



**Douglas A. Ducey**  
Governor

**Daniel H. Bergin**  
Director

## Arizona Department of Gaming

TRIBAL GAMING • RACING • BOXING & MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

Amanda Jacinto  
Public Information Officer  
1110 W. Washington St, Suite 450  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007  
[AJacinto@azgaming.gov](mailto:AJacinto@azgaming.gov)  
Desk 602.255.3806  
Cell 480.403.1265

### News Release

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#### **Two More Illegal Gambling Businesses Shut Down as Partnership with Phoenix Police Grows**

PHOENIX— On Wednesday afternoon investigators from the Arizona Department of Gaming (ADG) and members of the Phoenix Police Department served two search warrants at businesses for illegal gambling. Both businesses named “International Calling Cards” are believed to be owned by the same person and are located at 2305 E. Bell Road and 10413 N. 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue. During the joint operation 3 people were arrested in connection to the business and will be facing multiple charges including operating an illegal gaming facility, promotion of illegal gambling, and fraud.

For several months, investigators have been looking into the businesses and found they were committing fraud by selling fake calling cards as a front for an illegal gambling sweepstakes café. The businesses sold the non-working prepaid local and international calling cards which then allowed paying customers to play casino style games on computers inside the business. The games, while played on desktop computers, simulate what is often seen on the screens of electronic slot machines inside regulated casinos.

During the past week, ADG has partnered with Phoenix and Peoria Police Departments to serve warrants at an additional two illegal gambling locations. Those operations lead to the arrests of about dozen people, both employees and customers, and multiple felony charges. In one case a customer who had a violent history was found inside the business with a hidden loaded rifle. These unregulated cash businesses can often attract violent crimes to area neighborhoods, which is why ADG takes complaints about illegal gambling businesses very seriously.

The recent partnership between ADG and Phoenix Police alone has lead to five different search warrants since July. Those joint operations have also lead to the voluntary closure of at least five other known illegal gambling locations across the Valley.