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**Keep yourself and your gambling safe and healthy!**  
**The Massachusetts Gaming Commission Emphasizes Health and Safety During Responsible Gaming Education Week**

*Through collaboration with casino operators and GameSense, the MGC continues to encourage player safety within the context of COVID-19, as well as player health within the world of gambling.*

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) is pleased to announce its participation in Responsible Gaming Education Week (RGEW) from **September 13 – September 19, 2020**. This year's theme, *Keep yourself and your gambling safe and healthy*, is reflective of the current public health crisis. RGEW was established by the American Gaming Association in 1998 to increase awareness of problem gambling among gaming industry employees and customers, and to promote responsible gaming nationwide. The MGC will utilize this advocacy week to highlight the unique efforts of [GameSense](#), a player-focused responsible gaming program adopted by the MGC in 2015 as part of its mission to encourage positive play and mitigate problem gambling.

"As the nation grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, player health and safety has never been more important. We want to stress to gaming patrons that just as preventive strategies—such as wearing a mask—can help prevent exposure to COVID-19, prevention strategies can also be applied to gambling behavior, to ensure a safe and healthy experience. For example, setting a budget, understanding the rules of the games, and balancing gambling with other activities are important steps to prevent gambling related problems in the future," said **Mark Vander Linden**, MGC's director of research and responsible gaming.

Massachusetts casino operators have partnered with the MGC and GameSense to support RGEW. Plainridge Park Casino, Encore Boston Harbor and MGM Springfield will sponsor activities throughout the week to reinforce the importance of responsible gaming.

"Gambling operators, vendors, regulators – and people who gamble – all have important roles to play in player health and minimizing harm. This week not only gives us an opportunity to remind the public of the importance of responsible gaming, but it also allows us to highlight the nationally recognized and groundbreaking work that's being done in Massachusetts around gaming health and responsible gaming," said **Marlene Warner**, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health (MACGH), which was formerly known as the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, and operator of the GameSense Info Centers at each casino.

**About GameSense**

Introduced by BCLC in 2009, GameSense is an innovative, player-focused responsible gambling program that encourages players to adopt behaviors and attitudes that can reduce the risk of developing gambling disorders. This includes setting and sticking to personally-allocated time and monetary limits for gambling, as well as being open and honest with family, friends and oneself when it comes to personal gambling habits. GameSense has earned international recognition such as the World Lottery Association's Best Overall Responsible Gambling Program (2010), and the U.S. – based National Council on Problem Gambling's Social Responsibility Award (2015). In addition to being licensed and piloted at MGM Resort International casino properties, the program has been implemented by Connecticut Lottery, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission and Canadian provinces Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

In Massachusetts, each gaming establishment is required by statute to provide on-site space (the GameSense Info Center) for player education. Massachusetts is the only jurisdiction in the country required by law to offer responsible gaming resources onsite. There, patrons can learn about myths associated with gambling, the odds of the games they are playing, take a break, and seek support from a GameSense Advisor. The GameSense program 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 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)



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