

NT Casino Code of Practice for Gaming Harm Minimisation 2023

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NT	Northern Territory
This Code	Casino Code of Practice for Gaming Harm Minimisation 2023
Cth	Commonwealth

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Preamble

For many people, gaming is an enjoyable entertainment activity that doesn't cause any issues or problems.

Unfortunately, some people can experience a loss of control from their gaming. This can result in problems for themselves, their families, their employer and the community.

The NT Casino Code of Practice for Gaming Harm Minimisation 2023 (Code) aims to minimise these harms through the creation of responsible gaming environments, in line with best practice and community expectations.

It sets out the minimum requirements for Northern Territory (NT) casinos and their staff to reduce harms associated with problem gambling.

What is harm minimisation?

Harm minimisation allows individuals to make informed decisions about how they gamble. This is achieved through three initiatives:

1. Informed choice: the ability for an individual to make an informed decision on whether to engage in gaming activities
2. Consumer control: measures designed to direct individuals and their actions and be sufficient to address the variety of gaming options available in a casino
3. Venue / game restrictions: regulatory limitations to ensure the casino licensee provides a safe gaming environment and conducts their business with integrity.

Through the actions and ownership by individuals, communities, support services, the regulator and the gaming industry, socially acceptable outcomes can be achieved.

What is problem gambling?

In the Menzies School of Health Research 2018 Gambling Prevalence and Wellbeing Survey Report, 1.9% or 1 in 52 gamblers were classified as experiencing problem gambling.

The Menzies Report stated that the NT has the highest rates of problem gambling, moderate risk and low risk problem gambling compared with the most recent estimates from other Australian jurisdictions. Problem gambling often impacts on those beyond the individual, such as family, friends, employers and those in the broader community.

Problem gambling is characterised by difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling which leads to negative impacts for the gambler, others, or for the community.

The negative impacts resulting from problem gambling can broadly include, but are not limited to:

- excessive financial losses relative to the gambler's income
- adverse personal effects on the gambler, family, friends and work colleagues as well as the broader community
- adverse physical and mental health issues
- negative impacts on work performance
- legal problems.

However, the negative impacts from problem gambling can run much deeper. From a personal perspective, a problem gambler may experience:

- stress
- depression
- anxiety
- poor health
- thoughts of suicide and sometimes, attempts
- isolation from family and friends
- bankruptcy

- theft, fraud and other crimes.

From the family and friends perspective of a problem gambler, they may experience:

- neglect by the gambler
- the gambler missing family functions or other obligations
- regular requests for money
- pawning or selling family items
- arguments over time and money spent gambling
- domestic and family violence
- children may be left unsupervised or neglected due to the time spent gambling
- family breakdown.

Expected outcomes

The Code has been established to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Minimise the extent of gaming-related harm to individuals and the broader community
2. Enable people to make informed decisions about their gaming activities
3. Enable all people affected by gambling to have access to timely and appropriate assistance and information
4. Promote a shared understanding between individuals, the community, the gaming industry and regulator of responsible gaming practices and an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all parties
5. Ensure gaming providers have safe and supportive environments for the provision of gaming products and services.

The NT Casino Code of Practice for Gaming Harm Minimisation 2023

This Code includes practices that can lead to best practice in the provision of gaming products and services.

Consideration should be given to ensuring people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can access the relevant prevention and protection measures outlined in the Code.

While the principles of this Code are intended to apply to casinos, the method of achieving them will vary from each casino according to the form of gaming offered.

The Code may be gazetted under the following legislation and penalties exist for licensees that contravene or fail to comply with the Code:

- section 79A of the *Gaming Control Act 1993* (for casino licensees only)

NT casinos will be required to demonstrate implementation of the Code to achieve the stated outcomes.

Appropriate records corroborating this are required and must be made available periodically as required by the Director of Gaming Control.

1. Provision of information

NT casino licensees are to make available information that will allow their patrons to make informed decisions about their gaming habits, and promote responsible gaming messages.

The information that must be displayed includes the following.

1.1. Harm minimisation signage displayed

Gaming harm minimisation signage and multi-venue self-exclusion information, including contact details to a responsible gaming support service, must be made available in all gaming areas, within sight of ATMs, and cash out facilities.

Information must be displayed in prominent areas and inside restrooms. Where possible, harm minimisation signage should remind patrons to set limits, take breaks in play and only spend what they can afford.

Information must be made available to patrons on request and clearly displayed on the casino licensee's website.

1.2. Pre-dominant cultural groups

Where the government or another recognised support service has provided information and materials in the language of the predominant cultural group, casino licensees will be required to display this material at ATMs and in prominent areas.

2. Interaction with patrons and community

To support early intervention and prevention strategies, NT casino licensees and gaming support services are encouraged to establish appropriate links in the NT.

2.1. Harm minimisation designated employee

The casino licensee must ensure that there is at least one harm minimisation employee available to attend in each declared gaming area whenever the casino is operating.

A person is eligible to be designated as a harm minimisation employee only if the person has successfully completed the nationally accredited unit of competency 'SITHGAM001' – Provide Responsible Gambling Services'.

2.2. Patron complaints

The casino licensee must have a process in place for managing and resolving patron complaints, including any complaints related to the provision of gaming and this Code.

Complainants in all unresolved gaming disputes will be advised of the presence of, and their right to consult, a NT Gaming Inspector.

2.3. Incident records

The casino licensee must ensure they record all actions taken by staff in assisting people in accordance with the Code through the casino's incident register.

The register will need to include the following information:

- date, time, location and reason for the assistance
- name and address of the patron (or description of person where this information is unavailable)
- the name of the staff member involved
- the action taken.

The casino licensee must ensure they regularly review the register to identify a pattern of behaviour that indicates early stages of experiencing gaming harms requiring intervention.

A copy of this register must be provided to authorised inspectors on request.

2.4. Staff assistance

The casino licensee is to recognise that many of their employees are conducting duties in a gaming environment that could make them vulnerable to gaming harm.

The casino licensee shall include in their gaming harm policies and procedures, measures that will address staff welfare.

Such measures may include staff training on:

- how to engage in lower-risk gaming
- identifying a family member or colleague who may be experiencing gaming harm

- how to assist a family member or colleague
- how to seek assistance for themselves.

Staff harm minimisation policies should ensure that staff are aware that support is available without the issue being disclosed to managers and supervisors.

3. Training and skills development

NT casino licensees must ensure that every employee whose responsibilities involve the provision or supervision of gaming services has completed the following.

3.1. New staff required training

All new staff engaged in the provision of gaming services, must complete the nationally accredited unit of competency 'SITHGAM001' – Provide Responsible Gambling Services' within three (3) months of commencing employment.

3.2. Refresher training

All staff engaged in the provision of gaming services, must undertake the approved refresher training every three (3) years in accordance with the schedule determined by the Director of Gaming Control.

3.3. Record of training

Records relating to the staff's training as set out above should be maintained and kept as a part of the gaming harm minimisation records.

This register should include staff name, date of training and type of training. A copy of this register must be provided to authorised inspectors on request.

4. Exclusion provisions

NT casino licensees are to make available the option of patrons excluding themselves from the gaming site to patrons who feel they are developing harm with gaming.

4.1. Patron responsibility

Patrons will be encouraged to take responsibility for their gaming activity, and adherence to any exclusion deeds they enter into.

Information must be made available to patrons on request and clearly displayed on the casino licensee's website.

4.2. Multi-venue self-exclusion procedures

The casino licensee must be registered for the NT's multi-venue self-exclusion system or have available the paper-based self-exclusion form.

Procedures with clear, supporting documentation are to be implemented and all staff need to be aware of a venue's self-exclusion procedures.

4.3. Online notification and completed self-exclusion forms

Casino management, harm minimisation designated employees, gaming staff and security staff are to make themselves aware of notifications of online self-exclusion and completed self-exclusion forms.

4.4. Support contact information

The casino licensee must offer support contact information to any patron who seeks self-exclusion, or express a concern that they have a gambling problem.

The support contact information to appropriate agencies must be clearly displayed on the casino licensee's website.

4.5. Correspondence or promotional material

The casino licensee must not send correspondence or promotional material to patrons who are excluded from their services or who request that this information not be sent to them.

5. Physical environment

NT casino licensees must maintain a safe environment to protect the interests of gaming patrons themselves, their friends and family, and a physical environment that is consistent with gaming harm minimisation.

5.1. Passage of time

To assist patrons in being aware of the passage of time, casino licensees must prominently display the correct time to any person participating in gaming.

5.2. Breaks in play

The casino licensee will implement practices to ensure customers are discouraged from participating in extended, intensive and repetitive play.

Such practices may include:

- the action the casino licensee will take when they identify a patron who has played continuously for 6 hours or more
- staff notifying supervisors of patrons who have been gaming for long periods without a break
- encouraging patrons to take breaks in play.

5.3. New and emerging gaming products

Prior to the introduction of new gaming products or services, including emerging technology, the casino licensee will consider the potential impact on gaming behaviours through the completion of a risk assessment.

6. Minors

NT casino licensees are to adopt appropriate strategies to ensure minors are prohibited from gaming and not induced to gamble.

6.1. Unattended minors

A parent or guardian who brings a person under-the-age-of-18 (minor) to an area of the casino that permits minors must not leave the minor unattended.

The casino licensee will check car parks and surroundings, under their control, with the aim of reducing the risk of minors being left unattended.

(6.1 Does not apply to the casino's hotel and resort recreation areas)

6.2. Minors prohibited – declared gaming areas

Minors are strictly prohibited from declared gaming areas within a casino licensed premise. This area is to be clearly marked and separated from the general amenities.

The casino licensee shall ensure signage is placed in a prominent position at each entrance to the approved gaming areas.

6.3. Minor activities – no gaming

Activities run by casino licensee for minors must not promote any aspect of gaming and should not be conducted in close proximity to gaming activities.

6.4. Minors advertising – no gaming

Advertising displays and point of sale material for gaming products must not be directed at minors.

Advertising must not portray minors participating in gaming, encourage a minor to gamble, or be set up in an area specifically to target minors.

6.5. Minors – staff members

A person under-the-age-of-18 (minor) is not to be employed in any capacity by a casino licensee in relation to the provision of gaming, inclusive of Keno.

A minor shall not be employed in any capacity that would require access to or through the casino licensee's approved gaming area.

A casino licensee may employ a minor to work in the licensed premises, such as food and beverage, however only with the consent of the Director of Liquor Licensing.

7. Financial transactions

Financial transactions associated with gaming are to be undertaken in a harm minimisation manner.

7.1. ATMs – signage

Gaming harm minimisation signage, including contact details to a responsible gaming support service, must be displayed within sight of ATMs.

7.2. ATMs – location

ATMs must not be located at the entry to gaming areas, or within the casino licensee's approved gaming area.

ATMs must be located in an area so that patron activity can be monitored.

7.3. ATMs – no credit

ATM facilities will have access only to debit accounts; a cash advance from credit accounts will not be permitted.

8. Advertising and promotions

Advertising and promotions are to be delivered in an honest and harm minimisation manner with consideration given to the potential impact on people adversely affected by gaming.

8.1. Code of ethics

Gaming advertising must comply with the relevant legislation e.g. Advertising Code of Ethics, FreeTV Australia Code of Practice.

Gaming advertising must be conducted in a responsible manner and take into account the potential adverse impact it may have on minors, people experiencing gaming related harm, and people who are at risk of developing negative consequences associated with their gaming.

Advertising must not give the impression that gaming is a reasonable strategy for financial betterment.

8.2. Accurate details

Gaming advertising, marketing and promotions must inform patrons in a clearly defined way through applicable terms, conditions and limitation.

Gaming advertising, marketing and promotions must not be deceptive about odds, prizes or chances of winning, must not be misleading, and must not offer a false understanding of how gaming technologies work.

Advertising must include sufficient information for a reasonable person to understand the overall return to player or odds of winning.

8.3. Inducement to engage in gaming

Advertising, should centre on entertainment purposes and not promote gaming in any manner, which, in the opinion of the Director of Gaming Control is an 'inducement to engage in gaming'.

Casino licensees must not offer any product to a patron on the condition of gaming, however the casino licensee may reward a patron for their patronage in accordance with their rewards/loyalty program.

8.4. Acceptable patron loyalty programs

A casino licensee may offer a patron loyalty program which:

- is conducted in accordance with published terms and conditions
- is advertised and promoted in a manner consistent with clauses 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 of this Code
- offers rewards proportionate to gaming activity
- can produce an activity statement to the patron within 72 hours of the request.

8.5. External signage

Advertising on the exterior of the casino licensed premises shall be conducted in a responsible manner and take into account the potential adverse impact it may have on minors, people experiencing gaming related harm, and people who are at risk of developing negative consequences associated with their gaming.

8.6. Notices of winnings paid

Advertising of individuals' winnings paid should only be displayed within the casino licensee's premises and not externally in public spaces including online.

Personal particulars of winners are only to be published with their consent.

8.7. Alcohol consumption

The casino licensee will ensure no advertising depicts or promotes the irresponsible consumption of alcohol while engaged in gaming activities.

9. Participation in gaming research and evaluation

NT casino licensees have a social responsibility to participate in research and evaluation activities associated with gaming.

NT casino licensees must participate in all gaming research projects endorsed by the Director of Gaming Control.

10. Privacy policy

NT casino licensees must maintain the privacy of player information and must ensure that there is no unauthorised or inappropriate disclosure of personal information obtained or kept under this Code.