

April 24, 2020

Volume 26, Issue 17

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A publication of
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The _____ MICHIGAN GAMING _____ Newsletter



SBA REVERSES POLICY BANNING CASINOS FROM PPP FUNDING

The Small Business Administration (SBA) issued a revision to its rule that makes casinos eligible for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan earlier today provided they meet the other requirements of the program, such as having fewer than 500 employees. PPP Loans are intended to provide economic relief to small businesses nationwide under the CARES Act.

Gaming businesses were originally ineligible for funding, however, the SBA revised its policy to make eligible certain small businesses that derive revenue from legal gaming after receiving sharp criticism from Senators in states that have significant gaming presences as well as from American Gaming Association President and CEO Bill Miller.

Today's new revision states that a business is not rendered ineligible due to its receipt of legal gaming revenues, and 13 CFR 120.110(g) is inapplicable to PPP loans. Under this new policy, businesses that received illegal gaming revenue still remain ineligible.

"I'm grateful to President Trump and his administration for recognizing that commercial and tribal gaming industry employees deserve the same support available to other small businesses, and for the significant, sustained efforts of members of Congress to amplify the need for changes to the guidelines to get small gaming operators and their employees through this challenging time," Mr. Miller stated in an April 24 press release.

The revised policy can be read in full [here](#).

INDUSTRY LEADERS PRESENT WEBINAR ON PREPARING CASINOS FOR REOPENING

As previously detailed in [Volume 26, Issue 16](#) of the Michigan Gaming Newsletter, Global Gaming Business Magazine, The Innovation Group, and Regulatory Management Counselors, P.C. continue to join forces to present weekly informative webinars designed to help gaming companies-operators, manufacturers and suppliers-executives, employees, investors and customers navigate the "new normal" as the world struggles through and emerges from the devastating effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The first webinar was held Thursday, April 16 and featured perspectives from casino operations, the financial market and impacts, and human resources, including Matt Sodl, Anthony Sanfilippo and Jennifer Martinez offering their thoughts and commentary.

The second webinar in the series was held Thursday, April 23rd entitled Taking Care of Business: Difficult Decisions Ahead and featured comments by Ellen Whittemore, Executive VP & General Counsel of Wynn Resorts, Bobby Soper, President & CEO of Sun Gaming & Hospitality and Josh Swissman, former CMO for Stations Casinos, currently Founder of The Strategic Organization.

Mr. Soper opened the webinar by covering what reopening might look like, including the need to plan with adaptability and flexibility. He covered what many operators may be looking at for pre-opening preparation and execution, and also offered comments on marketing and communication strategies.

Ms. Whittemore offered a detailed outline of the process that Wynn Resorts has undertaken and envisions potentially utilizing as they look to reopen. She noted that Wynn made preparations to increase their liquidity and made the decision that it wanted to try and retain as many employees as possible rather than having to find and retrain new employees upon reopening. She closed by outlining Wynn's communication strategy with both its customers and employees.

Mr. Swissman focused his comments on the operator perspective, noting that one needs to utilize analytics, player engagement, loyalty programs and brand positioning to maintain a customer base and re-attract customers. He offered suggestions for changes to player reward programs, offering certain amenities to the best customers, and to try and balance the message of providing an escape to customers while still offering comfort from a safety perspective.

The next webinar in the series will be held Thursday, April 30th at 2 p.m. EST, entitled Tribal Troubles: How Indian Gaming Will Rebound. You can register for the webinar at www.casinowebinar.com. All previous webinars are recorded and the recordings along with the presentations are available at www.casinowebinar.com.

MICHIGAN GOVERNOR EXTENDS STAY AT HOME ORDER

Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced in a press conference today that Michigan's stay at home order has been extended through May 15, 2020. The previous order was set to expire on April 30th and implemented restrictions such as prohibiting travel between residences, the sale of certain goods from big-box stores, and lawn service operations. This week, Michigan has started to see its numbers of new confirmed cases each day drop from previous weeks.

The Michigan Gaming Control Board order currently in place closing casinos extends through April 30 and can be found [here](#). We will continue to monitor any extensions of that order by the Michigan Gaming Control Board.

"We can now start the process of gradually resuming in-person work and activities that were temporarily suspended under my prior orders," Governor Whitmer states in Executive Order 2020-59.

Executive Order 2020-59 reaffirms the shelter-in-

place order, requiring people to stay 6 feet away from others, follow CDC guidelines, and wear a mask in public. Businesses deemed nonessential are still required to remain closed at this time.

Additionally, there are several restrictions that have been loosened from the previous order. Permitted recreational activities now include boating and golfing, which were previously prohibited. Individuals may now travel between two residences in the State, with the exception of traveling to vacation rentals.

Garden stores, nurseries, and lawn care services are permitted to resume operations, as are bicycle repair workers and groundskeepers. Stores are permitted to sell goods other than necessary supplies and should consider curbside pick-up options.

The full text of Executive Order 2020-59 can be read [here](#). Daily updates and statistics of coronavirus in Michigan can be found at www.michigan.gov/coronavirus.