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# Gaming Cage Workers

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## Significant Points

- Job opportunities are available nationwide and are no longer limited to Nevada and New Jersey.
- Most employers prefer applicants who have at least a high school diploma as well as experience in handling money or previous casino employment.
- Workers need a license issued by a regulatory agency, such as a State casino control board or commission; licensure requires a background investigation.

## Nature of the Work

Gaming cage workers, more commonly called *cage cashiers*, work in casinos and other gaming establishments. The “cage” where these workers can be found is the central depository for money, gaming chips, and paperwork necessary to support casino play.

Cage workers carry out a wide range of financial transactions and handle any paperwork that may be required. They perform credit checks and verify credit references for people who want to open a house credit account. They cash checks according to rules established by the casino. Cage workers sell gambling chips, tokens, or tickets to patrons or to other workers for resale to patrons and exchange chips and tokens for cash. They may use cash registers, adding machines, or computers to calculate and record transactions. At the end of their shift, cage cashiers must balance the books.

Because gaming establishments are closely scrutinized, cage workers must follow a number of rules and regulations related to their handling of money. For example, they monitor large cash transactions and report these transactions to the Internal Revenue Service to help enforce tax regulations and prevent money laundering. Also, in determining when to extend credit or cash a check, cage workers must follow detailed procedures.

**Work environment.** The atmosphere in casinos is often considered glamorous. However, casino work can also be physically demanding. This occupation requires workers to stand for long periods with constant reaching and grabbing. Sometimes cage workers may be expected to lift and carry relatively heavy items. The casino atmosphere exposes workers to certain hazards, such as cigarette, cigar, and pipe smoke. Noise from slot machines, gaming tables, and talking workers and patrons may be distracting to some, although workers wear protective headgear in areas where loud machinery is used to count money.

Most casinos are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and offer 3 staggered shifts. Casinos typically require cage workers to work on nights, weekends, and holidays.

## Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

While there are no mandatory education requirements, gaming cage workers typically receive on-the-job training and are licensed by a regulatory agency, such as a State casino control board or commission.

**Education and training.** There usually are no minimum educational requirements, although most employers prefer at least a high school diploma or the equivalent.

Once hired, gaming cage workers usually receive on-the-job training. Under the guidance of a supervisor or other senior worker, new employees learn company procedures. Some formal classroom training also may be necessary, such as training in specific gaming regulations and procedures.

**Licensure.** All gaming workers are required to have a license issued by a regulatory agency, such as a State casino control board or commission. Applicants for a license must provide photo identification and pay a fee. Some States may require gaming cage workers to be residents of that State. Age requirements vary by State. The licensing application process also includes a background investigation and drug test.

**Other qualifications.** Experience in handling money or previous casino employment is preferred. Prospective gaming cage workers are sometimes required to pass a basic math test, and they must be careful, orderly, and detail-oriented to avoid making errors and to recognize errors made by others. These workers also should be discreet and trustworthy because they frequently come in contact with confidential material. Good customer service skills and computer proficiency are also necessary for this occupation. Each casino establishes its own requirements for education, training, and experience.

**Advancement.** Advancement opportunities in casino gaming depend less on workers’ previous casino duties and titles than on their ability and eagerness to learn new jobs. For example, in addition to advancement opportunities available in the cage, such as head cage cashier or supervisor, cage workers may advance onto the floor and become dealers or supervisors.

## Employment

Gaming cage workers held about 18,000 jobs in 2006. All of these individuals work in establishments that offer gaming; employment is concentrated in Nevada, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Atlantic City, New Jersey. However, a growing number



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### Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Gaming cage workers.....	43-3041	18,000	20,000	2,000	11

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

of States and Indian reservations have legalized gambling, and gaming establishments can now be found in many parts of the country.

#### Job Outlook

Employment of gaming cage workers is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2016. Job seekers should have favorable prospects due primarily to the spread of legalized gambling.

**Employment change.** Employment of gaming cage workers is expected to increase by 11 percent between 2006 and 2016, which is about as fast as the average for all occupations. The outlook for gaming cage workers depends on the demand for gaming, which is expected to remain strong. No longer confined to Nevada and New Jersey, gaming is becoming legalized in more States that consider gaming an effective way to increase revenues. A substantial portion of this growth will come from the construction of new Indian casinos and of "racinos," which are pari-mutuel racetracks that offer casino games.

Gaming cage workers, however, will experience slower growth than others in gaming establishments, as casinos find ways to reduce the amount of cash handled by employees. For example, self-serve cash-out and change machines are common along with automated teller machines. In addition, slot machines are now able to make payouts in tickets, instead of coins. Tickets can be read by other slot machines and the amount on the ticket transferred to the new machine. Known as Ticket-in, Ticket-Out game play, these technologies reduce the number of cash transactions needed to play and speed up the exchange process, which means fewer workers are needed to handle the cage than in the past.

**Job prospects.** In addition to job openings arising from employment growth, a fair number of openings will result from high turnover in this occupation caused by the high level of scrutiny workers receive and the need to be accurate. People with good mathematics abilities, previous casino experience, some background in accounting or bookkeeping, and good customer service skills should have the best opportunities.

#### Earnings

Earnings for gaming cage workers vary according to level of experience, training, location, and size of the gaming establishment. Median hourly earnings of gaming cage workers were \$11.13 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$9.49 and \$13.52 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$8.19, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$15.92 an hour.

#### Related Occupations

Many other occupations provide hospitality and customer service. Some examples of related occupations are credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks; gaming services occupations; sales worker supervisors; cashiers; retail salespersons; and tellers.

#### Sources of Additional Information

Information on employment opportunities for gaming cage workers is available from local offices of the State employment service.

Information on careers in gaming also is available from:

► American Gaming Association, 1299 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Suite 1010 East, Washington, DC 20004.

Internet: <http://www.americangaming.org>