

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON ADDICTION SERVICES**  
(Subcommittee of the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee)

**Notice of Meeting and Agenda**

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25, and Section 22 of the Acts of 2022, notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Subcommittee on Addiction Services, formed under G.L. c. 23K, s. 68(c). The meeting will take place:

**Thursday September 29, 2022 | 3:00-4:00 PM**

**Call-in Number: 1-646-741-5292**

**Meeting ID: 112 565 1545**

Please note that the Commission will conduct this public meeting remotely utilizing remote collaboration technology. Use of this technology is intended to ensure an adequate, alternative means of public access to the Commission's deliberations for any interested member of the public. If there is any technical problem with the Commission's remote connection, an alternative conference line will be noticed immediately on [www.MassGaming.com](http://www.MassGaming.com).

All documents and presentations related to this agenda will be available for your review on the morning of the meeting date by visiting our website and clicking on the News header, under the Meeting Notifications and Agendas drop-down.

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1) **Call to Order**

Mark Vander Linden, Subcommittee Chair

2) **Approval of the Minutes – 08.09.22 – VOTE**

3) **Third-Party Exclusion, Discussion and Recommendations**

4) **Sports Wagering Update**

5) **Subcommittee Member Updates**

6) **Other Business** - Reserved for matters not reasonably anticipated at the time of posting.

9/26/2022

(date)

*Mark Vander Linden*

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**Mark Vander Linden**

Chair, Subcommittee on Addiction Services

I certify that this notice was posted as "GPAC Subcommittee on Addiction Services meeting" at [www.massgaming.com](http://www.massgaming.com) on 9/27/2022 at 10:00 a.m. and emailed to: [regs@sec.state.ma.us](mailto:regs@sec.state.ma.us).



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

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## Subcommittee on Addiction Services Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2022

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**PRESENT:** Mark Vander Linden, Chair  
Victor Ortiz  
Rodolfo Vega (Rudy)  
Marlene Warner  
Yoyo Yau

**OTHER:** Crystal Beauchemin

### 1:05 a.m. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Chair Vander Linden called to order the meeting of the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee's Subcommittee on Addiction Services and took roll call, determining there was a quorum being all members were present.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2022 meeting and seconded. A roll call showed all in favor.

### 1:08 a.m. Third Party Exclusion, Discussion and Next Steps

Chair Vander Linden read the specific requirement to be addressed by the subcommittee- section 45 of Ch23K- Regulation and procedure for the exclusion and self-exclusion of persons from gaming establishments- regarding the various types of exclusion programs the Gaming Commission is required to implement. The focus for today, and for this subcommittee, is the third party exclusion. Chair Vander Linden read the statute.

*Section 45.i An immediate family member or guardian may petition, in writing, a district court for an order of exclusion from gaming establishments applicable to a person whom the petitioner has reason to believe is a problem gambler. Upon receipt of a petition for an order of exclusion of a person and any sworn statements the court may request from the petitioner, the court shall immediately schedule a hearing on the petition and shall cause a summons and a copy of the petition to be served upon the person as provided in section 25 of chapter 276. The person may be represented by legal counsel and may present independent expert or other testimony. The court shall order examination by a qualified psychologist. If after a hearing the court based upon competent testimony finds that the person is a problem gambler and there is a likelihood of serious harm as a result of the person's gambling, the court may order that such person be prohibited from gaming in gaming establishments. The court shall communicate this order to the commission, which shall place the person's name on the list of excluded persons.*

Mr. Vander Linden recapped the previous meeting, stating the subcommittee had heard from Judith Glynn, a consultant to commission, who has done research in other jurisdictions and implemented a similar program. Long Banh had also provided research on related statutes or laws such as substance abuse and mental health to see if a model path forward might advise such an exclusion program for the MGC.

Ms. Warner stated it was helpful to get more background. Given her team runs the onsite Game Sense program, there are still considerations for trying to figure out how to help family members. Ms. Warner thinks the courts are most extreme route, but does feel it is important to build in steps as an intermediate route to this exemption level.

Chair Vander Linden agreed that there are related efforts that go above and beyond what is required but reiterated that it's his top priority as MGC staff to implement this to the extent that there is such control to do so. At the very least, there's a requirement to have the base in place. Ms. Warner agreed.

Mr. Vega also identified that there should be other steps before getting to that very extreme level, requesting to explore ways in which other steps would be involved before including the legal system.

Ms. Yau felt that most populations might not take action on the family end, being worried about betrayal and family shame. She agreed it should be a very last resource. She'd like to consider building an educational and empowerment/awareness option that families could turn to when they are dealing with addiction.

Mr. Ortiz stated that while the MGC is obligated to implement this because it's statute, he felt they have the ability to interpret this. Mr. Vander Linden reminded him it was up to the Commission to have any other interpretation.

Mr. Ortiz stated concerns about the reach and effectiveness of such an exclusion list, especially if the family gets to determine this is an option they have. He mentioned that there are no residential programs for problem gamblers and stated that it is known that involving families early on in treatment shows better outcomes. He proposed that there could be an opportunity within the Voluntary Self Exclusion (VSE) structure to help incorporate families and navigate treatments, perhaps expansion within the VSE existing program to add that support. He wondered how the program is currently engaging family members, and stated he was equally concerned about elevating racial equity in this perspective, given communities of color are highly policed in regard to criminal justice systems and that people of color are disproportionately impacted by gambling.

Mr. Vander Linden posed to the subcommittee what the conduits between VSE and third party exclusion might be, with Mr. Ortiz responding that family support is universally the same; education/awareness, and individual counseling; and more was needed.

Ms. Warned added that she would guess the number of family members in treatment for this is very low because it's an especially heavy financial burden. She noted that GAMANON meetings for family members are very low across commonwealth. She acknowledged a point Mr. Vander Linden made that family members can reach out for free legal services and financial services, but referred to that as "Catch

as catch can.” She also added that there are programs in other states directly for family members, but MA doesn’t have that.

Mr. Vega stated that gambling addiction is usually accompanied by other mental health issues and addictions, which is important for building and integrating into such a system. He referred to family level intervention programs within the mental health system.

Mr. Ortiz offered that there are efforts in the prevention space, but that capacity needed to be built in the intervention space. Acknowledging, Ms. Warner’s comments, he agreed that there needs to be better communication of programs and awareness for the public, highlighting family connectors and assistance opportunities. Ms. Yau agreed that it was important to increase outreach and an organization’s capacity to serve such needs. She added that most individuals don’t want to be referred out from programs and systems they’re part of, so capacity-building needed to be added to existing infrastructure.

Mr. Vander Linden summarized that the concept was to add a step between the VSE and third party exclusion. The group would now need to reframe a recommendation to the GPAC and to MGC to incorporate building capacity and ensuring the resources are available. He reminded the subcommittee members that there is now an even greater call to service due to the mobile sports wagering component.

**1:40 p.m.** The subcommittee had a discussion about the potential of pulling together numbers of family members who reach out or look for help, even if it was a best estimate. Ms. Warner mentioned that the Recovery Advisory Board may be a helpful resource. The group determined ways to pull together a report of the services available, touch points in the system and government programs, and any opportunities for expansion.

A poll of the subcommittee members was taken to ensure there was agreement and everyone felt a range of options should be available to family members before the third party exclusion would be offered.

The subcommittee determined individual assignments which would be beneficial to pull together prior to the next meeting and discuss then, moving forward with developing a recommendation for this third party exclusion list. Mr. Vander Linden stated that at the next meeting, the subcommittee could put together a memo with concrete ideas about where to expand capacity before submitting for consideration.

Specific assignments;

- 1) Dr. Vega will provide a historical context of how families are impacted by problem gambling
- 2) Ms. Yau will provide a case example or overview of how BCNC helps families
- 3) Ms. Warner will provide a description of how families are supported through GameSense – primarily at the casino
- 4) Mr. Ortiz will provide an environmental scan of what services are available in the community to help family members of persons with gambling problems
- 5) Mr. Vander Linden will provide steps to fulfil requirements of fulfilling Sect. 45

## **2:13 pm. Sports Wagering Update**

Mr. Vander Linden announced that the sports wagering bill was passed by the legislature and was now waiting with the Governor as of Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, with the Senate and House having reconciled a bill in committee. He noted that Research and Responsible Gaming had been a piece that the MGC has sent feedback on. He noted that there was a research agenda component included in the final bill, with an annual assessment

in addition to a percentage of the tax revenue; recognizing there will need to be additional efforts in the area of sports wagering.

Mr. Vander Linden added that there is much to consider given the amount of licenses allotted for online sports wagering, and the mobile factor, while also having retail sports wagering locations. It is an expansion of how you may gamble, but also who may gamble. He stated that the legislation calls for a study of its impacts on the community and society, as well as thinking about bars and restaurants, with kiosks.

### **2:19 p.m. Subcommittee Member Updates**

No updates from subcommittee members were offered.

### **2:20 p.m. Meeting Adjourned**

The subcommittee discussed intending to plan the next meeting for a date in September.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Roll call showed all voted in favor.

### **List of Documents and Other Items Used**

1. Notice of Meeting and Agenda
2. Meeting Minutes from May 20, 2022
3. Memo from Mark Vander Linden re: Third Party Exclusion (May 17, 2022)
4. Presentation from Judith Glynn, titled *Third Party Exclusion to Address Harm to Families & Affected Others* (PPT)



TO: GPAC Addiction Services Sub-Committee

FROM: Mark Vander Linden, MGC Director of Research and Responsible Gaming

DATE: September 29, 2022

RE: Family or guardian initiated exclusion

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[Section 45\(i\) of Chapter 23k](#) set forth a requirement that would allow an “immediate family member or guardian” to petition a district court for an order of exclusion from gaming establishments a person they believe to be a problem gambler. When a petition is filed, responsibility rests with the court to order an examination by a “qualified psychologist” and determine whether the individual is a “problem gambler”. If the court determines the person is a problem gambler, and there is likelihood for serious harm resulting from the person’s gambling, the court may order the person be prohibited from gaming in gaming establishments and communicate this with the MGC.

To fulfill this section, the MGC promulgated regulation [205 CMR 152](#), establishing a process to exclude persons from gaming establishments. However, the MGC may wish to conduct a thorough review to assure that requirements from Chapter 23K Sect. 45(i) are addressed.

The MGC should also consider efforts to promote the availability of such a program through its website and social media. The MGC should coordinate additional promotional efforts with key partners including, but not limited to, casino licensees, the MA Department of Public Health, Problem Gambling Helpline, and the MA Council on Gaming and Health.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

The story illustrated **the root cause of gambling, social and cultural isolation, a lack of culturally appropriate treatment** options available to the community, and how **cultural brokers/family connectors**. Ethnic-specific and community-led organizations are best suited to provide programs, services, and interventions for problem gambling in the local community.

The story is about a family with gambling issues, but all names used here are pseudonyms.

Story:

Lily looked for family stabilization services at BCNC family services due to her family's financial difficulty and her husband's problem gambling issues. Lily indicated that her husband, Jeff, went to the casino five times per week right after his late-night restaurant work in the last four months. Jeff currently has a lot of financial debt and asked for money from Lily. Jeff and Lily would get into verbal and physical fights because of Jeff's gambling and financial problems. Lily was concerned about her own safety if Jeff got out of control. The BCNC family connector worked with Lily to develop a safety plan and to explore whether Jeff would be willing to seek gambling prevention services.

After two months of working and establishing trust with Lily, Jeff was willing to meet with the family connector to address his financial situation and gambling issue. Jeff disclosed that gambling was a way to relieve his stress after long hours of work. He said that casino staff treated him as a VIP guest. He used gambling as a way to escape reality for a while, a distraction from real life. Jeff noticed that he had financial struggles ranging from asking for money from friends and his wife, taking out loans, selling his car, and complete financial ruin.

The family connector helped Jeff to seek financial and legal advice as well as gambling treatment. Jeff refused the gambling treatment services due to language and cultural barriers. He agreed to seek financial and legal advice as well as case management services. After six months of intervention, Jeff and Lily stabilized their situation even though they sold their house and filed for bankruptcy. Lily agreed to stay in the marriage if Jeff would let her manage their finances. The family connector helped them to identify short-term rental housing and submitted affordable public housing applications. The family connector continued to meet with them on a regular basis and introduced them to support groups and recreational activities in order to increase their social support network.

After three years waiting period, Jeff and Lily finally moved into an affordable housing unit. Lily indicated that it reduced a lot of their financial burden on housing. She managed their household finances. Jeff currently works regularly and does not have a credit card. Occasionally, Jeff goes to the casino with limited cash to play, but Lily would go with Jeff to keep an eye on him. Lily felt lucky that Jeff was willing to quit, and they did not have any children. Gambling negatively impacts her family causing undue stress. She said that "When people gamble, everything will be gone, car, house and secondly the relationship".



## Family Centered Services

### Background:

The Expanded Gaming Act of 2011 called for the establishment and expansion of gambling opportunities in the Commonwealth. With this and the opening of casinos in the Commonwealth, concerns about gambling disorders and gambling-related harms grow. Research indicates that gambling is interrelated to various health-related issues and disproportionately impacts individuals with mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and communities of color. Historically, community-level experiences of gambling and communities of color are often not the focus of problem gambling services and efforts.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) promotes the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity in all people. Within MDPH, the Office of Problem Gambling Services (OPGS) ensures a comprehensive and integrated public health response to problem gambling by taking a community-driven approach that is rooted in the social determinants of health **with a racial equity lens**, informed by the social-ecological model (individual, families, and communities). The Office's goal is to maximize impact to support communities, **specifically those disproportionately impacted by gambling**, working at the nexus of problem gambling, related health issues, and the social determinants of health.

Since 2016, OPGS has engaged over **2,000 individuals** along with 40 community based partners to inform over 23 initiatives.

### Family Centered Services:

OPGS provides programs and services across five areas, outlined below. Equity is embedded across initiatives, using both targeted and mainstream approaches.

#### Community Engagement and Assessment

- **Community Level Health Project- Everett:** Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) along with community partners engaged 148 community members in the greater Everett area that led to a family centered initiative: **Project RISE**



#### Programmatic Support and Evaluation

- **Massachusetts Problem Gambling Treatment Technical Assistance Center (M-TAC):** Builds capacity of outpatient treatment programs to address problem gambling, with a focus on strengthening services for individuals, families, and communities.







**Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
Office of Problem Gambling Services**

- **Massachusetts Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling Prevention (MCOE PGP):** Provides capacity building, training, and resource development services to address the prevention of problem gambling and related health issues such as the prevention of substance misuse, suicide and violence.



**Direct Services**

- **MA Problem Gambling Helpline:** Provides support and education to individuals and family members impacted by problem gambling.



- **Problem Gambling Treatment Services:** Provides problem gambling clinical services to individuals and families.
- **Photovoice 2.0:** Provides youth participants with training and resources to prevent or reduce the occurrence of underage problem gambling. The project also engages caregivers to provide information and resources.

**Workforce and Training Supports**

- **Project Build Up:** Grant program to strengthen capacity of outpatient treatment agencies to provide gambling treatment services for individuals, families, and community.



**Public Awareness**

- **Youth & Parents Toolkit:** A [toolkit](#) that helps parents start a conversation with youth on how to prevent gambling from becoming a problem.
- **Holiday Lottery Campaign:** An initiative, in partnership with the Massachusetts State Lottery, to discourage gifting lottery products to youth and raise awareness regarding the risks of underage gambling





**The Massachusetts Council**  
**ON GAMING AND HEALTH**  
*We Understand the Problem. We Can Help.*

To: Subcommittee on Addiction, GPAC  
From: Marlene D. Warner, Executive Director, MACGH  
Re: Family Services provided by GameSense/MACGH  
Date: September 29, 2022

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The Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health (MACGH) is a private, public-health focused nonprofit organization that is committed to providing education, information, and services to people who choose to gamble and video game, as well as their family members. MACGH has a contract with the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) to operate the GameSense brand and the related GameSense Information Centers (GSICs) within the three casinos in Massachusetts and the associated host and surrounding communities. The GSICs and the related GamLine and online chat are staffed by MACGH team members named GameSense Advisors (GSAs). The GSAs refer people to MACGH's VSE Recovery Liaison (VRL) and/or community-based treatment or human service agencies. The GSAs and the Recovery Liaison helped to develop the information contained in this document.

### **Engagement with Family Members**

When GSAs and the VRL speak to family members they are careful to start with a compassionate engagement. Whether they meet on the floor of the casino, on the phone, or via chat they demonstrate that they care about the concerns being brought forward. Some know absolutely nothing about the disorder or resources some have done some research. They feel helpless and want to know if there is anything they can do. Resources, stages of change and how difficult it is to make someone quit gambling are often part of the conversation. Recently, we've seen an uptick of questions from mothers of college age young men who are engaging in sports betting and are at the transitional age where they are a legal adult yet still somewhat financially dependent on the parents and the parents still have some level of influence (although they may feel helpless). They are looking to better understand the issue, feel empowered to help and find ways to influence their adult child without alienating them. We also get family members concerned or upset about their immediate family member doing too much gambling. The person borrows money from them to pay bills and they don't understand why the person can't afford to pay them back. The family member often doesn't know exactly what is wrong or if it involves gambling and we can help ask probing questions for them to figure that out.

## Resources for Family Members

We tell anyone that asks that we can offer them resources to hand to their loved one experiencing a gambling problem; however, given that they are reaching out, they are likely feeling directed impacted by their loved ones' gambling, so they may also want resources for themselves.

Here are some of the resources that we offer to a family member:

- Pre-recorded webinars on family resources (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4dmImIkTh8&t=21s>)
- Peer support via phone calls (family members that have been through it)
- Gam-Anon meetings (not many meetings)
- SMART Recovery meetings for Family and Friends
- Problem Gambling Support Group meetings (for young people)
- Gamblersinrecovery.com (world-wide Zoom meeting for people working on recovery)
- Recoveryroadonline.com
- Family Financial Resources
- Legal Financial Resources
- Books for Family Members struggling with a Loved One with a Gambling Problem: Know The Odds, Behind the Eight Ball, and Don't Leave it to Chance (we are constantly editing this list of books); we'll also email articles that could be useful

## Our Resource Wish List for Families (in no certain order):

- Family-specific chat outreach
- Family-peer outreach position
- Family resources in other languages
- Family-focused Telephone Recovery Support
- Family-focused Urge Surfing type of resource
- Materials and interventions that can be offered in the casino for them and for them to easily take to their loved one with a problem (harm reduction ideas; self-exclusion ideas (casino, lottery, credit extension, check cashing, ATMs, etc))
- More short, relatable videos for people to feel connected, but not overwhelmed
- MOUs or relationships with entities such as True Link: <https://www.truelinkfinancial.com/prepaid-card>
- A Social Marketing campaign for loved ones that lets them know they are not alone and there are resources specifically focused on them.

To: Addiction Services (GPAC) Subcommittee

From: Rodolfo R Vega

Re: Scan of the research literature about the relation between gambling, problem and family wellbeing.

As per your request, please find below the main findings of the literature on gambling and families. References are provided and full-text of articles can be made available. As you will see, the relation between the family context and problem gambling prevails along the entire evolution or continuum of problem gambling from its initiation as a social or family activity, to the negative impact it has on the family, to the role that the family play in the treatment of problem gambling. Please note that this is a brief scan of the literature and not a scientific literature review.

### **Historical context**

- David Schwartz<sup>1</sup> points out that the negative impact of problem gambling and families was noted since the 1400's in Venice, when city officials had to regulate existing gambling palaces because they were causing financial ruin on the (wealthy) families.
- Just about 600 years later, Las Vegas realized that the number of high-rollers they could attract was limited, thus they opened the Circus Circus to attract families and America's middle-class.

### **Financial impact<sup>2</sup>**

- Before and a year after the introduction of the National Lottery in 1994 there was an increase in the proportion of households that spent money on gambling (from 40% to 75%).

### **Families and gambling<sup>3</sup>**

- Gambling behavior often begins as part of leisure family activities.
- There is a positive correlation between problem gambling behavior and history of family gambling.

### **Families and problem gambling<sup>4</sup>**

- Problem gambling is highly correlated to intimate partner violence.
- A series of meta-analyses revealed that over one-third of problem gamblers report being victims of physical IPV (38%) or perpetrators of physical IPV (37%); and that problem gambling is over-represented in perpetrators of intimate partner violence (11%).
- The intimate relationships and family environments of problem gamblers are often characterized by relationship dissatisfaction, conflict, reduced stability and trust, poor communication, financial deprivation, and confusion of family roles and responsibilities.
- Intimate partners and children of problem gamblers experience reduced emotional and physical health and high rates of maladaptive behaviors.
- "... the impact of gambling on the family system can be devastating and long lasting."<sup>5</sup>
- The presence of gamblers in families is related to increased gambling or other addiction-related behaviors

### **Families and help-seeking behavior for problem gambling<sup>6</sup>**

- Only about 10 % of problem gamblers seek formal assistance for their gambling problems but as many as 50 % reportedly rely on informal help from concerned significant others, including partners, children, other family members, friends and colleagues.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Schwartz, David G.. Roll the Bones: The History of Gambling (pp. 299-300). Winchester Books.

<sup>2</sup> Grun, L., & McKeigue, P.M. (2000). Prevalence of excessive gambling before and after introduction of a national lottery in the United Kingdom: another example of the single distribution theory. *Addiction*, 95 6, 959-66 .

<sup>3</sup> Subramaniam, M., Chong, S.A., Satghare, P., Browning, C., & Thomas, S. (2017). Gambling and family: A two-way relationship. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 6, 689 - 698.

<sup>4</sup> Dowling N, et al (2016) Problem Gambling and Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Trauma Violence Abuse*. 17(1):43-61.

<sup>5</sup> Blaszczynski, A., Richard, D. C., & Nower, L. (Eds.). (2013). *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of disordered gambling*. John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>6</sup> Hing, N., Tiyce, M., Holdsworth, L. et al. All in the Family: Help-Seeking by Significant Others of Problem Gamblers. *Int J Ment Health Addiction* 11, 396–408 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-012-9423-0>