

GAMBLING INFORMATION #1

The role of local government in managing the impact of gambling

Local government has an important role in managing the impacts of gambling in local communities, particularly for electronic gaming machines.

What is the role of local government in managing the impact of gambling?

The Victorian *Local Government Act 1989* requires all local governments to provide the best outcomes for the community, while having regard for the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.

Local governments are required to protect and promote health and well-being under the Victorian *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and apply the 'precautionary principle' to preventing and controlling public health risk.

Local government has a statutory responsibility to consider the social and economic impacts of gaming machines in their municipality under Clause 52.28 of the Victorian Planning Provisions.

Why should local government be involved in managing the impact of gambling?

- In 2011-12, Victorians lost \$2.7 billion on electronic gaming machines (EGMs). Approximately \$1 billion of these losses are paid as taxes to the Victorian Government.
- Local government has an important role to play in managing the impacts of gambling in local communities, particularly EGMs.
- EGMs are associated with higher levels of problem gambling, with approximately 80 per cent of problem gamblers having issues with EGMs.
- Problem gambling imposes adverse health, emotional and financial impacts on the gambler the gambler's family, friends and colleagues, and the local community.

**Customer
Service Centres**
Cranbourne
Centro Cranbourne

Narre Warren
Magid Drive

Narre Warren South
Amberly Park
Shopping Centre

Telephone: 9705 5200
Facsimile: 9704 9544

TTY: 9705 5568
TIS: 131 450
(Translating and
Interpreting Service)

Magid Drive
PO Box 1000
Narre Warren VIC 3805

Email:
caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au
Website:
www.casey.vic.gov.au

This information page was developed by the Local Government Working Group on Gambling (LGWGOG) which comprises of a group of local government professionals sponsored by the Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA).



What actions can Local Governments undertake to manage the impact of gambling?

Councils can undertake many policy, regulatory and advocacy actions to manage the impact of gambling including:

- **Develop a Council Gambling Policy** – This should clearly outline a council's position on gambling and what actions they will undertake to protect their community from the impacts of gambling
- **Incorporate council's position on gambling into the Municipal Public Health Plan (MPHP)** – This should emphasise the importance of harm minimisation in managing the health and wellbeing impacts of gambling in local communities
- **Advocacy** – Local governments can lobby both Australian and Victorian Governments to improve regulatory and policy responses to gambling
- **Assess gaming applications** – Councils are required to assess the impacts of new EGMs in their municipality under the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003* and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Councils can respond to gaming applications to the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR)
- **Develop a Local Planning Policy for electronic gaming machines** – Under the Victorian *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, local councils have the power to create local planning policies. The purpose of a Local Planning Policy for EGMs is to give council's the ability to regulate their location and movement in a municipality. It can help to minimise the harmful impacts of EGMs on local communities, particularly socially and economically disadvantaged communities which have a higher level of losses from gaming.

Key messages for local government	Recommendation
Advocate for council's position on gambling	Develop or update council gambling policy Make submissions to government inquiries on gambling Attend forums and meet with government and industry representatives
Assess gaming applications	Make submissions on gaming applications to the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation
Regulate the movement and location of EGMs	Develop a local planning policy for EGMs, which gives a council the ability to regulate the movement and location of EGMs in their municipality, and help to minimise the harmful impacts of EGMs in local communities

Gambler's Help Services

Gambler's Help

- This is a 24 hour phone counselling service. The website has some self-help tools.
- 1800 858 858
- www.problemgambling.vic.gov.au

Gambling Help Online

- This provides free, online counselling by trained staff, including live counselling and email support. The website also has self-help tools.
- www.gamblinghelponline.org.au
- Gambler's Help service programs are funded through the Community Support Fund and were established with the introduction of gaming machines in Victoria.

Metropolitan services

Region	Gambler's Help service	Phone
Eastern metropolitan suburbs	EACH http://www.each.com.au/gamblers-help-eastern/	1300 131 973
Inner metropolitan suburbs	The Salvation Army	(03) 9653 3250
Northern metropolitan suburbs	Banyule Community Health	1300 133 445
Southern metropolitan suburbs	Bentleigh Bayside Community Health http://www.ghsouthern.org.au/	(03) 9575 5353
Western metropolitan suburbs	https://www.ipchealth.com.au/	(03) 9296 1234

Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR)

- 49 Elizabeth Street, North Richmond, VIC 3121
- 1300 1 VCGLR (1300 182 457)
- contact@vcglr.vic.gov.au
- <http://www.vcglr.vic.gov.au>