



Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board

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Gaming Control Board Recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) is recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in order to promote resources intended to help individuals with a gambling addiction.

As part of the agency's efforts to raise awareness of problem gambling and provide both professionals and individuals with information, staff with the PGCB's Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling will be available at the following events:

- Thursday, March 7th at The Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA's East Conference in Trevoze;
- Thursday, March 14th at The Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA's West Conference in Pittsburgh; and,
- Tuesday, March 19th in the Capitol Building mini-rotunda in Harrisburg from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Elizabeth Lanza, Director of the PGCB's Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling, says problem gambling is an issue that can affect Pennsylvanians of any age, race and ethnic background and can have significant societal and economic cost.

"Problem Gambling Awareness Month shines a spotlight on the issue of problem gambling, and we want the public to know help is available 24 hours a day by calling 1-800-GAMBLER," Lanza said. "This includes the PGCB's Self-Exclusion Program, an effective and proven tool to assist an individual with a gambling disorder in removing himself or herself from the temptation of gambling."

In 2006, the Board established the Pennsylvania Self-Exclusion Program which permits an individual to request that he or she be banned from entering and gambling at a Pennsylvania casino for one year, five years or a lifetime. While a person is on the Self-Exclusion List, gaming facilities in the Commonwealth must refuse wagers from and deny gaming privileges to that person, and deny check cashing privileges, player club membership, complimentary goods and services, junket participation and other similar privileges and benefits. In addition, the self-excluded individual is informed at the time of enrollment that they could be charged with criminal trespass if they enter a Pennsylvania casino during their time on the list.

Gaming Control Board Executive Director Kevin F. O'Toole says the agency's role in protecting the interests of the public has included efforts to make sure individuals know about the help available before the problem develops. He notes that with the passing of Act 42 of 2017 which

increases gambling activities beyond land-based casinos, the legislature also wisely continued to increase gambling treatment and prevention dollars to ensure the new types of legalized gambling contribute to the Compulsive and Problem Gambling Treatment Fund.

“Our agency has made outreach for problem gamblers a priority since the opening of the first casinos in Pennsylvania over 12 years ago,” said O’Toole. “With the expansion of gaming beyond the walls of the casinos, our agency is expanding its efforts in ensuring the tools will be available to self-exclude from gambling or limit one’s spend or time spent on gambling.”

The new Self-Exclusion programs and the self-imposed spend and time limits will be made available in 2019 as the PGCB and the gaming industry launch new gambling initiatives including casino-like games and sports wagering through the internet and video gaming terminals at truck stops.

More information on problem gambling is accessible through the PGCB’s web site, www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov.

About the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board:

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is tasked to oversee all aspects of the state’s casino industry, including sports wagering offered currently at six locations. The oversight also includes other new gaming initiatives, expected to be launched in the coming months, which were created through Act 42 of 2017, an amendment to the Race Horse Development and Gaming Act.

The Commonwealth’s casino industry currently consists of 10 stand-alone and racetrack casinos in operation, along with the two smaller resort casinos. These facilities collectively employ nearly 17,000 people and annually generate approximately \$1.4 billion in tax revenue from slot machine and table games play. The largest portion of that money is used for property tax reduction to Pennsylvania homeowners.

Additional information about both the PGCB’s gaming regulatory efforts and Pennsylvania’s gaming industry can be found at gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov. You can also follow the agency on Twitter by choosing @PAGamingControl.

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