

Wyoming Gaming Development & Regulatory Timeline

Legislative History of Pari-Mutuel Gaming and Historic Horse Racing in Wyoming

1967 – Wyoming Pari-Mutuel Commission Created

This establishes the regulatory foundation for legalized horse racing wagering in Wyoming and creates the framework for future pari-mutuel gaming development.

1987 – Authorization of Simulcasting & Off-Track Wagering

Wyoming permits wagering on televised interstate and intrastate horse racing, subject to county approval and geographic restrictions.

1999–2001 – Legislative Expansion Efforts

Multiple attempts to expand wagering to include additional racing formats including rodeo and dog racing. Some proposals are vetoed in 1999 and 2000. In 2001 the Legislature overrides a veto to allow simulcast dog racing.

May 21, 2003 – Pari-Mutuel Commission Rule Adjustment

The Commission removes the term “live” from simulcast definitions, enabling the regulatory framework for instant racing and early forms of Historic Horse Racing systems.

2005–2006 – Judicial Review of Instant Racing

Wyoming courts determine that the Commission lacks statutory authority for instant racing. The Wyoming Supreme Court rules that Historic Horse Racing terminals are not permitted under then-existing statutes.

2006 – Senate File 0061 Enacted

This legislation authorizes the Pari-Mutuel Commission to access certain criminal history records for regulatory purposes.

2013 – House Bill 0025 Enacted – HHR Legalized

Historic Horse Racing is legalized in Wyoming. The statute expands the definition of pari-mutuel events to include previously run races conducted through electronic systems incorporating skill and judgment components.

February 12, 2020 – House Bill 0230 Introduced

The bill is introduced specifically to add professional rodeo events to Wyoming’s pari-mutuel wagering statutes, providing for professional rodeo events as pari-mutuel events.

March 17 & July 1, 2020 – House Bill 0171 & House Bill 0230 Become Law

HB 0171 authorizes continued operation of skill-based amusement games. HB 0230 takes effect July 1, 2020, adding professional roping and rodeo events to Wyoming’s statutory definition of pari-mutuel events – the first legal authorization of pari-mutuel wagering on professional rodeo in Wyoming.

2021 – Online Sports Wagering Legalized & Skill Games Codified

Wyoming authorizes mobile and online sports betting, with market launch in September 2021. Skill-based gaming operations are formally incorporated into Wyoming Gaming Commission regulatory structure.

2021–2023 – Federal Compliance Issue Identified (FBI/CJIS)

Federal Public Law 92-544 requires that fingerprint-based background check categories be explicitly authorized by state statute. Agency rulemaking alone is insufficient for compliance.

Through July 1, 2023 – FBI CJIS Compliance Grace Period

Wyoming is granted additional time to align pari-mutuel and gaming background check statutes with federal requirements. No new applicant categories may be added during this period.

2022–2023 – Senate File 0041 Enacted

Regulates placement of skill-based amusement games and establishes grandfathering provisions for existing locations prior to September 14, 2022.

2025 – House Bill 0087 Fails; Senate File 0164 Expires

HB 0087, intended to consolidate gaming statutes and modernize licensing frameworks, does not pass. SF 0164, proposing defined statutory categories for rodeo participants to align with FBI-compliant background check requirements, does not complete passage before the legislative deadline.

KEY CONCLUSION ON RODEO BETTING & REGULATORY STATUS

Rodeo betting in Wyoming is legally established under House Bill 0230, effective July 1, 2020. The remaining issue is not the legality of wagering activity, but statutory alignment with federal FBI and CJIS requirements for fingerprint-based background checks. Wyoming must define explicit statutory categories for rodeo-related licensees in order to fully satisfy federal compliance standards.

Note: *Future legislative action is expected to address this issue in a subsequent session, with the 2027 Wyoming Legislative Session identified as a likely opportunity.*

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