



**Victorian Bookmakers' Association**

*Always a Better Bet!*

# **Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct**

**November 2009**

(updated January 2018)

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THIS CODE IS MADE PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE GAMBLING  
REGULATION ACT 2003 AND IS APPROVED BY THE VICTORIAN COMMISSION FOR  
GAMBLING REGULATION.

THIS CODE RECORDS MY COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE  
STANDARDS SO AS TO ENSURE THAT THE CONDUCT OF MY BUSINESS WILL  
FOSTER RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING.

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## 1. Legislation and Regulation

I will comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements and co-operate with the Commission as the body charged with the responsibility for approving monitoring my compliance with the requirements with the requirements of this Code.

## 2. Availability of Code

I will undertake the following actions to make this Code available to my customers:

- I will display a copy of this Code on my website (if applicable).
- If I conduct my business at a venue, I will have a copy of this Code with me and ensure that it is made available to my customers upon request.
- A copy of this Code will be made available to my telephone and internet betting account holders upon request.

A generic version of this Code is available from the Victorian Bookmakers' Association (VBA) website at: <http://vicbookmakers.com.au/>

## 3. Responsible Gambling Message

I am committed to ensuring that my customers bet with me responsibly.

I will communicate my responsible gambling message (as outlined in the 'Definitions' section of this Code) by ensuring that the message is displayed in all betting tickets issued by me at a venue. The message will also be displayed in a prominent position on my website (if applicable).

The responsible gambling message will be communicated to my telephone and/or internet betting account customers (if applicable) via the inclusion of the message on the relevant account opening application form.

In addition, to promote awareness of the Code to my established account customers, I will endeavour to ensure that any written communications I have with these customers (e.g. the provision of a statement of account) incorporate my responsible gambling message.

## 4. Responsible Gambling Information

I am aware that information regarding responsible gambling is available through the Gambler's Help website at <http://www.responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/getting-help> or by phoning the free call, 24 hour, Gambler's Helpline on 1800 858 858 or the Gambler's Help Youthline on 1800 262 376.

I will ensure my website (if applicable) incorporates a prominent link to the Gambler's Help website. Furthermore, if a customer indicates to me that he or she has a gambling problem, I shall direct them to Gambler's Help for further information and support.

In addition, once the relevant responsible gambling materials have been finalised, I will have available at any venue where I work a responsible gambling kit, the contents of which I will make available upon request to my customers. This kit will include information about:

- How to gamble responsibly.
- How to make and keep a pre-commitment decision.
- The availability of gambling support services.
- Restrictions that apply to the payment of winnings by cheque and the provision of credit or the lending of money for the purposes of gambling.

The materials contained in this kit will also be made available to any customer who opens a telephone or internet betting account with me.

## 5. Gambling Product Information

The conduct of my business is subject to provisions of the Gambling Regulation Act 2003 (the Act) and the Racing Act. My betting with customers is governed by rules made by the relevant racing controlling bodies. Current rules can be perused at the following websites:

- Racing Victoria (<https://rv.racing.com/>)
  - The relevant rules include the Rules of Racing of Racing Victoria (incorporating the Australian Rules of Racing, the Local Rules of Racing and the Rules of Betting), Bookmaker Licence Rules, Bookmaker Sports Betting Rules, Bookmaker's Telephone Betting Rules and Bookmaker's Internet Betting Rules. These rules are located within the Industry section of the website.
- Harness Racing Victoria (<http://www.hrv.org.au/>)
  - The Bookmaker and Betting Rules are incorporated as part of the Victorian Local Rules for Harness Racing.

- Greyhound Racing Victoria (<http://www.grv.org.au/>)
  - The Betting and Bookmaker Rules are contained within the Rulebook Section of the website.

Any customer who requests information about the rules which govern my Bookmaking operations will be directed to these websites or, if I am conducting my business at a race meeting, may be directed to the relevant controlling body betting supervisor for further information.

Information regarding bookmaker betting rules which apply for the conduct of Mixed Sport Gatherings and Club Betting Events can be obtained from the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Department of Justice on telephone 03 8684 1903 or from <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/>.

Helpful information regarding how to place a bet with a Bookmaker is also available from the Victorian Bookmakers' Association (VBA) via its website <http://vicbookmakers.com.au/>.

I will ensure that my website (if applicable) incorporates an appropriate link to any controlling body rules relevant to the conduct of my bookmaking operations.

## 6. Customer Loyalty Scheme

I do not offer a loyalty scheme as defined in the Act to my customers.

If such a scheme were to be offered by me in the future, then all participating customers will be provided with full particulars of the scheme with in writing or via my website (if applicable).

## 7. Pre-Commitment Strategy

Consistent with my commitment to responsible gambling I will implement strategies to allow my customers to make a pre-commitment decision when betting with me.

In the case of internet betting, my computer software will include a facility which will allow account customers to set up betting limits on their accounts. This service will be made available upon the opening of the account or at any time thereafter.

In the case of telephone betting, I will offer a service whereby account customers may establish betting limits with me. This service will be made available upon the opening of the account of at any time thereafter.

Customers at a venue can make a pre-commitment request to me at any time.

## 8. Interaction with my Customers

I will interact with my customers so as to foster responsible gambling. I will do this by:

- Ensuring communication of my responsible gambling message as provided for in this Code.
- Having my responsible gambling materials with me when I am conducting my business at a venue, and ensuring that these materials are otherwise available to my customers as provided for in this Code.
- Ensuring that I and my employees are up to date with responsible gambling issues and have available contact details of Gambler's Help and like services.
- Not accepting bets from any customer displaying indicators of distress that may be related to problem gambling.
- Providing appropriate information as to help available to any customer that requests information about or assistance with a gambling problem.
- Immediately responding to any request by a customer (either personally, by telephone or online) for voluntary exclusion from betting with me either indefinitely or for a fixed period.

All my interactions with customers must and will respect their right to privacy.

## 9. Interaction with my Employees

Employees may bet with me when I am conducting my business.

OR

I do not allow my employees to bet with me at any time.

*(Please delete whichever option is not applicable)*

If an employee indicates to me that he or she has a gambling problem, I shall direct them to Gambler's Help services and make available to her or her my responsible gambling materials. All my interactions with customers must and will respect their right to privacy.

I will encourage my employees to be aware of responsible gambling issues. This Code will form part of the induction information given to all new employees when they commence their employment. In addition, all of my employees will be provided with training about the purpose, contents and procedures of this Code.

I will record relevant training details, including the date and the nature of the training that has been provided to my employees, in my Training Register. The Commission may, at any time, inspect this Register.

Employees who effectively implement and adopt the practices in this Code will be appropriately recognised by me. Any matters raised by my employees about the operation of this Code should be directed to me for attention.

## 10. Interaction with Problem Gambling Support Services

I will contact Gambler's Help services at least annually to obtain updated publications including any advice of changes to contact details or support services they have available.

Once this information is obtained, I will ensure it is communicated to my employees, as well as ensuring this it is made available for use with my customers, as soon as practicable, after it is received.

I will record relevant details of this contact, including when the contact was made and who I spoke with, in my Contact Register. The Commission may, at any time, inspect this register.

## 11. Customer Complaints – Responsible Gambling

The below complaints process is limited to compliance with the requirements of this Code.

- A customer with a complaint about the operation of this Code can make this complaint to me either verbally or in writing.
- The customer must state their name and give me as much information as possible about their complaint. I reserve the right to seek further information from the customer or any third party involved.
- I will enter details of any complaint received in my Complaints Register. The Commission may at any time inspect this register and otherwise monitor my dealings with customer complaints.

- I will respond to any complaint received, in writing, within 28 days of receipt of the complaint.
- If the complaint is substantiated, I will inform the customer of the action that I have undertaken to remedy the complaint.
- If I determine that the complaint does not relate to the operation of this Code, the customer will be informed as to my reasons for this determination.
- If a customer does not agree with my decision I will advise him or her of relevant options that are available to further pursue the complaint.
- These options include reporting my conduct to the VBA or the relevant racing controlling body (should the nature of the complaint also be relevant to the rules under which I conduct my bookmaking operations). A customer will also be informed of their right to make a complaint to the Commission.
- If the complaint cannot successfully be resolved through these channels I will, with the agreement of the complainant, refer the complaint to the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators Australia (IAMA) for resolution. Any costs associated with this process shall be shared equally between the complainant and me.

## 12. Gambling by Minors

It is illegal for me to bet with or facilitate betting with minors. I recognise the absolute nature of this prohibition. Whilst I cannot control the presence of any minor at a venue I will in the case of any doubt require proof of age.

Before opening a betting account with me, customers must provide a date of birth and assert that they are over 18 years of age. My website (if applicable) will include an appropriate warning, in a prominent position, advising that minors are not permitted to bet with me.

## 13. The Gambling Environment

Race and Sports betting are time dependant. A customer's awareness of the passing of time is made by the programming of the particular event. The scheduling of the events themselves ensure that customers are provided with many opportunities for regular breaks.

## 14. Financial Transactions

I will only cash customer cheques by pre-arranged agreement with my existing clients.

I will maintain a register of any cheques I have cashed. This register will be made available for inspection by the Commission upon request.

When conducting my business at a venue, if any customer with winnings in excess of \$1,000 requests payment by cheque, I will provide a cheque within a timeframe that has been mutually agreed between myself and my customer.

## 15. Responsible Advertising and Promotions

If I advertise or undertake any promotion related to betting, any such advertising or promotion will:

- Comply with all applicable Commonwealth and State Laws, regulations and Codes relating to the advertising or promotion of wagering products, including the Australian Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics.
- Not be false, misleading or deceptive about odds, prizes or the chances of winning.
- Have the consent of any person identified as winning a prize prior to publication.
- Not be offensive or indecent in nature.
- Not create an impression that gambling is a reasonable strategy for financial betterment.
- Not promote the consumption of alcohol while purchasing gambling products.
- Contain the statement (if any) prescribed by section 4.7.9 of the Act.
- Not offer any credit, voucher or reward as an inducement to open a betting account in breach of Section 4.7.10 of the Act.

## 16. Code Review

I will review this Code on an annual basis. My process for the review shall have regard to:

- My experience as to the operation and effectiveness of the Code.
- Input received from my employees and a sample of customers.
- Any advice received from the VBA.
- Any guidelines issued, or determinations made by the Commission with regard to review timeframes, formats and methodologies.

## 17. Definitions

In this Code -

- **Controlling body** means:
  - In the case of horse racing, Racing Victoria.
  - In the case of harness racing, Harness Racing Victoria.
  - In the case of greyhound racing, Greyhound Racing Victoria.



- **Customer complaint** means an expression of dissatisfaction or grievance from a customer relating to this Code but not a request for information.
- **Permit holder** means:
  - The holder of a Club Betting Permit issued under Division 2A of Part 1 of the Racing Act 1958.
  - The holder of a Mixed Sports Gathering Permit issued subject to the requirements of Section 19 of the Racing Act 1958.
- **Pre-commitment decision** means a decision a person makes before commencing a session of gambling to set a specified limit to his or her expenditure or time spent gambling.
- **Race Club** means a club registered in accordance with the rules of Racing Victoria, Harness Racing Victoria or Greyhound Racing Victoria.
- **Responsible Gambling** means minimising harm caused by problem gambling while accommodating those who gamble without harming themselves or others.
- **Responsible Gambling Message** means the statement prescribed by section 4.7.9 of the Act. If no statement is prescribed then the statement shall ne the phrase “Bet Responsibly” accompanied by words that identify the name of, and provide a current contact number for Gambler’s Help Services.
- **The Act** means the Gambling Regulation Act 2003.
- **The Commission** means the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation established under the Gambling Regulation Act 2003.
- **The Racing Act** means the Racing Act 1958.
- **VBA** means the Victorian Bookmakers’ Association Limited
- **Venue** means the place or place from or at which I lawfully conduct my business.