facility operator shall post at each Poker table that offers a High Hand Jackpot payout notice advising players of eligibility for a High Hand Jackpot payout, and shall display the current amount of the High Hand Jackpot payout and post in a conspicuous location within the Poker room the High Hand Jackpot payout rules, which shall include:

- (1) The collection and qualifying periods for the High Hand Jackpot payout;
- (2) The maximum contribution amount that will be collected from each pot to fund the High Hand Jackpot payout;
- (3) The minimum pot amount required before the contribution to the High Hand Jackpot is collected;
- (4) The minimum number of players who shall be dealt into a hand to qualify for a High Hand Jackpot payout;
- (5) The division of the High Hand Jackpot payout if two or more players have the same value Qualifying High Hand during a qualifying period;
- (6) Any time limits on collecting High Hand Jackpot payouts including a statement notifying players that they do not need to be present at the end of the qualifying period to win the High Hand Jackpot payout; and
- (7) Any restrictions on collecting a High Hand Jackpot payout, including a statement notifying players that valid identification shall be presented for a player's hand to qualify for a High Hand Jackpot payout.

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C. A facility operator shall extract from each pot at a Poker table designated for participation in a High Hand Jackpot payout a prescribed contribution to the High Hand Jackpot payout.

(1) The contribution amount shall be collected in accordance with the High Hand Jackpot payout rules as specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

(2) After the dealer has extracted the rake, the amount from each pot to be contributed to a High Hand Jackpot payout shall be determined, segregated from the pot and deposited into the High Hand Jackpot payout box.

D. At the end of each qualifying period, a facility operator shall count the accumulated contents of each High Hand Jackpot payout box at a closed Poker table, the main cage or a satellite cage, in accordance with the facility operator's approved internal controls, as follows:

(1) If the contents of a High Hand Jackpot payout box are counted at a closed Poker table, the counting shall be performed by a Poker dealer in the presence of a floorperson or above and recorded by the surveillance department.

(a) Documentation of the count shall be prepared and signed by both the dealer and the floorperson or above who witnessed the count.

(b) The contents of the High Hand Jackpot payout box shall then be placed in a locked container along with documentation of the count and transported to the main cage or satellite cage by a security department employee.

(2) If the contents of a High Hand Jackpot payout box are counted in the main cage or a satellite cage, a floorperson or above shall account for all locked High Hand Jackpot payout boxes transported from the Poker tables to the cage, and a security department employee shall transport the High Hand Jackpot payout boxes to the main cage or satellite cage for counting.

E. After a High Hand Jackpot payout box or locked container is delivered to the main cage or satellite cage:

(1) A cashier shall count the contents of each box; or

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(2) If the contents of the boxes were previously counted by Poker room personnel and combined in a locked container for transport, a cashier shall verify the aggregate count.

F. The accounting department shall maintain the official record of the amount of contributions to the High Hand Jackpot payout.

G. At the start of each qualifying period, dealers shall begin tracking hands.

(1) When a player has a full house, as defined in Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings, the dealer shall call a floorperson or above who shall verify the hand and record the value on the High Hand Tracking Slip.

(2) As the value of the hands increase during the qualifying period, the value of the next higher hand shall be announced and the floorperson or above shall record on the High Hand Tracking Slip the next higher value hand.

(3) The High Hand Tracking Slip shall contain:

(a) The name, phone number and seat number of the player with the higher value hand;

(b) The table number;

(c) The higher value hand;

(d) The dealer's name and license number; and

(e) The signature and license number of the floorperson or above who verified the higher value hand.

H. When a qualifying period has ended:

(1) The contribution amount collected during the qualifying period shall be counted, verified and taken to the main cage or satellite cage in accordance with §§D and E of this chapter; and

(2) The pooled contribution amounts from all Poker tables that participated in the qualifying period shall be announced and displayed.

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I. A player with the highest Qualifying High Hand during the qualifying period shall be awarded a High Hand Jackpot payout.

(1) A High Hand Jackpot payout shall be paid from the main cage or satellite cage.

(2) If a full house was not made by any player during the qualifying period, the High Hand Jackpot payout contribution amounts shall be added to the next High Hand Jackpot payout qualifying period.

J. A facility operator shall specify in its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 the procedure for distributing a High Hand Jackpot payouts that has not been collected within the time period specified in §B(6) of this chapter.

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Chapter 17 - Poker Revenue.

A. A facility operator shall derive its Poker revenue at all Poker tables by extracting a rake, and shall submit as part of its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 the following:

- (1) The types of rake utilized;
- (2) The methodology used for calculating the rake;
- (3) The amount of maximum permissible rake per round of play;

B. A facility operator may use one or more of the following procedures in determining and extracting the rake:

(1) A percentage rake, not to exceed 10 percent, which shall be calculated and extracted from the pot and any side pots:

(a) After the conclusion of a betting round and placed into the designated rake area required under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables as play progresses; and

(b) Upon completion of a round of play and immediately placed by the dealer into the drop box.

(2) An incremental rake, as certain predetermined dollar levels have been achieved which:

(a) Upon collection shall be placed into the designated rake area required under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables; and

(b) Upon completion of a round of play shall be immediately placed by the dealer into the drop box.

(3) A rake based on time charges which:

(a) May be assessed on a per-player basis or on a per-table basis;

(b) If taken on a per-player basis, inactive players seated at the table shall also be assessed;

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- (c) Shall be expressed as an hourly fee based on the minimum and maximum betting limits at a game;
 - (d) May be assessed fractionally every 20 or 30 minutes as determined by the facility operator;
 - (e) Once assessed, shall be placed by the dealer into the designated rake area required under Chapter 2 - Poker Tables; and
 - (f) Upon verification by a floorperson or above of the time charges collected, shall be immediately placed by the dealer into the drop box.
- C. A sign describing the type and amount of rake to be collected under §B of this chapter shall be posted at each Poker table.
- D. An uncalled final bet may not be considered part of the pot for purposes of calculating the amount of rake under §§B(1) and (2) of this chapter.
- E. After the dealer has extracted the rake and the pot and any side pots have been collected by the winning player or players, additional rake may not be taken.

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Chapter 18 - Player Conduct; General Poker Operating; Irregularities.

A. In a dispute in which a ruling, interpretation, clarification or intervention is required, the decision of a Poker shift supervisor is final.

B. A player in a Poker game shall play the game solely to improve the player's chance of winning and may not take action to improve another player's chance of winning or communicate information to another player which could assist the other player in affecting the outcome of a Poker game.

C. A facility operator who has reasonable cause to believe that a player has acted or is acting in violation of §B of this chapter may require the player to leave the game and shall notify a Commission compliance representative as soon as possible.

D. A player shall keep all cards dealt to the player in full view of the dealer at all times, and the dealer shall ensure compliance with this requirement.

E. At a showdown, a winning hand shall be clearly displayed in its entirety and properly identified.

(1) The player initiating the final bet shall be the first player to show his hand at the showdown.

(2) All other players who have not folded shall then reveal their hands in a clockwise rotation.

(3) Unless an operator in its Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 requires the disclosure of all discarded hands, a player holding a losing hand may concede his rights to the pot and discard the hand without revealing the player's cards.

F. A player in a showdown shall ensure that the player's hand has lost to the other hands at the table before discarding the hand.

G. Cards that are misdealt shall be returned to the dealer for a reshuffle, and these errors shall be cause for a misdeal:

(1) Failure to shuffle and cut the cards in accordance with Chapter 5 - Shuffling and Cutting the Cards;

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(2) Dealing to an incorrect starting position if the error has been detected prior to two players voluntarily placing bets into the pot;

(3) If more than one card is found face up in the deck; and

(4) Failure to deal to an eligible seated player, if the error has been detected prior to two players voluntarily placing bets into the pot.

H. If one or more cards are mistakenly dealt to an ineligible player, the cards dealt to that player shall be discarded and the round of play shall continue.

I. If at any time during a round of play missing cards are discovered or additional cards are found, the round of play is void, all value chips, tournament chips and plaques in the pot shall be returned to the appropriate player and the deck shall be replaced.

J. A card found face up in the deck may not be used in that round of play and shall be placed with the pile of discarded cards.

K. A player who fails to take reasonable means to protect the player's hand shall have no redress if the player's hand becomes a fouled hand or the dealer accidentally collects the hand, except that:

(1) A hole card in a game of Stud Poker shall be considered protected for purposes of fouling a hand.

(2) If a protected hand comes into contact with discarded cards, every effort shall be made to reconstruct the hand and complete the round of play.

(3) A player who has a protected hand collected by the dealer or fouled by discarded cards shall be entitled to a refund from the pot of all moneys that the player put in the pot if the player has been a victim of and not a contributor to the error.

(4) A player who leaves the table without comment and has an unprotected hand shall be assumed to have no interest in the pot and the player's cards shall be collected and discarded.

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L. Verbal statements which are clearly audible by and directed to the dealer shall always have precedence over actions and gestures and are considered binding on the player whose turn it is to act.

(1) A player shall be deemed to have folded if, when faced with making or calling a bet, the player:

(a) Discards the player's hand face down towards the pile of discarded cards or the pot; or

(b) Turns up the player's cards in a game of Stud Poker face down.

(2) If a player is obligated to place a bet as a Blind Bet, Forced Bet or by virtue of a verbal statement, throwing away the player's cards does not relieve the player of that obligation.

M. In Seven-card Stud:

(1) If a player's first or second hole card is accidentally turned face up in the dealing process, the third card shall be dealt face down;

(2) If both hole cards are accidentally turned face up, the dealer shall collect the two cards, call the player's hand void and return the player's Ante bet, if applicable; and

(3) If a player's third hole card is accidentally turned face up in the dealing process, the player shall be afforded the option to:

(a) End the player's obligation to make additional bets and contend only for that part of the pot formed prior to any additional betting; or

(b) Continue to contend for the entire pot.

N. In Five-Card Stud, if a player's hole card is accidentally turned face up in the dealing process, the second card shall be dealt face down.

O. If a card is accidentally dealt off the table, the card may not be used in that round of play and shall be placed with the pile of discarded cards after a thorough examination of the card by the dealer.

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P. In the games of Hold 'Em and Omaha Poker, if any of the cards that are required to be dealt face down to a player are accidentally dealt face up, the dealer shall exchange the exposed card with a card from the top of the deck and place the exposed card face down with the pile of discarded cards.

Q. If an automated card shuffling device is being used and the device jams, stops shuffling during a shuffle or fails to complete a shuffle cycle, the cards shall be reshuffled.

R. If an automated card shuffling device malfunctions and cannot be used, the device shall be covered or have a sign indicating that the automated card shuffling device is out of order placed on the device before any other method of shuffling may be utilized at that table.

S. A facility operator may clarify and supplement the procedures related to irregularities in this section in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

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Chapter 19 - Five-Card Omaha Poker; Procedures for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Five-Card Omaha High or Five-Card Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than eight players may participate in a Five-Card Omaha Poker game.

(1) A player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement and amount of an Ante bet, and the Kill or Half-Kill option, must be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. The dealer shall use a button to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which players shall bet in accordance with following procedures:

(1) At commencement of play, the dealer shall place the button in front of:

(a) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(b) A player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt; and

(2) Thereafter, the dealer shall rotate the button around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

D. Before any cards are dealt, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(1) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

(2) The amount and number of all Blind Bets required must be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

E. If the facility operator offers the Straddle Bet, the player to the left of the player who placed a Blind Bet may place a Straddle Bet.

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(1) The rules governing the placement of a Straddle Bet and the amount of the Straddle Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

(2) No more than one Straddle Bet may be made during a round of play.

F. Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal five rounds of cards face down to each player, so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

G. After each player has been dealt five cards in accordance with §F of this chapter, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player or players who were required to place a Blind Bet or the player who placed a Straddle Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call, or raise the bet.

(1) The option to raise also applies to a player who made a Blind Bet or Straddle Bet.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round is complete.

H. The dealer shall then burn the top card of the deck and proceed to deal three community cards face up in the center of the table.

(1) The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the next betting round and may bet or check.

(2) Each subsequent player may, in clockwise rotation, fold, call, raise, or, if preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check.

(3) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round is complete.

I. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fourth community card face up in the center of the table, and commence and complete the next betting round as required under §H of this chapter.

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J. Upon completion of the betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck and deal a fifth and final community card face up in the center of the table, and commence and complete the final betting round as required under §H of this chapter.

K. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, a showdown shall be used to determine the winner of the pot.

(1) Each player remaining in the game shall form a Five-Card hand using two of the five cards dealt to the player and three of the five community cards.

(2) The winner of the pot shall be:

(a) In Five-Card Omaha High Poker, the player with the highest ranking Five-Card high hand; or

(b) In Five-Card Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker, the player with the highest ranking Five-Card high hand and the player with the highest ranking Five-Card low hand, subject to §L of this chapter, shall divide the pot equally.

(3) The player with the highest ranking Five-Card high hand and the player with the highest ranking Five-Card low hand, subject to §L of this chapter, shall divide the pot equally.

(4) If a pot cannot be divided equally, the excess amount, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

(5) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking high hand, the high hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(6) If the high hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest ranking high card by suit or to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

(7) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking low hand, the low hand share of the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(8) If the low hand share of the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the lowest

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ranking low hand Poker card by suit or to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

(9) For purposes of this subsection, the cards shall be ranked by suit with the highest to lowest rank suit in order as follows: spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs.

L. In Five-Card Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker:

(1) A winning low hand may not contain a pair, a three-of-a-kind, a four-of-a-kind, or a 9, 10, jack, queen, or king.

(2) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement in §L(1) of this chapter, the entire pot shall be awarded to the player with the highest ranking high hand.

(3) The player may form two different hands of five cards each, enabling that player to contend for both the high hand and low hand share of the pot.

(4) A hand shall consist of any three of the community cards and any two of five cards dealt to the player.

(5) A player may use the same Five-Card grouping to make a high hand and a low hand.

(6) An ace may be used concurrently as a low hand card to make up a low hand and as a high card to make up a high hand.

M. In Five-Card Omaha High-Low Split Eight or Better Poker the facility operator may use either the Half-Kill or Kill option.

N. If a facility operator elects to use either option described in §M of this chapter, the facility operator shall indicate which option is being used in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and post on a sign at each Omaha Poker table which option is being used and the minimum value of a qualifying pot.

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Chapter 20 - Badugi Poker; Procedures for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Badugi Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. No more than nine players may participate in a Badugi Poker game.

(1) A player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(2) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of the Ante bet, and the Kill or Half-Kill option, shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. The dealer shall use a button to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which players shall bet in accordance with the following procedures:

(1) At commencement of play, the dealer shall place the button in front of:

(a) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(b) The player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt; and

(2) Thereafter, the dealer shall rotate the button around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

D. Before any cards are dealt, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(1) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

(2) The amount and number of all Blind Bets required must be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

E. If the facility operator offers the Straddle Bet, the player to the left of the player who placed a Blind Bet may place a Straddle Bet.

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(1) The rules governing the placement of a Straddle Bet and the amount of the Straddle Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

(2) No more than one Straddle Bet may be made during a round of play.

F. Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal four rounds of cards face down to each player so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

G. After each player has been dealt four cards in accordance with §F of this chapter, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player or players who were required to place a Blind Bet or the player who placed a Straddle Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call, or raise the bet.

(1) The option to raise also applies to a player who made a Blind Bet or Straddle Bet.

(2) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting round is complete.

H. The dealer shall then burn the top card of the deck.

(1) A player who has not folded, starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing in a clockwise rotation, may draw new cards.

(2) A player may keep the player's original hand or discard as many cards as the player chooses.

(3) The dealer shall replace a discarded card with a new card from the deck, and, if an insufficient number of cards remain in the deck for a player to draw new cards, the dealer shall reshuffle the discarded cards and deal new cards to the player.

(4) The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the next betting round and may bet or check.

(5) Each subsequent player may, in clockwise rotation, fold, call, raise, or, if preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check.

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(6) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the second betting round is complete.

I. Upon completion of the second betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck, and commence and complete the next betting round as required under §H of this chapter.

J. Upon completion of the third betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck, and commence and complete the next betting round as required under §H of this chapter.

K. Upon completion of the fourth betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck, and commence and complete the final betting round as required under §H of this chapter.

L. If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, the dealer shall use a showdown to determine the winner of the pot.

(1) Each player remaining in the game shall form a Badugi hand of four cards from different suits and ranked in accordance with Chapter 6 – Poker Rankings, with the best hand being an ace, 2, 3, and 4.

(2) In Badugi Poker, the winner of the pot is the player with the lowest Badugi hand.

(3) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement in §L(1) of this chapter, the player with the lowest three card hand from different suits and ranks wins.

(4) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement in §L(3) of this chapter, the player with the lowest two card hand from different suits and ranks wins.

(5) If none of the hands of the remaining players satisfies the requirement in §L(4) of this chapter, the player with the lowest card wins.

(6) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking low hand, the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

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(7) If the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the lowest ranking Poker card by suit or to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

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Chapter 21 - Triple Draw Poker; Procedures for Dealing; Completion of Play.

A. A facility operator that offers Triple Draw Poker shall follow the procedures in this chapter.

B. Players.

(1) No more than seven players may participate in a Triple Draw Poker game.

(2) A player who elects to participate in a round of play may be required to place an Ante bet.

(3) The rules governing the placement of an Ante bet and the amount of the Ante bet, and the Kill or Half-kill option, shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

C. Order of Betting.

(1) Button Placement. The dealer shall use a button to indicate the order in which the cards shall be dealt and the order in which players shall bet in accordance with the following procedures:

(a) At commencement of play, the dealer shall place the button in front of:

(i) The first player to the right of the dealer; or

(ii) The player randomly determined by rank of a single card dealt.

(b) Thereafter, the dealer shall rotate the button around the table in a clockwise manner after each round of play.

(2) Blind Bet.

(a) Before any cards are dealt, the player to the immediate left of the button shall initiate the first betting round by placing a Blind Bet.

(b) A facility operator may require additional Blind Bets to be made immediately after the initial Blind Bet.

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(c) The amount and number of all Blind Bets required must be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at the table.

(3) Straddle Bet.

(a) If the facility operator offers the Straddle Bet, the player to the left of the player who placed a Blind Bet may place a Straddle Bet.

(b) The rules governing the placement of a Straddle Bet and the amount of the Straddle Bet shall be specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19 and posted on a sign at each Poker table.

(c) No more than one Straddle Bet may be made during a round of play.

D. Procedures for Dealing Cards.

(1) Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, the dealer shall deal five rounds of cards face down to each player so that the player with the button shall be the last player to receive a card each time.

(2) After each player has been dealt five cards in accordance with §D(1) of this chapter, each player, starting with the player to the left of the player or players who were required to place a Blind Bet or the player who placed a Straddle Bet, and continuing around the table in a clockwise manner, may fold, call, or raise the bet.

(3) The option to raise also applies to a player who made a Blind Bet or Straddle Bet.

(4) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the betting is complete.

(5) The dealer shall then burn the top card of the deck.

(6) Starting with the player to the immediate left of the button and continuing in a clockwise rotation, a player who has not folded may draw new cards.

(7) A player may keep the player's original hand or discard as many cards as the player chooses.

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(8) The dealer shall replace a discarded card with a new card from the deck, and if an insufficient number of cards remain in the deck for a player to draw new cards, the dealer shall reshuffle the discarded cards and deal new cards to the player.

(9) The first player to the left of the button who has not folded shall commence the next betting round and may bet or check.

(10) In clockwise rotation, each subsequent player may fold, call, raise or, if preceding players have not made a bet, make an opening bet or check.

(11) After the last player has responded to the most recent bet, the second betting round is complete.

(12) Upon completion of the second betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck, and commence and complete the next betting round as required under this section.

(13) Upon completion of the third betting round, the dealer shall burn the top card of the deck, and commence and complete the final betting round as required under this section.

E. Completion of Play.

(1) If more than one player remains in the round of play after the final betting round has been completed, the dealer shall use a showdown to determine the winner of the pot.

(2) Each player remaining in the game shall form a hand of five-cards from different suites and ranked in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings.

(3) The winner of the pot is the player with the highest ranking five-card low hand, counted from the highest card in the hand to the lowest card in the hand.

(4) If a tie exists between two or more players for the highest ranking low hand, the pot shall be divided equally among the tied players.

(5) If the pot cannot be divided equally among the tied players, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player specified in the facility operator's Rules Submission under COMAR 36.05.03.19.

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(6) 2-7 Lowball Poker.

(a) An ace is used only as a high card.

(b) The best possible 2-7 Lowball Poker hand is 7, 5, 4, 3, 2 with all five cards not of the same suit.

(c) A straight, flush, or pair shall be considered for purposes of determining a winning hand.

(7) Ace-5 Lowball Poker.

(a) An ace is used only as a low card.

(b) The best possible Ace-5 Lowball Poker hand is a 5, 4, 3, 2, A, regardless of suit.

(c) A straight or flush shall not be considered for purposes of determining a winning hand.

F. Splitting the Pot. Notwithstanding the requirements in §E of this chapter, if specified in its Rules Submission, the facility operator may offer Triple Draw Poker and split the pot awarded between players as follows:

(1) In 2-7 Lowball Poker, if Badeucey is being offered:

(a) Half of the pot shall be awarded to the highest ranking 2-7 Lowball Poker hand and the other half of the pot shall be awarded to the player with the best Badugi hand.

(b) For purposes of Badeucey, a Badugi hand is a hand in which four of the player's five cards are of a different suit from the others and rank in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings with the best Badugi hand being a 2, 3, 4, and 5.

(c) If the pot cannot be split evenly, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest 2-7 Lowball Poker hand.

(2) In Ace-5 Lowball Poker, if Badacey is being offered:

(a) Half of the pot shall be awarded to the highest ranking Ace-5 Lowball Poker hand and the other half of the pot shall be awarded to the player with the best Badugi hand.

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(b) For purposes of Badacey, a Badugi hand is a hand in which four of the player's five cards are of a different suit from the others and rank in accordance with Chapter 6 - Poker Rankings with the best Badugi hand being an ace, 2, 3 and 4.

(c) If the pot cannot be split evenly, the excess, which may not exceed \$1, shall be given to the player with the highest Ace-5 Lowball Poker hand.