

Welcome to the Venue Manual

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Responsible Gambling Home

Responsible Gambling

One of the VGCCC's key functions is to foster responsible gambling practices among gambling industry licence holders to minimise harm caused by problem gambling.

This section provides information for commercial licence holders and gaming industry employees on responsible gambling.

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1.0 Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct

The *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* makes it compulsory for certain licensees to have a Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct (Code) in place.

The following licence holders are required to have a Code:

- Gaming venue operators
- Bingo centre operators
- Commercial raffle organisers
- Casino operator
- Wagering and betting licensee
- Public lotteries licensee
- Keno Licensee
- Interactive gaming licensees; and
- Registered bookmakers.

The requirement to have a code does not apply to the conduct of bingo and raffles, where they are run solely by a declared community or charitable organisation, or to the conduct of a trade promotion lottery.

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1.01 Requirement to have a Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct

It is a condition of a venue operator's licence that the venue operator implement a Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct that complies with:

- (a) regulations made for or with respect to Part 4C in Schedule 1; and
- (b) each direction under section 10.6.6(1) that applies in relation to the venue operator.

Responsible Gambling Codes of Conduct

Copies of Codes are listed here:

[Responsible gambling codes of conduct](#)

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1.02 Adopting and amending a Code of Conduct

Copy of code to be provided to Commission

A venue operator must, except where that venue operator has adopted a model code, provide a copy of the code that will be implemented by the venue operator to the Commission for publication on the Commission's website.

A code provided by a venue operator to the Commission and published on the Commission's website will be deemed to be the code that must be implemented by the venue operator.

Amending a code

A code may be amended by the venue operator or, in the case of a model code, the code administrator.

Where a code is amended the venue operator or in the case of a model code the code administrator must provide a copy of the amended code to the Commission.

Model codes

A venue operator can meet the standards and requirements set out in this direction by adopting a model code provided that model code complies with this direction.

Where a venue operator adopts a model code, the model code published on the Commission's website will be deemed to be the code that will be implemented by the venue operator.

A venue operator who has adopted a model code must notify the Commission:

- (a) that the venue operator has adopted a model code; and
- (b) the name of the code administrator whose code has been adopted.

Availability of the code

A code must be available:

- (a) to customers (and must specify how this will occur); and
- (b) where the venue operator has a website, on that website.

Consistency with the Act

A code implemented by a venue operator must:

- (a) meet the requirements of the Act; and
- (b) comply with this and any other relevant Ministerial direction.

Clarity of the code

A code must be written in a manner that will enable it to be readily understood by customers.

As a minimum requirement, a code must be written in plain English and be presented in

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such a way as to be reasonably accessible to customers, including customers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

[Ministerial Direction - Responsible Gambling Codes of Conduct](#)

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1.03 Responsible Gambling Message

A venue operator has a duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent and minimise harm from the operation of gaming machines in the approved venue, including by monitoring the welfare of gaming machine players, discouraging intensive and prolonged gaming machine play and intervening when a person is displaying behaviour that is consistent with gambling harm.

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1.04 Interaction with customers – communications with gamblers

A venue operator must ensure that communications with customers do not:

- (a) induce a person to enter or remain in the gaming machine area;
- (b) induce gaming machine play (with the exception of communication that forms part of a lawful loyalty scheme); or
- (c) reinforce or encourage fallacies or misconceptions about gaming machines, including but not limited to:
 - i. telling a person that he or she can make money playing a gaming machine;
 - ii. telling a person that a gaming machine or gaming machine jackpot has or has not paid, or that it is due to pay, winnings; Victoria Government Gazette S 85 21 February 2020 3
 - iii. discussing luck or superstitions;
 - iv. telling a person that a 'near miss' means the gaming machine is about to pay winnings;
 - v. suggesting or encouraging the belief that a spin on a gaming machine is not independent of another spin on that gaming machine;
 - vi. suggesting or encouraging the belief that there are strategies that a person can use to win when playing a gaming machine (for example, increasing or decreasing the amount bet per line or number of lines on which a bet is made); or
 - vii. telling a person that he or she deserves to win.

A venue operator must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with customers discourage intensive and prolonged gaming machine play.

With the exception of EFTPOS signage, a venue operator must not induce a person to:

- (a) withdraw money, or withdraw more money, from a cash facility; or
- (b) leave the approved venue to obtain money, or obtain more money, to enable that person to play, or to continue to play, a gaming machine.

A venue operator may however direct a person to a cash facility when requested to do so by a customer.

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1.05 Interaction with customers – signs of distress

A venue operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure the gaming machine area and entrances to the gaming machine area are monitored at all times gaming machines are available for gaming.

A venue operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure that customers in the gaming machine area are regularly observed to monitor behaviour that is consistent with gambling harm.

A venue operator must not encourage or induce a person to engage in intensive or prolonged gaming machine play.

A venue operator is expected to ask a person to take a break away from the gaming machine area where an interaction has occurred and that interaction has determined that the person is angry while gaming or has requested assistance as a consequence of their gaming.

A venue operator is expected to interact with a person who has been observed to have been playing gaming machines for a prolonged period without a break and ask that person to take a break away from the gaming machine area.

A venue operator is expected to interact with a person who:

- (a) has been asked to take a break and refuses to take a break away from the gaming machine area;
- (b) plays multiple gaming machines simultaneously; or
- (c) reserves a gaming machine in order to play another gaming machine.

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1.06 Gaming venue staff

A venue operator must ensure that staff do not play a gaming machine on a rostered day of work at the venue where the staff member is employed.

A venue operator must provide information to staff so that they are aware of their increased risk of harm from gambling.

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1.07 Interaction with problem gambling support services

A venue operator is expected to ensure that staff who have day-to-day management of the operation of the approved venue and responsible gambling officers meet with the venue's nominated venue support worker at least once every six months.

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1.08 Pre-commitment Scheme

A venue operator must not encourage a person to play multiple gaming machines simultaneously.

A venue operator must take all reasonable steps to discourage a person from reserving a gaming machine in order to play another gaming machine in the gaming machine area.

During the opening hours of food and beverage facilities outside the gaming machine floor, a venue operator must ensure that a person can order and be served food and beverage without having to enter the gaming machine area.

A venue operator may offer a person seated at or playing a gaming machine food or beverage provided it is offered as part of an interaction with that person.

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1.09 Responsible gambling officer

A venue operator must nominate responsible gambling officers for its approved venue(s).

A responsible gambling officer must be available in the gaming machine area at all times gaming machines are available for gaming.

A venue operator must display prominently in the gaming machine area a notice advising that a responsible gambling officer is available for assistance at all times.

A responsible gambling officer must take all reasonable steps to:

- (a) monitor the gaming machine area and ensure compliance with the Act, regulations and this code;
- (b) ensure that staff record responsible gambling incidents and interventions in the responsible gambling register;
- (c) observe customers who display behaviour that is consistent with gambling harm and provide assistance as necessary;
- (d) provide advice to staff about gambling harm and how to respond to signs of gambling harm: and
- (e) respond to customer enquiries and complaints about the supply of gambling in the approved venue.

A responsible gambling officer must complete prescribed responsible service of gambling training, if any.

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1.10 Responsible Gambling Register

A venue operator must establish and maintain a responsible gambling register and must ensure that details of all responsible gambling incidents and interventions are recorded in this register, including:

- (a) date and time the incident occurred;
- (b) details of the incident;
- (c) details of the intervention made in response to the incident;
- (d) details of the customer's response to the intervention, if known;
- (e) date and time the entry was recorded in the responsible gambling register; and
- (f) the name of the individual, if this is provided voluntarily by that individual.

A venue operator must retain the information in the responsible gambling register for not less than six months from the day it was recorded in the responsible gambling register.

A venue operator must provide a copy of the responsible gambling register to the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission on request.

A venue operator may provide information in the responsible gambling register to a Venue Support Worker for training and development purposes provided that information does not include the name or identifying characteristics of any person.

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1.11 Review of Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct

Section 10.6.8 of the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* (the Act) states that the Minister must cause a review to be undertaken of the operation of directions under section 10.6.6(1) of the Act within each consecutive period of 5 years.

Further, section 10.6.8(3) of the Act notes that the review is to be a review of how effectively the Responsible Gambling Codes of Conduct:

- (a) ensure that gambling products are supplied in a responsible manner; and
- (b) promote practices that support and encourage responsible gambling; and
- (c) assist in minimising harm caused by gambling.

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2.0 Self-Exclusion Program

The *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* makes it compulsory for gaming venue operators to have a self-exclusion program (SEP) in place.

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2.01 Requirement to have a Self-Exclusion Program

[Section 3.4.12A](#) of the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* (the Act) makes it compulsory for Venue Operator Licence holders to have a SEP in place that complies with -

- (a) regulations made for or with respect to Part 4B in Schedule 1 of the Act; and
- (b) the direction under section 10.6.1(1) of the Act.

Note that the Australian Hotels Association and Clubs Victoria currently conduct SEPs on behalf of all venue operators. A copy of these SEPs and a list of those venues that have adopted each of these SEPs may be found here:

[gaming venue operator self-exclusion-programs](#)

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2.02 Administration of a Self-Exclusion Program

An SEP must:

- (a) meet the requirements of the Act; and
- (b) comply with this and any other relevant Ministerial direction.

A venue operator must:

- (a) provide the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (Commission) with a copy of the SEP that will be conducted by the venue operator; or
- (b) where the venue operator provides a SEP that is conducted on its behalf by another person, notify the Commission of the name of the person conducting the SEP program on the venue operator's behalf.

Where a person conducts a SEP on behalf of a venue operator, that person is required to provide a copy of the SEP to the Commission.

An SEP may be amended by a venue operator, or by a person conducting an SEP on behalf of a venue operator.

Where an SEP is amended, the venue operator or the person conducting a SEP on behalf of a venue operator must provide a copy of the amended SEP to the Commission.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.03 Process for Self-Excluding

An SEP must establish a process for self-exclusion and must specify the steps a person:

- (a) needs to take to voluntarily self-exclude;
- (b) must take to revoke a decision to self-exclude; and
- (c) must take to vary the terms of a self-exclusion.

An SEP must be designed so that:

- (a) a person considering self-exclusion is not deterred by unnecessary administrative requirements and complexities; and
- (b) there is capacity to assist a person who chooses to self-exclude to also self-exclude from gaming venues that have a different SEP.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.04 Duration of self-exclusion

An SEP must identify:

- (a) how long a customer's decision to self-exclude will last; and
- (b) how that period can be extended or revoked.

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2.05 The provision of information to customers

An SEP must establish a process for self-exclusion and must specify the steps a person:

- (a) needs to take to voluntarily self-exclude;
- (b) must take to revoke a decision to self-exclude; and
- (c) must take to vary the terms of a self-exclusion.

An SEP must be designed so that:

- (a) a person considering self-exclusion is not deterred by unnecessary administrative requirements and complexities; and
- (b) there is capacity to assist a person who chooses to self-exclude to also self-exclude from gaming venues that have a different SEP.

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2.06 Identification of a self-excluded person in the gaming machine area

An SEP must:

- (a) require the venue operator to take reasonable steps to ensure that a self-excluded person does not enter the gaming machine area of the venue;
- (b) detail the procedure that will be adopted to detect self-excluded persons who enter the gaming machine area of the venue; and
- (c) detail the procedure that will be adopted when a self-excluded person is detected in the gaming machine area.

Any procedure for detecting self-excluded persons specified in an SEP must have due regard for the privacy and dignity of the self-excluded person.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.07 Staff Training

An SEP must detail the training that will be provided to gaming staff to enable them to:

- (a) help a person seeking information about self-exclusion or wishing to self-exclude;
- (b) identify self-excluded persons; and
- (c) understand how to appropriately manage persons who have self-excluded.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.08 Availability of Support Services

An SEP must require a venue operator, or a person who manages an SEP on the venue operator's behalf, to maintain regular contact with problem gambling support services and to develop agreed protocols in order to facilitate:

- (a) referral of a person to problem gambling support services; and
- (b) the enhancement of the venue operator's SEP.

An SEP must detail how regular contact will occur.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.09 Data Management

An SEP must require the venue operator, or a person who manages an SEP program on the venue operator's behalf, to keep a record of the number of:

- (a) persons who have self-excluded;
- (b) self-excluded persons detected in the gaming machine area of the venue (including data on repeated breaches); and
- (c) self-excluded persons who extend or revoke their self-exclusion.

An SEP must specify how this information will be collected, retained and provided to the Commission.

Data relating to self-exclusion must be collected and maintained in a manner that:

- (a) enables the Commission to monitor compliance by the venue operator with the SEP; and
- (b) respects the privacy of persons who have self-excluded.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.10 Complaints Process

An SEP must specify a process for resolving complaints from a person about the operation of the program.

The complaints process must:

- (a) specify how a complaint can be made;
- (b) specify how information about complaints will be collected and retained; and
- (c) enable the Commission to monitor compliance with the complaints process.

[Ministerial Direction - Self-Exclusion Program](#)

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2.11 Responsible Gambling Register

In accordance with the requirements of their SEP a venue must have established processes in place to ensure that all responsible gambling related matters are recorded in a responsible gambling register. All relevant staff should be informed of the register, where it is located in the venue and how to use it.

The responsible gambling register should have the provision to record all of the following information:

- (a) the date and time of the occurrence
- (b) the names of employees who observed or dealt with the matter
- (c) the name of the customer involved (if available)
- (d) a description of what occurred
- (e) the details of any documentation completed or received by gaming venue staff that relate to the matter
- (f) the action taken, comments made by any relevant party or details of any follow-up action required or agreed to
- (g) confirmation of venue sign-off of the matter by a senior representative such as the responsible gambling officer, nominee or manager.

The customer's right to privacy and confidentiality should always be respected in relation to a responsible gambling matter. Only licensed gaming industry employees, Victoria Police and VGCCC Inspectors should be provided with access to the register. The register must be made available at all times to VGCCC Inspectors upon request.

[Responsible Gambling Register Fact Sheet](https://www.vcglr.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/uploadGambling_fact_sheet_-_Responsible_Gambling_Register.pdf)

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2.12 Review of Self Exclusion Program

Section 10.6.3(1) of the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* (the Act) states that the Minister must cause a review to be undertaken of the operation of directions under section 10.6.6(1) of the Act within each consecutive period of 5 years.

Further, section 10.6.3(3) of the Act notes that the review is to be a review of how effectively the SEPs assist people to exclude from approved venues and limit their access to gaming.

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3.0 YourPlay Pre-commitment Scheme

YourPlay, the Victorian Government's pre-commitment scheme, empowers players to make informed decisions about their gaming machine play.

The scheme allows them to:

- set limits of time or money spent
- track their gaming machine play across Victoria.

YourPlay is operating on all gaming machines in the state, including those at the Melbourne casino.

Further resources and information about your obligations may be found here:

[YourPlay information for venue operators page](#)

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4.0 Responsible Service of Gaming Training Course

All employees working in gaming machine areas while open to the public must complete the approved Responsible Service of Gaming training course if they are employed in a Victorian gaming venue and:

- work in the gaming machine area of a gaming venue; and
- have more than incidental contact or interaction with players of gaming machines in the gaming machine area.

Training is managed through the Department of Justice and Community Safety and available online via the [Department of Justice and Community Safety website](#)