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## **Massachusetts Gaming Commission Recognizes March 2023 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 MGC continues to advance the nation's most comprehensive gambling research agenda and strives to mobilize it to reduce gambling harm. Over 60 research reports on topics ranging from epidemiology of problem gambling and health, social, and economic impacts across Massachusetts to reducing harm through safer gambling strategies, practices, and policies have been released by the MGC.

The MGC maintains a steadfast commitment to promoting responsible gaming by leveraging findings from this research to inform ongoing development and implementation of a variety of innovative player tools and resources.

Ahead of retail sports wagering launching in Massachusetts on January 31, 2023, the MGC expanded options to help people to control their gambling, announcing the creation of a Voluntary Self-Exclusion (VSE) established specifically for sports wagering. As the Commonwealth introduces online sports wagering, the MGC is broadening our research focus and associated policy, strategy, and practice supports.

“With sports wagering becoming available in the Commonwealth, ensuring all players have the resources they need is paramount to the MGC and responsible gaming efforts,” said **Mark Vander Linden, Director of Research and Responsible Gaming**. “By mobilizing the data and research we have collected, we can advance responsible gaming strategies, practices, and policies, as well as prevention, treatment, and recovery resources.”



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

In 2022, the MGC published a study titled [Legalized Sports Betting in the United States and Potential Impacts in Massachusetts](#). The report conducted by researchers at UMass Amherst identified the social and economic outcomes associated with the introduction of sports betting in the U.S. Authors provided specific policy recommendations intended to optimize the economic and social benefits of sports betting in Massachusetts while minimizing social and economic harm.

The MGC research agenda is accessible on the MGC website.

This March also marks the one-year anniversary of PlayMyWay's [launch at MGM Springfield](#). All three Massachusetts casinos now offer the slot machine-based budgeting tool following PlayMyWay's launch at MGM Springfield in March 2022 [and at Encore Boston Harbor in September](#) of the same year. [PlayMyWay](#) allows patrons to voluntarily set a budget at the slot machine and receive reminders as they approach their budget.

With advisors on-site at each casino property and available 24/7 online or over the phone, GameSense is the MGC's statewide responsible gaming program. GameSense advisors are available to educate gaming employees and patrons on tips to keep play safe, support player health, and access community-based support resources.

"Reducing gambling-related harm and promoting safe play are central pieces of the mission of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission," said **MGC Chair Cathy Judd-Stein**. "Our efforts to offer programs and initiatives to achieve those goals in understanding and addressing problem gambling are a Commission-wide effort that includes everyone. We are proud to once again recognize and promote Problem Gambling Awareness Month."

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