

VCGR



Victorian Commission
for Gambling Regulation

A Guide to making a Complaint about the Conduct of Gambling



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About us

The Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation (VCGR) is the statutory authority in charge of regulating Victoria's gambling industry. We regulate all forms of legalised gambling in the state in accordance with three Acts of the Victorian Parliament, the *Gambling Regulation Act 2003*, the *Casino Control Act 1991* and the *Casino (Management Agreement) Act 1993*.

Our Mission

To protect the community by regulating gambling activities consistent with government requirements.

Purpose

This complaints charter explains what complaints are investigated by the VCGR and how they are handled.

All complaints about regulated gambling activities are investigated by the VCGR. Investigations are carried out by the Compliance and Investigation Branch [CIB].

This charter covers:

- Our Mission
- What you can complain about
- What to do before making a complaint
- How and where to complain
- The complaints process and possible results

Investigate

What does the VCGR investigate?

The VCGR investigates:

- the general conduct of gambling
- minors in gambling premises or gambling
- the conduct of Gaming Industry Employees/Casino Special Employees
- unauthorised gambling
- illegal gambling

The general conduct of gambling

This includes how any gambling activity is conducted or run by the casino, gaming venues, totalizator (Tabcorp), sports betting, bookmakers, public lotteries (Tatts or Intralot), Keno, raffle providers and even local charities or sporting organisations.

The complaint could cover such areas as the rules of a game at the casino, responsible gambling matters, placing a bet on a horse, the terms and conditions of a trade promotion lottery or a raffle not being drawn at the advertised time or the prize not being provided.

Minors gambling or in premises

All complaints received about minors in a venue gaming room or the casino, or involved in a gaming activity are carefully investigated.

The conduct of Gaming Industry Employees/Casino Special Employees

This includes staff working without a licence, providing credit to players or not providing information on self-exclusion programs or code of conduct procedures and policies.

Unauthorised gambling

Unauthorised gambling refers to gambling activities that are conducted without the required approval, permit or licence. For example, a raffle being conducted by a charity or sporting organisation that has not been declared or approved by the VCGR.

Illegal gambling

Illegal gambling activity may include owning or selling a poker machine, fraudulent practices within the gaming industry or involving lotteries such as raffles and bingo. Criminal conduct is reported to the Victoria Police.

If in doubt as to whether a complaint is under the investigative authority of the VCGR, the matter can be discussed with an inspector who will advise of the best course of action. For example, a complaint about smoking in a gaming venue, would be referred to the Human Services (Health) Department or local Shire or Council.

Information

Before making a complaint

Complaints may be made in writing (letter/fax/email), by phone or in person at one of our two offices. Before making a complaint there are a number of matters that you should consider, which may affect how your role as a complainant may evolve and how you are advised of the outcome of your complaint.

Anonymous or not?

You may wish to remain anonymous or unknown, or you may wish to identify yourself when making a complaint. This choice is personal. In making that decision, you should, however, consider the following:

- One of the first steps in an investigation is for an inspector to contact the complainant. Often, additional information is obtained through this contact that assists the Inspector to investigate your complaint. If you cannot be contacted, potentially valuable information may be lost, which may affect the outcome or result of the investigation.
- In addition, if you choose to remain anonymous we will not be able to advise you on the result of the investigation.
- If requested, we will keep your name and details strictly confidential.

Organise your thoughts

Complaints often result from a person being aggrieved or believing they have been wronged. This is often accompanied by heightened emotions. To help with the complaints process it is helpful if you as a complainant can follow a few guidelines:

- Following the incident, make notes as to what has happened.

- Your notes should include the specific time, date and location the incident or event occurred.
- Include all names of people involved, if known, such as those you may be making a complaint about or other witnesses that were there with you.
- Keep any potential evidence you may have in relation to the matter, such as receipts, vouchers, documents, advertisements, photos, brochures etc.

Timelines

Complaints should be made to the VCGR as soon as possible after the event or incident that has caused your complaint. The longer the time between the event and its reporting, the more difficult it is to investigate.

False or misleading information

It is important all information about a complaint is true. Providing false or misleading information to the VCGR is illegal.

How to make a complaint

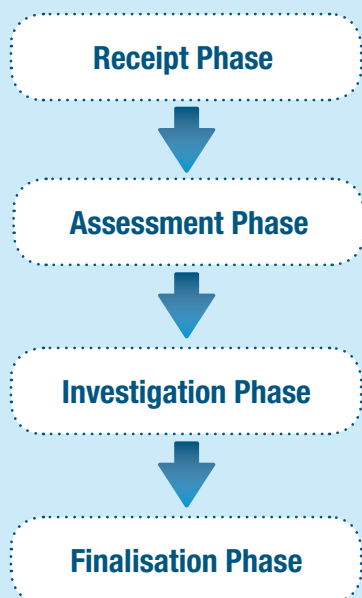
The following steps provide a useful guide to making a complaint.

- Step 1: Identify matter/s for complaint
- Step 2: Where possible, identify wrong doers and/or those affected
- Step 3: Document where and when the matter occurred
- Step 4: Identify any witnesses
- Step 5: Decide whether you wish to remain anonymous
- Step 6: Lodge complaint via email, phone, fax, mail, VCGR website or in person

Process

How are complaints processed?

Complaints are handled systematically to ensure investigative policies and procedures are followed. In general terms, the complaints cycle can be seen as a four-step process:



Receipt Phase:

In this phase a complaint comes in as a document, such as an email, a letter, a fax, or verbally either in person or over the phone. The process will vary slightly if the complaint is lodged in person or by phone, as the person taking the complaint may ask further questions at that time.

Once a complaint is received a record is kept, so each complaint is tracked.

Assessment Phase:

During this phase complaints are reviewed and assigned to a particular VCGR team for investigation.

Investigation Phase:

Once the complaint is assigned, an inspector takes charge of it. During an investigation the inspector will in most cases contact the complainant (if contact details have been provided) in order to gain further information or understanding of the matter and later to cross check information or details obtained during the investigation.

There may also be a requirement for you to provide a written statement and give evidence in a Court.

Finalisation Phase:

Once the investigation is finalised its outcome is reported to the complainant (unless they are anonymous).

What are the possible outcomes?

Investigation findings can result in one of two outcomes:

- No offence detected
- Offence(s) detected

Where an offence(s) is detected, several actions may follow. These are determined by senior management and are not at the discretion of the investigating inspector. Action may be taken against the person, business or organisation who conducted the activity, which may include:

- Educational action – taken when the result of the investigation finds the person conducting the activity did not know about or understand their responsibilities.
- A letter of warning – usually taken when the investigation finds that there was a technical or minor breach of the Rules, Act or Regulations.

Outcomes

- Disciplinary action - this action may be taken when the investigation finds a serious breach of the Rules, Act or Regulations. Disciplinary action can only be taken against a person or organisation which holds a licence or other authorisation issued by the VCGR.
- Prosecution through the Courts - this action may be taken when the investigation finds a serious breach of the Rules, Act or Regulations that warrants the matter to be brought before a Court of law.

Notifying the complainant of result

An inspector will take all reasonable steps to contact a complainant with results of the matter.

There may be occasions when an inspector does not find a breach of the law in relation to the original complaint, but may find other matters that require further VCGR investigation. In these cases, it is against the law for the inspector to give the results of those matters to a complainant.

How long will an investigation take?

The time it takes to complete an investigation can vary. It depends on a variety of factors, for example, the number of persons to be interviewed and statements made, amount of evidence to be collected, etc.

The best way to stay informed of the status of an investigation is to contact the inspector who is handling the matter for you. With every complaint received a file is created and a unique file number is allocated.

Where and how can complaints be lodged?

In writing: Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation
PO Box 1988
Melbourne Victoria 3001

Faxed to: (03) 9651 3777

Email to: investigation@vcgr.vic.gov.au

In person: Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation
Level 5
35 Spring Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
[9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday – Friday]

Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation
C/- Crown Casino
8 Whiteman Street
Southbank Victoria 3006
[24 hours, 7 Days a week]

By phone: (03) 9651 3737 [24-hour hot line]
(03) 9686 9760 (Casino office) [24-hour]

VCGR website: www.vcgr.vic.gov.au



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