

Gambling harm prevention reform

Merri-bek

Our Ask:

Commit to the rolling out of further gambling reforms, including:

- expanding gaming venue closure hours
- lowering daily EFTPOS withdrawal limits at gaming venues, and
- extinguishing all forfeited electronic gaming machine (EGM) licences.

State Government research found that the financial impact of gambling on Victorians has doubled over the past decade, reaching a total of \$14.1 billion in 2023.²⁸ Data on annual player losses for 2024–2025 indicates that electronic gambling machines account for the largest share (43%), followed by wagering and online betting on sports and racing (33%).²⁹ In 2024-25, Victorians lost over \$3.1 billion on electronic gaming machines. In Merri-bek there are currently 639 poker machines, which took more than \$64 million losses from our community in 2024-2025.

Around 330,000 Victorians experience gambling harm each year and these financial losses contribute to significant social costs including financial distress, mental health impacts and relationship harm.

The existing regulatory framework is not adequately addressing the significant social harm experienced by the community. Council urges the Victorian Government to prioritise gambling harm prevention within the State's Gambling Regulations.