



For Immediate Release
March 2, 2022

Media Contact:
Thomas Mills (MGC) 617-894-0064
Press release: 22-010

Massachusetts Gaming Commission Recognizes March 2022 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) is pleased to recognize March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM). Established 20 years ago by the National Council on Problem Gambling, PGAM is a national outreach campaign designed to educate the public about problem gambling and the resources available.

PGAM aims to generate awareness about the risks of gambling and urges action toward hope and recovery for those in need. The theme of PGAM is “Awareness + Action,” which is fitting as the MGC continues to advance the nation’s most comprehensive gambling research agenda and strives to mobilize it to reduce gambling harm.

“The Commission’s ongoing research agenda has put into focus several factors that likely contribute to gambling-related harm,” said **Mark Vander Linden, MGC Director of Research and Responsible Gaming**. “With increased attention during PGAM, we aim to mobilize this research to create resources to promote safer levels of play and prevent gambling-related harm.”

That robust research agenda has been underway for almost ten years and generated over fifty reports covering numerous aspects of gambling expansion in the Commonwealth, including social, economic and public safety impacts as well as responsible gaming evaluation. Research findings have provided vital information to inform the work of the MGC and stakeholders throughout Massachusetts.

The MGC maintains a steadfast commitment to promoting responsible gaming by leveraging findings from its research agenda to create new and innovative player tools and resources. Last year, the Massachusetts Gambling Impact Cohort ([MAGIC](#)), the first major cohort study of gambling conducted in the United States, was released. The findings from this study provided a framework to help develop a series of lower-risk gambling guidelines which will be released this month. The MGC is also poised to release a white paper focused on gambling advertising, including a series of evidence-informed recommendations to reduce harm. The MGC research agenda is accessible on the MGC website.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission



In recognition of a statewide commitment to increasing awareness, Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito have officially declared March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month across the Commonwealth, “urging citizens to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance,” according to the [proclamation](#).

“The Massachusetts Gaming Commission is committed to promoting safe levels of play and reducing gambling-related harm by offering programs and initiatives that help understand and address problem gambling,” said **MGC Chair Cathy Judd-Stein**. “This is an all-hands effort, and we are thrilled to partner with the Governor, Lt. Governor, stakeholders, and casino operators in the Commonwealth to raise awareness.”

To cap off PGAM, in late March, MGM Springfield will join Plainridge Park Casino as the first casinos in the U.S. to offer a slot machine-based budgeting tool, called PlayMyWay, to help patrons manage their play. PlayMyWay allows patrons to voluntarily set a budget at the slot machine and receive reminders as they approach their budget.

“During PGAM, it is our responsibility to raise awareness of programs, and resources for people who make the choice to gamble in the Commonwealth” said **Marlene Warner, Executive Director, Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health**. “It is also an opportunity to remind players to focus on positive play: a demonstrated effort to increase their gambling literacy and a commitment to a predetermined amount of money and time spent gambling.”

The MGC encourages all casino employees and patrons to engage with its statewide brand and on-site responsible gaming program, [GameSense](#). GameSense staff will educate casino employees and patrons on tips to keep play safe, support player health, and access community-based support resources.

For more information on MGC’s problem gambling prevention efforts, visit [MassGaming.com](#) or for more on the GameSense program, visit [GameSenseMA.com](#).



Massachusetts Gaming Commission