

A look at key moments in the history of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City

2007: The Seminole Indian tribe buys Hard Rock International for \$965 million, acquiring 124 Hard Rock Cafes (including one in Atlantic City), five hotels, two casino hotels and Hard Rock Live! concert venues

2010: Hard Rock International announces plans to develop a signature music-themed casino hotel on the Boardwalk at the foot of the city's Route 40 entryway.

October 2010: The state Senate approves so-called “boutique” casino legislation that allows smaller casino projects that don't meet a 500-room minimum, clearing the way for the proposed Hard Rock project.



Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

March 2014: State documents confirm Hard Rock remains interested in Atlantic City and is one of several potential buyers for Revel Casino Hotel.

January 2015: Hard Rock wins approval from the Casino Control Commission for a statement of compliance, a preliminary step toward a full-fledged casino license.

June 2, 2015: Hard Rock unveils plans for a \$1 billion, 650,000-square-foot property at the Meadowlands Racetrack. The plan calls for 200 gaming tables and 5,000 slot machines.

July 2018: Hard Rock's gas station, Rocktane, opens.

January 2019: Hard Rock enters the sports betting arena with the launch of both an on-site and on-line sportsbook.

June 2019: Hard Rock celebrates its one-year anniversary by donating \$200,000 to five local organizations. The Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Atlantic City Police Foundation, Avanzar, Turning Point Day Center and Covenant House each receive \$40,000.

March 2020: Hard Rock and every other Atlantic City casino is forced to close under COVID-19 pandemic restrictions against social gatherings. They remain closed until early July 2020.



Nov. 15, 2011: Hard Rock President and CEO Jim Allen tells the New Jersey Casino Control Commission that Hard Rock plans to start construction by July 2012 and open in spring 2014.

September 2012: Hard Rock's project stalls after it decides not to make a \$1 million payment to the state for its casino-license application.

April 2013: Hard Rock buys a stake in the Meadowlands Racetrack.



Celebrities and VIPs smash guitars as part of the grand opening celebration at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, June 28, 2018.

November 2016: New Jersey voters shoot down a proposal to expand casino gaming outside Atlantic City, a crippling blow to Hard Rock's plan for the Meadowlands Racetrack.

March 1, 2017: Hard Rock announces plans to buy and renovate the closed Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort.

June 27, 2018: Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City opens.

February 2021: Hard Rock provides bonuses for all of its employees. The initiative, which pays more than 2,000 employees, totals more than \$1 million.

November 2021: Hard Rock President Joe Lupo is appointed president of the Casino Association of New Jersey.



In this March 22, 2019, photo, gamblers watch live sporting events at the Hard Rock casino.

LEE ENTERPRISES GRAPHIC