



## Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wind Creek Presents Mitigation Plan to PA Gaming Control Board on Children Left Unattended at Their Casino**

*Board also places two more parents on involuntary self-exclusion list*

**HARRISBURG, PA:** Representatives of Wind Creek Casino Bethlehem today outlined to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (Board) at its public meeting a mitigation plan to enhance the facility's efforts to deter and detect instances in which a parent or guardian leaves a child unattended at its property.

Wind Creek's plan is in response to increased concern over the past year by the Board of the number of incidents reported of children being left unattended in vehicles, hotel rooms or other locations in the casino's facility. Accordingly, Wind Creek examined the years 2018-2021 and uncovered 147 incidents involving 268 children which were left unattended. The age range for these children was 2-months to 17-years-old, with minors being left unattended for periods ranging from just 1 minute to over 9 hours.

Gaming Control Board Executive Director Kevin O'Toole said Wind Creek's efforts continue a proactive approach by Pennsylvania casinos to combat this problem and should be lauded for its proactive approach. He noted that this is the second plan to mitigate occurrences of unattended children at casinos brought to the Board following one presented in November 2021 by Boyd Gaming, operator of the Valley Forge Casino Resort in Montgomery County.

"Since the Board publicly addressed this serious situation, we have seen the casinos step up their efforts to detect children left unattended on their property while adults responsible for their care gamble," said O'Toole. "All casinos are taking this matter seriously and we expect more specific plans, such as those implemented at Valley Forge and Wind Creek casinos, to come before us in the near future."

A copy of the Wind Creek Casino's Memorandum of Understanding, which includes specifics about the mitigation plan, is available at this [link](#).

The Board also today placed two adults who left children unattended at a casino on the PGCB's Involuntary Exclusion List that prohibits individuals from entering and gambling at all Pennsylvania casinos. Additionally, offenders may also face criminal prosecution for endangering the welfare of a child or children.

#### DETAILS OF INCIDENTS

- The parent of a 10-year-old child was placed on the Involuntary Exclusion List after leaving him unattended in a hotel room for over 2 hours while she gambled at slot machines. The boy left the room during that time and was discovered by security officers.
- The parent of a 13-year-old child was placed on the Involuntary Exclusion List after casino staff found him alone in the bus lobby. The boy was unattended for 36 minutes while his mother played slot machines.

In making these decisions regarding the two adults, the Board is reminding the gambling public to not leave children unattended in the parking lot or garage, a hotel, or other venue at a casino, not only

because of the possible exclusion from all Pennsylvania casinos and prosecution, but more importantly due to the possible safety hazard to the child.

In a related matter, the Board received and rejected a request by a woman who was placed on the Involuntary Exclusion List in October 2019 for leaving her infant child unattended in a vehicle to gamble on slot machines. The Board unanimously voted that the woman failed to cite reasons which would justify her removal from the Exclusion List and she will remain banned from entering casinos in the Commonwealth.

The next meeting of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is scheduled for 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 15, 2022 in the PGCB's Public Hearing Room located on the second floor of the Strawberry Square Complex in Harrisburg.

### **About the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board**

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is tasked to oversee all aspects of gambling involving 16 land-based casinos, online casino games, retail and online sports wagering, and Video Gaming Terminals (VGTs) at qualified truck stops, along with the regulation of online fantasy sports contests.

The land-based casino industry in Pennsylvania consists of six racetrack (Category 1) casinos, five stand-alone (Category 2) casinos, two resort (Category 3) casinos and three mini-casinos (Category 4). Casino expansion will continue over the next couple of years with the anticipated openings of up to two additional Category 4 casinos. A significant job generator in the Commonwealth, casinos and the other types of Board-regulated gaming is expected to generate over \$2 billion in tax revenue during the 2021/2022 State Fiscal Year.

Additional information about both the PGCB's gaming regulatory efforts and Pennsylvania's gaming industry can be found at <https://gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov>. You can also follow the agency on Twitter by choosing **@PAGamingControl**.

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