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# The \_\_\_\_\_ MICHIGAN GAMING \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter



## **MICHIGAN CASINOS DONATE FOOD AND SUPPLIES DURING CORONAVIRUS CLOSURES**

This week, both commercial and tribal casinos throughout the State have donated food and supplies to charities to aid during the Coronavirus pandemic. Governor Gretchen Whitmer called for a two-week closure of the Detroit casinos on Monday, with many tribal casinos quickly following suit. In response to the closure, casinos have opted to donate their unused food to local charities.

MGM Grand Detroit donated over 9,500 pounds of food to Forgotten Harvest and 3,000 gloves to the City of Detroit. In addition, MotorCity Casino Hotel donated 5,000 pounds of food to Forgotten Harvest, as well as 6,000 sanitizing wet wipes and 8,000 vinyl gloves to the City of Detroit. Forgotten Harvest is a non-profit organization that delivers donated surplus food to families in the Metro Detroit area.

"We're thankful for the opportunity to support our community during this challenging time," MotorCity Casino said in a tweet. "These items will be used to help keep our DDOT [Detroit Department of Transportation] drivers safe while they continue to provide much needed transportation to the citizens of Detroit."

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and its Four Wind Casinos have donated 7,450 pounds of food this week to food banks in Southwest Michigan and Northern Indiana. The donation includes unused food from the Pokagon Band's four casinos in New Buffalo, Hartford, and Dowagiac, as well as in South Bend, Indiana. The food will be distributed by Feeding America in Benton Harbor and Cultivate in South Bend.

"Given the recent closure of our casino locations and the uncertainty of the evolving Coronavirus situation, we felt compelled to donate these unused food items as soon as possible so they could be used by community members in

need," said Matthew West, Tribal Chairman of the Pokagon Band.

Gun Lake Casino in Wayland, Michigan, is donating more than 2.75 tons of food to Dégagé Ministries, Feeding America West Michigan, and Hand2Hand during its temporary closure.

"Gun Lake Casino has always been committed to fighting issues surrounding hunger in communities," said Sal Semola, President and COO of Gun Lake Casino. "We recognize this is a worrisome time for all, especially for the families who may be unable to afford food. In this great time of need, Gun Lake Casino is proud to donate and lessen the effects of this worldwide crisis."

Gun Lake Casino often partners with Dégagé Ministries to provide food to the local communities.

## **DETROIT CASINOS TO PAY EMPLOYEES DURING TEMPORARY CLOSURE**

The Detroit casinos were forced to close for at least two weeks on Monday following an executive order from Governor Gretchen Whitmer. The two-week closure has displaced thousands of service industry workers across the State, including casino employees. In response, the three Detroit casinos have each guaranteed to pay their employees during the two-week temporary closure.

MotorCity Casino Hotel announced that it will pay all associates, and that full-time associates will continue to receive their benefits during the closure.

"We realize the temporary closure of our casino has associates concerned as to what the next two weeks will bring," MotorCity said in a statement.

Greektown Casino announced in a [press release](#) that it will continue to pay its 1,650 team members their salary and benefits during the two-week closure.

"The health and well-being of our guests and team members will always be our paramount concern," said Jay Snowden, President and CEO of Penn National Gaming. "This is a challenging time for all of us, and we are very appreciative of the overwhelming support and understanding from our guests and team members."

MGM Grand Detroit will also continue to pay its employees for the two-week closure, in addition to benefits for eligible employees through June 30 according to an [article](#) in the Detroit Free Press.

## **HOUSE PASSES DISASSOCIATED PERSONS BILL**

On March 17, the Michigan House of Representatives passed HB 4686, modifying the disassociated persons law in Michigan for problem gamblers. As previously reported in [Volume 26, Issue 8 of the Michigan Gaming Newsletter](#), the bill was sponsored by Rep. Ryan Berman of the 39th District. Under current law, a person who places himself on the disassociated persons list is banned for life with no opportunity to remove himself. HB 4686 allows a person to petition the Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) after 5 years to have his name removed from the list. Once an individual's name is removed from the list, the MGCB will notify each casino, the Attorney General's office, and the State Police.

Substitute H-2 was adopted by the House, and it passed with 89 yeas, 1 nay, and 20 not voting. The title was amended and a second vote was taken, ultimately passing the bill with 91 yeas, 1 nay, and 18 not voting.

The bill will be sent to the Senate where it will likely be assigned to the Senate Regulatory Reform Committee.