

# VENUE BEST PRACTICE GUIDE



Victorian  
Responsible  
Gambling  
Foundation



# THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The Venue Support Program is an important part of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation's work to:

- reduce the prevalence of problem gambling
- reduce the severity of harm related to gambling
- foster responsible gambling.

This guide highlights some of the excellent practices identified by the Venue Support Program in gaming venues across the state. These practices demonstrate a commitment to high standards and continuous improvement within venues.

The examples of activities can be used to meet and exceed existing Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct requirements to deliver best practice.

The guide is intended as educational material and does not replace or add to any current regulatory or compliance requirements. The Victorian Commission for Liquor and Gambling Regulation remains the source of guidance on compliance issues for venues.

However, venues can use this guide to benchmark their own responsible gambling practices and demonstrate their commitment to providing the safest possible gambling environment.

## SUPPORT USING THE GUIDE

Gambler's Help venue support workers can help venues put this guide into practice as part of the regular support and training they provide.

Help is also available to sporting clubs with gaming venues who participate in the foundation's Sporting Clubs Program and elect to sign the responsible gambling charter.

For more information about the foundation's Venue Support Program and Sporting Clubs Program, contact us on **(03) 9452 2600** or [contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au).



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# THE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING CODE OF CONDUCT: DOING IT WELL

To help venues provide safer gambling environments by applying the Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct effectively, this guide broadly follows the categories in the code. It lists best practice activities according to:

- information about responsible gambling for staff and customers
  - interaction with customers, staff and support services
  - customer complaints and the gambling environment.
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## INFORMATION ABOUT RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING FOR STAFF AND CUSTOMERS

- Provide copies of the code and easy-to-read guides on key requirements to all new gaming staff during induction, and follow up regularly with exercises to reinforce staff knowledge.
- Let gaming room patrons know where they can access the code – through distinct signage and other means.
- Ensure information about responsible gambling is prominently displayed on the venue website and easy to understand.
- Develop a list of responsible gambling messages that can be conveyed over a public address system, on electronic displays or via signage within the gaming room.
- Incorporate Gambler's Help messaging and contact information wherever possible in the gaming room – for example, via signage and electronic displays.
- Include messages about responsible gambling in newsletters to venue or loyalty program members, advertising and other venue communications.
- Provide printed Gambler's Help support materials in a prominent, accessible and visible location.

### INTERACTION WITH CUSTOMERS AND STAFF

- Ensure the responsible gambling officer on each shift is known to staff and clearly identifiable at all times.
- Maintain a policy of recording interactions with customers about responsible gambling by the end of each shift.
- Up-skill and support staff to provide responsible gambling messages in their general interactions and conversations with patrons, and have processes in place for acknowledging their efforts.
- Encourage staff to offer alternative recreational activities or opportunities for breaks to customers who gamble frequently or for long periods of time. This may include other recreational activities offered within the venue.
- Make sure staff know the visible signs of potentially problematic gambling and the protocols for responding appropriately to them, including approaching customers directly.
- Ensure responsible gambling is a standing agenda item at all staff and management meetings.
- Provide clear guidelines on how staff can raise issues about implementation of the code with venue management.
- Have a clear and readily available policy on staff members gambling in the venue.
- Provide information and support to staff members on how to access Gambler's Help and other support services.

### INTERACTION WITH THE VENUE SUPPORT PROGRAM

- Where possible, ensure venue management attends Venue Support Program training to demonstrate engagement and be better equipped to lead on responsible gambling best practices.
- Ensure gaming staff meet or train with the Venue Support Program within three months of commencing employment.

- Host Venue Support Program training at least quarterly and ensure all staff members (gaming and non-gaming) who interact with gaming patrons attend.
- Provide realistic incentives to staff to encourage them to attend responsible gambling training.
- Ensure venue management meets at least quarterly with the local venue support worker.
- Engage fully with Venue Support Program activities and events, including promoting Responsible Gambling Awareness Week.

## CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

- Provide clear information to customers on who to contact about complaints related to responsible gambling and how complaints will be handled by the venue.
- Provide staff with a clear template for recording responsible gambling complaints.

## THE GAMBLING ENVIRONMENT

- Ensure EFTPOS withdrawal facilities are neither overtly promoted within, nor highly visible from within, the gaming room.
- Ensure staff processing EFTPOS transactions receive training from the Venue Support Program (this may include non-gaming staff members).
- Ensure staff actively monitor the gaming area to identify anyone who has joined a self-exclusion program.

## PRE-COMMITMENT AND LOYALTY

- Ensure all gaming room staff are trained to use and are able to promote the use of pre-commitment features on gaming machines.
- Regularly offer demonstrations of pre-commitment features to customers.
- Encourage staff to promote YourPlay to customers as a responsible gambling tool that will assist them in keeping watch on their gambling.
- Ensure gaming staff actively promote the use of YourPlay to customers to encourage customer take-up.

# RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING: TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

This section lists extra practices that are mostly outside the Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct but enable venues to further demonstrate their commitment to responsible gambling.

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Local venue support workers can assist venues to implement the following practices:

- Make layout improvements that create barriers, including minimising visibility of the gaming room, to reduce the likelihood of young children viewing or entering the gaming room.
- Cease promotions likely to encourage underage people into the venue, including 'kids eat free' and discounted children's meal offerings.
- Encourage breaks from gaming machines by serving beverages or food (complimentary or otherwise) only to patrons not physically at the machines.
- Have a staffed reception desk or a staff member at venue or gaming room entrances to discourage underage people from entering the gaming area and to look out for potentially intoxicated patrons.
- Ensure the venue has a clear policy against loan sharking, and that staff and management responses to any observed issues are recorded.
- Keep the gaming area as separate from the non-gaming area as possible in terms of visibility and audibility, to allow non-gambling patrons or those taking a break from gambling to enjoy other parts of the venue.
- Implement a policy of recommending to customers that they take large wins under \$1000 in part or in full by cheque.
- Implement a policy on customers making multiple EFTPOS withdrawals – this may include a threshold that prompts intervention by a staff member.

# CONTACTS AND FURTHER SUPPORT

## VENUE SUPPORT PROGRAM

For more information on the Venue Support Program or this guide:

**Telephone:** (03) 9452 2656

**Email:** [contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au)

**Web:** [responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/for-venues](https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/for-venues)

## VICTORIAN RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING FOUNDATION

For information about other programs and services offered by the foundation:

**Telephone:** (03) 9452 2600

**Email:** [contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au)

**Web:** [responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au](https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au)

## GAMBLER'S HELP

For information on help for people experiencing issues with gambling, as well as help for their families and friends:

**Telephone:** 1800 858 858

**Web:** [gamblershelp.com.au](https://gamblershelp.com.au)

## VICTORIAN COMMISSION FOR GAMBLING AND LIQUOR REGULATION

For information on the regulation of gambling in Victoria and the Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct:

**Telephone:** 1300 182 457

**Email:** [contact@vcglr.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@vcglr.vic.gov.au)

**Web:** [vcglr.vic.gov.au](https://vcglr.vic.gov.au)



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**A Victoria free from gambling-related harm**



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