



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Gaming Commission

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Massachusetts Gaming Commission Votes to Adopt Nationally-Recognized Best Practices and Operational Standards to Strengthen Massachusetts's Horse Race Industry
Proposed Regulatory Reforms Aimed at Promoting Uniformity and Enhancing Safety Regulations

Today the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) voted to approve the initiation of the administrative rule-making process to pursue the adoption of national best practices and operational standards regarding health and medication procedures for the state's horse racing industry. These proactive measures taken by MGC will support the highest standards in both integrity and safety as the horse racing industry prepares to co-exist with casinos. In preparation for the 2013 racing season, MGC's Division of Racing is aggressively pursuing new protocols, procedures and standards to ensure the utmost integrity and efficiency for horse racing in Massachusetts.

The racing division recently completed its first phase of proposed regulatory reform. As a result, the racing division is seeking rule changes relevant to Harness Racing (205 CMR 3.00) and Horse Racing (205 CMR 4.00). The proposed rule changes will adopt nationally-recognized standards presented by the Model Rules of the Racing Commissioners International (RCI Model Rules) as they pertain to equine veterinary practices, health and medication and submissions from stakeholders.

The proposed new rules will accomplish the following, but not limited to:

- Promote uniformity by aligning Massachusetts medication rules with the RCI Model Rules used in most other racing jurisdictions;
- Repeal the current regulation which permits the use of a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication (phenylbutazone) on raceday;
- Provide a split, or referee, sample provision to afford owners and trainers additional due process protection in the event of an alleged medication violation;
- Prevent the transfer of horses in a suspended trainer's care to his or her spouse during the period of suspension;
- Provide clear withdrawal times for accepted therapeutic medications to veterinary practitioners and trainers in the form of treatment restriction windows

MGC's Director of Racing, Jennifer Durenberger, stated, "Taking these important and proactive measures to strengthen our standards and promote uniformity will reassure the pari-mutuel customer that Massachusetts is serious about protecting the integrity of its racing and the welfare of its participants. We look forward to moving this process forward as we approach the 2013 racing season."

MGC is now seeking public comment on the draft regulations, which will soon be posted to mass.gov/gaming. MGC will also host a public hearing regarding these regulations on February 25, 2013 at 1:00pm located at 1000 Washington Street, Room 1-E, Boston, MA.

As a result of the creation of the Race Horse Development Fund via the state's Gaming Act, the industry is positioned to benefit from purses enhanced by casino and slot gaming revenues. As a result, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission continues to pursue and adopt the nation's best practices to support the integrity of the state's racing industry as it prepares to co-exist with the casinos.

On May 20, 2012, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission assumed regulatory responsibility of the state's horse racing industry from the State Racing Commission. MGC's newly created Racing Division is now the lawful authority on all regulatory matters for the industry. In April 2012 and in preparation of the transfer of duties, MGC commissioned veteran racing and gaming consultants to conduct an independent and comprehensive overview of the current status of the state's racing industry. MGC also requested that the consultants outline critical next steps to prepare the industry for the arrival of expanded gaming.

About MGC

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 www.mass.gov/gaming or connect and share on Twitter (@MassGamingComm) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm).

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