



## GameSense

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### **Massachusetts Gaming Commission announces launch of Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program** *Innovative and personal tool is part of MassGaming's comprehensive efforts to mitigate problem gambling*

In anticipation of the arrival of the expanded gaming industry, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is announcing the launch of the Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program. A key requirement of the Expanded Gaming Act, the program is just one of many resources the Commission is employing to help people who may have a gambling problem or may be at risk of developing one.

The Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program allows participants to ban themselves from any of the Massachusetts casino gaming facilities for a pre-determined period of time. Participants will have the option to self-exclude for six months, one year, three years, five years, or for life. Enrollees will not be allowed to enter any casino gaming facility in Massachusetts, and if they break the agreement any winnings will be forfeited. Information provided by enrollees will be maintained and securely managed by the Commission, and shared with security personnel in gaming establishments throughout Massachusetts as a service to help enrollees honor their commitment.

Said MGC's Director of Research and Responsible Gaming Mark Vander Linden, "A key element of our Responsible Gaming Strategy is to provide the people of Massachusetts with tools to empower them to be informed consumers of casino gambling, and to help manage their gambling in a responsible manner. Voluntary Self-Exclusion is one of those tools."

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission stresses the importance of face-to-face interaction as a hallmark of the Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program. Enrollment must be performed in person with a professional who has been trained to handle these requests. Enrollees may speak to advisors at the **GameSense Info Center at Plainridge Park Casino**. In addition, an enrollee can make an appointment with an advisor by contacting either of the following:

- **The Massachusetts Gaming Commission**, at 617-533-9737 or [vse@state.ma.us](mailto:vse@state.ma.us)
- **The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling**, at 800-426-1234

Advisors at each of these locations will also be able to direct enrollees to additional support services. Furthermore, MGC is the first in the nation to require exit interviews with enrollees seeking to exit their commitment to self-exclusion when their pre-determined self-exclusion term has ended. As a courtesy, enrollment forms are available for download at [MassGaming.com/VSE](http://MassGaming.com/VSE).

The program will be subject to review by experts at Harvard Medical School / Division on Addictions, in keeping with the Commission's fact-based, data-driven approach to mitigation of problem gambling. Marlene Warner, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Executive Director, commented, "This is an opportunity to offer a safety net to those for whom gambling is not a safe or risk-free activity. The Massachusetts Gaming Commission has taken an evidence-based practice such as Voluntary Self-Exclusion, and further enhanced it to presumably strengthen its efficacy. We are ready to provide resources and referrals for those enrollees in need."

#### **About MassGaming**

The mission of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is to create a fair, transparent, and participatory process for implementing the expanded gaming law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in November, 2011. In creating that process, the Commission will strive to ensure that its decision-making and regulatory systems engender the confidence of the public and participants, and that they provide the greatest possible economic development benefits and revenues to the people of the Commonwealth, reduce to the maximum extent possible the potentially negative or unintended consequences of the new legislation, and allow an appropriate return on investment for gaming providers that assures the operation of casino-resorts of the highest quality. For more information on MGC, please visit [MassGaming.com](http://MassGaming.com) or connect and share on Twitter ([@MassGamingComm](https://twitter.com/MassGamingComm)) or Facebook [www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm](http://www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm).

#### **About GameSense**

GameSense is an innovative and comprehensive Responsible Gaming strategy adopted by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission as part of its mission to encourage responsible play and mitigate problem gambling. GameSense combines recommendations on responsible gaming techniques with interactive tools and exhibits meant to engage patrons at Massachusetts casino gaming facilities and online at [GameSenseMA.com](http://GameSenseMA.com).

#### **About the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling**

Founded in 1983, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to providing leadership to reduce the social, financial, and emotional costs of problem gambling, and to promote a continuum of prevention and intervention strategies including: information and public awareness, community education and professional training, advocacy and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones and the greater community.

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