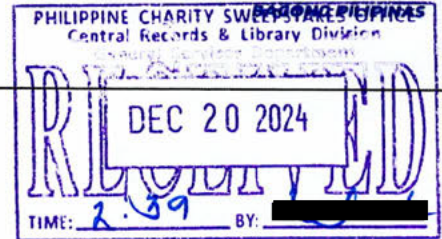




Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President

PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE

Sun Plaza Building, 1507 Shaw Boulevard corner Princeton St., Mandaluyong City 1152
www.pcsso.gov.ph



Memorandum Order No. 2024-166
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POLICY ON RESPONSIBLE GAMING ADVERTISING AND MARKETING COMMUNICATION

I. BACKGROUND

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office is a member of the World Lottery Association (WLA) with more than 150 state authorized lottery and sports betting operators from 80 countries. WLA member lotteries not only increase their revenues and returns to good causes, but also rally behind responsible play. Responsible Gaming is indeed a critical component of corporate social responsibility in the lottery sector. Balancing growth in sales and giving back to good causes with the facilitation of responsible play is essential for both ethical and practical reasons. By promoting responsible gaming, lotteries can protect players from risks associated with excessive better, which helps maintain trust in the industry.

In addition to safeguarding players, responsible gaming practices contribute to the sustainability of lottery operations by ensuring a positive public image and long-term viability. When players are encouraged in making informed decisions, it reduces the likelihood of gaming-related harm, which can undermine public trust and ultimately diminish revenues. This, in turn, ensures that lotteries continue to generate funds for public good in a sustainable and socially responsible manner.

Player protection through responsible gaming initiatives must remain a priority to ensure ethical standards and long-term success in the lottery sector.

In 2006, the WLA formalized its practices in Corporate Social Responsibility by adopting Responsible Gaming Principles and a Responsible Gaming Framework aimed at protecting lottery players around the world.

Pursuant to Chapter VI of Republic Act No. 7394 (Consumer Act of the Philippines), and the General Standards for Materials that Advertise Gaming under the Code of Ethics of the Advertising Standard Council (ASC, this policy seeks to provide guidelines in the creation and development of advertising materials that are aligned with the responsible gaming.

II. OBJECTIVES

Responsible gaming advertising aims to promote safe and responsible behavior in relation to gaming activities. It involves ensuring that promotion efforts of the agency, its agents, gaming partners and its marketing platforms provide clear, truthful, and responsible messaging to bettors to reduce the risk of harm, and complies with relevant laws and regulations.

To promote responsible gaming, the PCSO commits to provide the public with information in an accurate and balanced manner to enable individuals to make informed choices about gaming activities within the Philippines. We are committed to protecting the well-being of our customers and promoting a safe and enjoyable gaming experience.

III. COVERAGE

This policy applies to all forms of advertising and promotional content, including but not limited to:

- Television, radio and print media
- Digital advertising (websites, blogs, social media, email marketing, streaming platforms)
- Outdoor advertising (static billboards, transit ads, LED billboard/wall, posters, pillars, lighted box, among others)
- Sponsorships
- Affiliate Marketing
- Event Promotions

This policy applies to PCSO employees, as well as to lotto and small town lottery agents, gaming partners, third-party gaming agencies engaged in the creation and distribution of advertising and marketing of PCSO's gaming products.

IV. CORE PRINCIPLES

- a) **Honesty and Clarity** – All advertisements must accurately represent the nature of the gaming products. No advertisement should mislead or deceive customers regarding the chances of winning or the benefits of gaming.
- b) **Promote Responsible Gaming Behavior** – Advertisements should promote responsible gaming practices and avoid glamourizing or encouraging excessive play. They must not imply that gaming is a pathway to wealth or financial security, and should not urge individuals to play beyond their means or in an unhealthy manner.
- c) **Target Audience and Age Restrictions** – Advertising must only target individuals who are of legal age. It should avoid ads directed at vulnerable individuals, including minors, people with known gaming issues, or individuals at risk of developing problem gaming behaviors.

Accordingly, advertising should not be placed on platforms or in contexts where the majority of the audience may be underage or where vulnerable individuals are likely to be exposed.

- d) **Prevention of Overstimulation and Excessive Appeals** – Advertisements should avoid excessive or sensationalized language, images, or tactics that may encourage impulsive or harmful gaming behavior.

The use of overly attractive promotional offers, such as “guaranteed winnings”, “luxury items”, or “no-risk gaming” is not allowed.

- e) **Inclusion of Responsible Gaming Messaging** – Gaming related advertisements must include clear information on responsible gaming practices and responsible play message. This may include messages relating to risks of excessive gaming.

Marketing communications should display contact information for relevant local or national gaming helplines and support services.

- f) **Compliance with Laws and Regulations** – All advertising must comply with local, national and international laws and regulations related to gaming advertising and responsible gaming.

V. ADVERTISING AND MARKETING GUIDELINES

Advertisements placed in any platform shall be socially responsible, consistent with the principles of dignity, integrity and in accordance with law. This policy seeks to ensure that consumers are not misled, harmed or offended by advertisements in order to maintain consumer confidence in marketing communications relating to gaming, as follows:

a) **Tone** –

- Lotteries should not be promoted as a substitute for employment, a financial investment, or a means of achieving financial security.
- Marketing communication should use inclusive language and avoid offensive or inappropriate language, imagery, or actions, and must not demean or disrespect individuals based on ethnicity, minority status, religion, or any protected group.
- Marketing communication should emphasize the fun, leisure and entertainment aspect of playing lottery games and not imply that it is a money making activity.
- Lottery advertisements should not create a sense of urgency, make false claims, or suggest that winning is a guaranteed outcome.
- Marketing communications should not belittle individuals who choose not to buy a lottery ticket, nor should they excessively praise those who do.
- Lottery games are purely games of chance, advertisements should not give the impression that a player’s skill can influence the outcome of a gaming activity, or that talent can change the result of the game or can ensure a win.

b) **Promotion and Placement** –

- Advertisements should state the age restrictions through clear visual or verbal cues, indicating that only 18 years old and above can play.
- Advertisements should not be overly frequent or intrusive, particularly during times when minors or at-risk groups may be watching or engaging with content.

- Advertisements should avoid placement during programming specifically targeted to children or young people (e.g., children TV shows, cartoons, etc.)
 - Ads should not feature people who are or who appear to be under 18 years old;
 - Ads should not use cartoons, animations, imagery, symbols or themes that may attract vulnerable individuals, or catch the attention of children or give interest to viewing minors
 - Responsible play messages should always be posted at the betting stations and included in ad materials.
 - Recipients of promotional and marketing tokens must not include minors.
- c) **Content Restrictions** – Advertisements must **NOT**:
- Portray, encourage or condone gaming behavior that is socially irresponsible or lead to financial harm;
 - Encourage excessive or continuous gaming as a form of escape from personal or financial difficulties
 - Promote gaming as a way to recover previous losses from gaming or other economic failures
 - Give an impression that gaming is an accepted way to make money or solve financial problems.
 - Promote unrealistic representations of potential winnings nor ensure winning or prizes not guaranteed.
 - Include misleading statements about odds and prizes
- d) **Game Information** –
- The game mechanics, rules, terms and conditions, and odds of winning and prizes at stake made publicly available, allowing individuals to make informed decisions.
 - Game rules should be clear and should avoid ambiguous terms or misleading messages.
- e) **Sponsorships and Endorsements** – Sponsorship or endorsement arrangements should:
- Align with PCSO's commitment to responsible gaming such that sponsored events or individuals promote responsible gaming messages.

VI. MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

- a) **On-going Monitoring** – All advertisements will be monitored to ensure compliance with this policy. This includes regular reviews of all advertising campaigns and content across different platforms.
- b) **Complaints Handling** – Any complaints or concerns raised by customers or regulatory bodies regarding advertising practices will be investigated promptly. The PCSO shall take corrective action if any advertising content violates the principles of responsible gaming.

c) **Training and Awareness –**

- The HRD shall conduct trainings on responsible gaming principles and the requirements of this policy.
- Media partners, advertising providers, and organizations being sponsored by the PCSO shall likewise be informed and required to implement this policy on responsible gaming advertising and marketing communication.

VII. ENFORCEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Internal disciplinary action
- Withdrawal or modification of advertising content
- Reporting to relevant regulatory authorities
- Potential legal consequences, including fines or loss of sponsorship.

VIII. REVIEW AND UPDATES

This policy shall be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws and regulations and to reflect the best practices in responsible gaming advertising. All updates will be communicated to relevant partners and stakeholders.

For strict compliance.


MELQUIADES A. ROBLES
General Manager 