



Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2022

PA Gaming Control Board Warning Adults Visiting Casinos During Holiday Weekend to Not Leave Children Unattended

HARRISBURG, PA: The Thanksgiving Holiday weekend is one of the busiest periods of the year for Pennsylvania casinos. That is why the PA Gaming Control Board (PGCB) is emphasizing its warning to casino patrons to not bring children onto the casino grounds and leave them unattended.

The PGCB has tracked an alarming number of situations in which adults go to a casino and leave children under their care unattended in their parked vehicles or in hotel rooms. This spurred the launch of the “Don’t Gamble with Kids” awareness campaign to bring this issue to light.

“Leaving minors unattended in the parking lot or garage, a hotel, or other venue at a casino creates a potentially unsafe and dangerous environment for the children,” says PGCB Executive Director Kevin O’Toole. “In its role to protect the public, the Board hopes to bring awareness of this very important issue through the ‘Don’t Gamble with Kids’ campaign.”

Since the start of 2022, the PGCB has recorded 269 incidents involving 441 minors who were left unattended while one or more of the adults responsible for them chose to gamble in a casino. One initiative of the campaign is to let adult caregivers who may choose to leave a child unattended to enter a casino know of potential consequences of their actions:

- Up to a lifetime ban by the individual casino in which the incident took place;
- Placement on the Board’s publicly available Exclusion List, in which individuals lose the privileges of entering all casinos in the Commonwealth;
- Criminal charges filed by law enforcement; and,
- Investigation by the applicable county’s Department of Children and Youth Services.

In addition, the PGCB’s Don’t Gamble with Kids campaign is aimed at making the general public who visit casinos to be aware of the problem and be diligent in looking out for children at risk so they can immediately report the situation to casino or hotel security.

“We are hopeful this campaign will raise awareness not only for those who gamble and are responsible for children, but also for the gaming public who we hope will be more diligent in looking out for children at risk,” O’Toole says.

Public service announcements for the “Don’t Gamble with Kids” campaign are running statewide. More information including social media spots that can be shared and posted by the public can be accessed www.DontGamblewithKids.org. Additionally, since adults who leave children unattended may be exhibiting signs of a compulsive gambling problem, there is a link on the campaign’s website that provides the individual with information on the Board’s compulsive and problem gambling program website, www.responsibleplay.pa.gov.

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 generated 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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