



# OHIO CASINO CONTROL COMMISSION

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 5, 2023

### **Sports Gaming Companies Issued Notices of Violation by Ohio Casino Control Commission**

*Ads lacked required problem gambling message, falsely promoted “free” bets*

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Casino Control Commission announced today it has notified BETMGM, LLC (BetMGM), American Wagering, Inc. (Caesars) and Crown OH Gaming, LLC (DraftKings) that it intends to take administrative action against them for violations of Ohio law and administrative rules pertaining to advertising and promotions.

“The sports gaming industry has received multiple reminders of the rules and standards for advertising and promotions, yet continues to disregard Ohio law. These repeated violations leave the Commission no choice but to pursue administrative action to bring operators into compliance,” said Matthew Schuler, Executive Director of the Ohio Casino Control Commission. “The Commission takes responsible gambling seriously – and expects the industry to value the same.”

BetMGM, Caesars, and DraftKings – or their affiliate marketer – all ran sports gaming advertisements on several platforms that violated provisions in both Ohio law and the Commission’s rules that require sports gaming advertisements to clearly and conspicuously contain a message designed to prevent problem gambling as well as a helpline number to help access resources.

Advertisements from BetMGM, Caesars and DraftKings lacking the appropriate responsible gambling messaging appeared after the Commission issued explicit guidance on the matter, on December 30, and directed all operators to immediately ensure that their advertising was compliant.

In addition to ads lacking the appropriate responsible gambling messaging, all three companies also advertised promotions or bonuses described as “free” or “risk-free” when patrons were required to incur a loss or risk their own money to obtain the promotion. Commission rules on promotions and bonuses (Ohio Adm Code 3775-16-09(D)) prohibits the use of the word or phrase “free” or “risk-free” in sports gaming promotions where a patron must spend their own funds to obtain the promotional value.

The Commission is seeking a \$150,000 fine from each company as well as other remedial action to ensure personnel are trained in all applicable laws, rules and policies relevant to sports gaming advertising and promotions.

BetMGM, Caesars, and DraftKings each have the right to a hearing and due process. Ultimately, the Commission will vote on any action taken regarding these violations in a public meeting. Fines levied by the Commission regarding sports gaming are deposited into the Sports Gaming Revenue Fund.

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*The Ohio Casino Control Commission is the regulatory body with oversight of the state's four casinos, skill-based amusement machines, fantasy contests and sports gaming. It has the responsibility to ensure the integrity of gaming by licensing, regulating, investigating and enforcing state laws. Learn more at <http://casinocontrol.ohio.gov>.*

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