IGT iLottery Guide:

Submitting Wagering Apps to

The Google Play Store

IGT is the global leader in gaming. IGT delivers entertaining and Responsible Gaming experiences for players across all channels and regulated segments, from Lotteries and Gaming Machines to Sports Betting and Digital. Leveraging a wealth of compelling content, substantial investment in innovation, player insights, operational expertise, and leading-edge technology, IGT solutions deliver unrivaled gaming experiences that engage players and drive growth.

IGT creates applications that enable players to experience their favorite games across channels and jurisdictions. As part of our experience with developing impactful apps, IGT iLottery professionals are ahead of the game with app submissions and have crafted much-needed best practices for app deployments. As a leading iLottery supplier that works very closely with platform providers to ensure product compliance, the IGT iLottery team would like to share knowledge base as it relates to successful submissions of wagering apps to the Google Play Console. Previously, only informational convenience apps were accepted.

Lotteries will hopefully find this information useful for their own first-time wagering app publications via Google Play Store -- whether for U.S. or international lotteries.

Please see below for helpful tips on adhering to required guidelines to create a solid foundation for your Google Play Store wagering app submissions!

The Basics:

Following app development and successful testing, as requirements evolve, it is recommended that builds and screenshots be submitted for key product elements including:

• Home Screen

• Catalogues

• Games Screens

• Winning Numbers

• Animations

Key Learnings:

Follow Guidelines

It is essential that the latest guidelines -- as posted over Google developer forums – be followed for a smoother review process.

Yearly Upgrades

As standard practice, it is recommended that the mobile app developer upgrade the app regularly, with a potential annual upgrade to the latest version of the software development kit (SDK) version to stay up to date with new features. Google Play Store requires apps to use certain target SDK each year. For example, beginning in November 2022, apps were required to use target SDK 31. The Google Play SDK Index can help administrators select the right commercial SDK for their apps, if any.

Gambling Application Form

Prior to submitting the actual app for review, the Gambling Application Form should be submitted by the Lottery account administrator to Google Play for approval.

Signature Issues

Here is a key item to look out for: when an existing app is moved from enterprise server to Google Play, admins must sign the app using the same app-signing key. They must also select the option to upload the app-signing key for bundling rather than using default Google's auto-generated signing key. This is an important one-time step, which needs to be completed when the first bundle is uploaded. Please note that if missed, Google does not supply a method for later correction.

Same Signing Keys

It is important to note that each app must use its own app-signing key as well as upload key. Certain applications do need to talk to each other; sharing keys is the exception and not the rule here, only utilized for specific scenarios.

App Submissions:

Login Credentials

Reviewers will look for supplied app credentials to verify screens. This information must be entered into the relevant fields in Play Console. Contact information must be up to date.

Sensitive Permission Declaration

It is necessary to remove all unwanted permissions to avoid rejections by Google Play. When any sensitive permission (example: QUERY_ALL_PACKAGE) is used, necessary information must be provided for review.

Meta Data Information

Relevant images, videos, descriptions, and any meta information can all be uploaded. All mandated forms shown in Play Console should be completed. Missing any required forms will result in process delays.

App Verification

To ensure stability, it is important to Smoke test the app for any crashes or app hang issues prior to submission to Google Play Store.
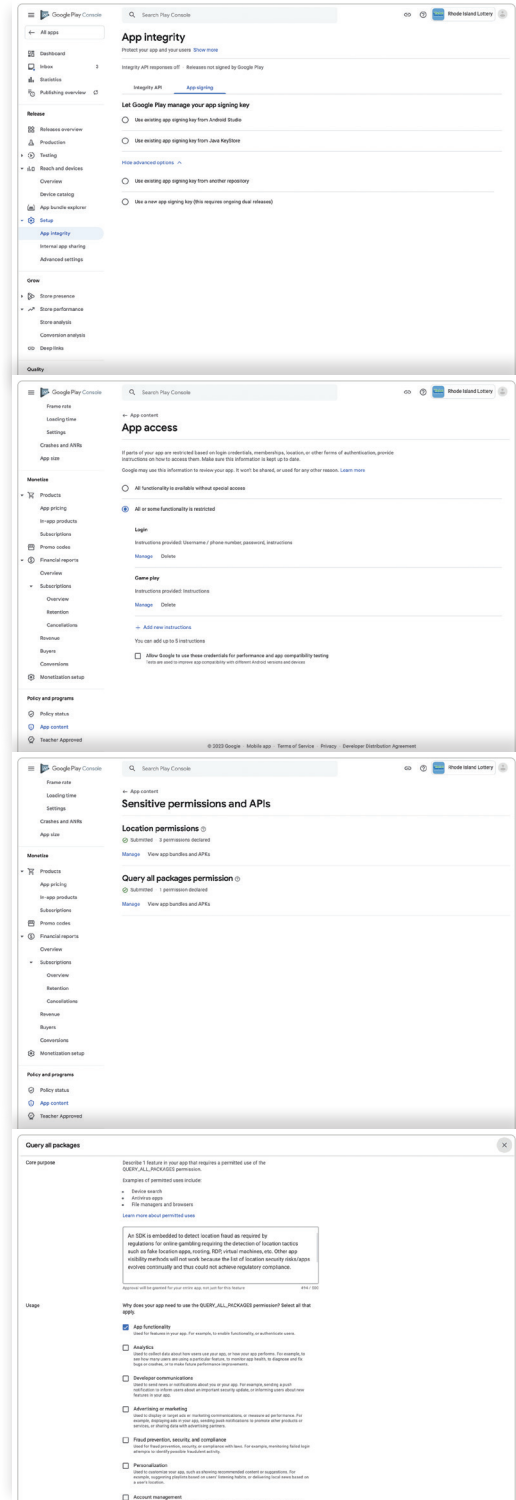
Multiple APK Submission Conflicts

If possible, creators should strive to maintain the same "build version" throughout the Internal, Production, Beta, and Alpha tracks. Different versions in each track while in the submission phase could cause unnecessary confusion and result in unintended app rejections.

Age Restrictions

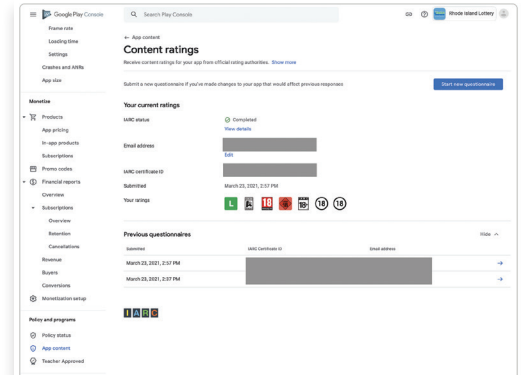Proper age restriction labels must be featured. A screenshot must be provided for Google Play, showing proof of age gating. For example, online gambling apps must be restricted to 18+ and feature an 18+ Content Rating.


Compliant Content:

A Right to Wager Legal document should be provided with the app submission as proof of the Lottery's right to make sales.

Similarly, the Lottery provider's permissions document granting IGT permissions to operate for or on behalf of the Lottery or game must be submitted.

Pro Tips:

Responsible Gaming

Responsible Gaming details should be included in the app "description" section. The Responsible Gaming alert should also be featured within the app itself in the app footer or as an item within the app's top-level menu. Information about Responsible Gaming support should come via a required link to a third-party Responsible Gaming resource. A link just bringing the user to submitter website would not be acceptable. For example, Google will typically accept ncpgambling.org for the Responsible Gaming link in apps publishing in the US. A screenshot of this Responsible Gaming link and page must be provided to Google.
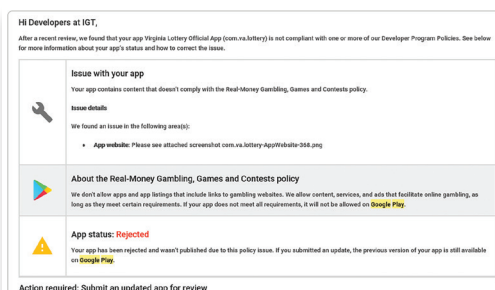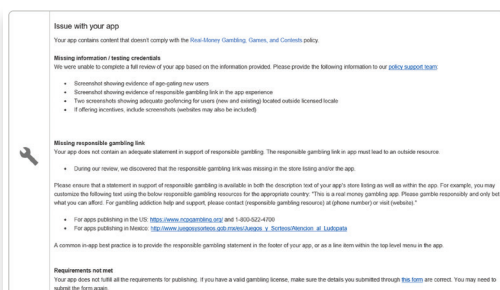
Privacy

The valid Privacy Policy link and Responsible Gaming details should also be included within the app "description" section that can be found in the Google Play Console. Additionally, the Privacy Page alert should be featured within the app itself in the app footer or as an item within the app's top-level menu.

Permission Services

The app must illustrate the required alert information before the player requests permission services by Google. Make sure players understand why the information is needed.

This is important so that when the app is published, the player will receive a popup requesting permission to use player data. The app should feature a designed version of this content asking and informing players that they will be asked to share their information. This enables the app to not send requests to Google if the player does not want to do so.

It is also important to provide at least two images to Google demonstrating proper geofencing. Submitting a brief video showing the app once it has been launched, and depicting the geofencing user experience, with your submission is highly recommended.

Contacting Google

When contacting Google through their Play Support form and/or responding to clarification emails, duplication of communications should be avoided. It is best to wait for a few days before following up as response times can vary depending upon the query raised.

Build Format

It is recommended that AAB rather than APK be used for submissions.

Avoiding Developer Rejection

Resubmitting new builds of same app version (previously approved by Google) for review may delay approval.
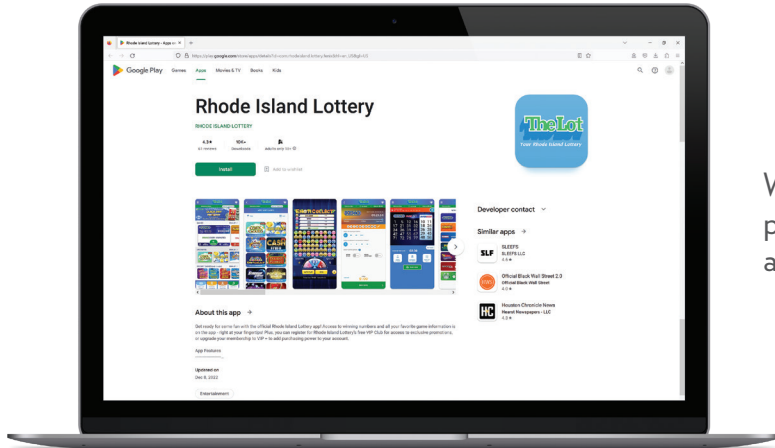
When your app is successfully submitted and published, your content will be featured on a page like this in Google Play!

More information is available on the Google Play Console.
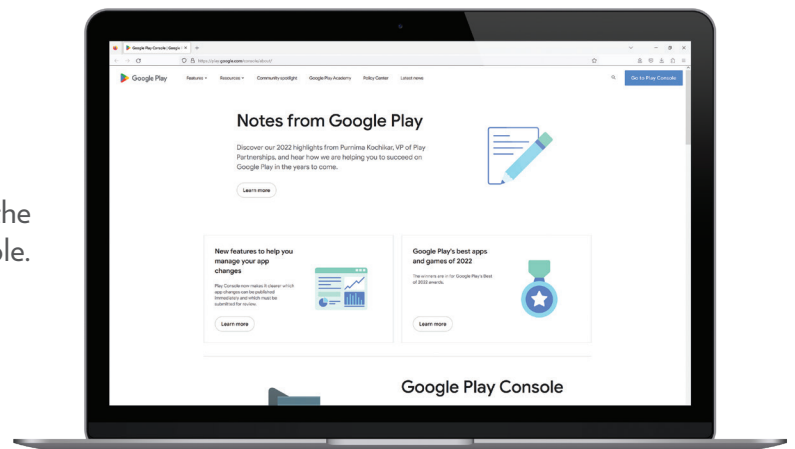
Reach Out:

For IGT customers and business partners: to assist with potentially avoiding and overcoming issues experienced in initial wagering app deployments, the IGT iLottery team would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. IGT's app development experts are here to offer IGT customers and business partners support with pain points or hurdles met in the front-end submission process.

Please Feel Free to Contact:

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