

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Monday, 3 April 2023

NEW REFORMS TO CRACK DOWN ON GAMBLING HARM

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering world leading reforms to ensure Crown Melbourne becomes a global leader in the reduction of harm.

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation Melissa Horne issued a direction that requires the casino's Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct to be updated with further protections to minimise gambling related harm.

The Code sets limits on the length of time a person may gamble at the Casino, with the operator required to enforce 15-minute breaks if a person has been gambling for three continuous hours.

Anyone who has gambled for 12 hours in any 24-hour period will be required to take a break of 24 hours, with no person able to gamble for more than 36 hours in a single week. Crown responsible gambling staff will have powers to exclude them from the casino floor.

The Victorian Government is continuing to ensure the lessons of the Royal Commission into the Casino Operator and License are implemented at Crown. The direction has been developed to implement recommendation 11 of the Royal Commission, which imposes duties on the casino operator to prevent and monitor for gambling harm.

Further guidance for responsible gambling staff is also included in the direction, detailing how and when they should interact with a person demonstrating observable signs of gambling harm – for example, encouraging a patron to take a break from the gambling floor and discussing harm services.

The direction has been developed following consultation with key stakeholders, including gambling harm researchers, advocacy groups, the casino operator and the relevant union.

The casino operator has six months to update its code in accordance with this direction and any breaches of the code may lead to disciplinary action from the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission. The maximum penalty for a breach of the direction is up to \$100 million.

The Minister has also gazetted another direction to gambling advertisers to replace the former "gamble responsibly" taglines on advertisements with new evidence-based warnings that better challenge people to think about their gambling activity and minimise harm.

Some new taglines include "Chances are, you're about to lose," and "You win some. You lose more." The taglines will also be accompanied by details for gambling support services to encourage people to seek help.

Of the 33 recommendations from the Royal Commission, 29 have been either fully implemented or legislated and awaiting commencement in the coming months.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation Melissa Horne

"This Direction reflects my expectations that Crown must aim to be a global leader in the reduction of gambling harm – or lose their license."

"Crown is on track to implement mandatory pre-commitment in all electronic gaming machines by the end of this year. When combined with the strengthened code of conduct, the harm reduction protections will be world leading for a casino of this size."

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