



For immediate release, March 5, 2020

## **N.Y.S. GAMING COMMISSION OBSERVES NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH**

*Commission to Bring 2020 Problem Gambling Awareness Month Theme of Awareness + Action to Life with Regional Responsible Gaming Events*

The New York State Gaming Commission is joining forces with the National Council on Problem Gambling, New York State public health organizations, advocacy groups and gambling operators to dedicate the month of March to raising public awareness of problem gambling.

“The theme for Problem Gambling Awareness Month 2020 is “Awareness + Action,” said National Council Executive Director Keith Whyte. “This month is all about taking action and having conversations about problem gambling issues and directing people to the help they may need.”

“The *Awareness + Action* theme summarizes our plans for Problem Gambling Awareness Month very well,” said Commission Executive Director Robert Williams. “We’re partnering with our licensed operators across the state to educate the gaming public on the various policies and procedures we’ve enacted to both safeguard our players and enhance the integrity and entertainment value of their favorite games.”

The Commission’s participation in Problem Gambling Awareness Month comes on the heels of the Commission earning Level 4 Certification by the World Lottery Association as a global leader in the incorporation of responsible gaming principles into its daily operations year-round. The Commission remains the only North American Gaming Commission that has achieved Level 4 status.

“Nowhere is our commitment to Responsible Gaming more evident than in our efforts to prevent New York’s underage players from becoming tomorrow’s disordered gamblers,” said Williams.

The Commission’s continued focus on curbing youth access to gambling follows a series of recently implemented programmatic developments to better detect and prevent underage play. These actions include:

- Activation of new identification verification software to guard against underage and out-of-state participation in the Lottery’s popular second-chance drawings and related promotions

- Formation of an alliance with the New York Association of Convenience Stores, the Empire State Restaurant and Tavern Association and the Food Industry Alliance of New York to discuss current public and private sector policies with the goal of strengthening proof-of-age requirements for the Lottery's age-restricted products
- Production and distribution of an evergreen public service campaign promoting the need to take age into consideration when gifting Lottery products

The Commission will use insights from discussions with its alliance partners as well as our Responsible Play Partnership colleagues (the N.Y.S. Office of Addiction Services and Supports and the New York Council on Problem Gambling) to develop a well-informed age verification marketing program that significantly increases awareness of, and elicits behavioral changes around, Lottery age restriction requirements among licensed retailers and Lottery players.

### **Commission-Specific Problem Gambling 2020 Initiatives**

The Commission will relaunch its award-winning "Falls Into Place" public service campaign on 65 [television](#) and 62 [radio](#) stations from Albany to Watertown throughout March.

The New York Lottery will launch a complementary Problem Gambling Awareness Month campaign comprised of special messaging on all [draw game tickets](#); custom [electronic messages](#) at more than 13,000 retail locations; [posters](#) placed in 1,000 high-profile retailers statewide; and three new [social media posts](#) on the Lottery's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

The Commission's Gaming Division and Horse Racing Division are also participating in the PGAM poster initiative, with licensed gaming properties displaying the traditional PGAM poster.

# # #