MAY 2020 SECTOR REOPENING PLAN

FOR PROFIT REGULATED GAMBLING (CASINO AND VIDEO LOTTERY TERMINALS)





Message from the President & CEO

We are pleased to present the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation's (NSGC) Sector Reopening Plan. The Plan focuses on our promise to offer an industry that is well regulated, fun and entertaining and most of all safe for both employees and players. This Plan is about making Nova Scotia a better place by being a major contributor to the Province, its people and good causes that are important to Nova Scotians.

NSGC's mandate is to run the business in a manner that is accountable, sustainable and socially responsible. The corporation will offer first-class responsible gambling programs to Nova Scotians where one hundred percent of the profits from regulated gambling go to government to fund priority programs and services. NSGC and its operators are proud to be key contributors to the Nova Scotia economy.

This Plan highlights the gambling industry's strategies to achieve a safe reopening of the business so that the industry can continue to generate economic returns in an environment where there continues to be uncertainty.

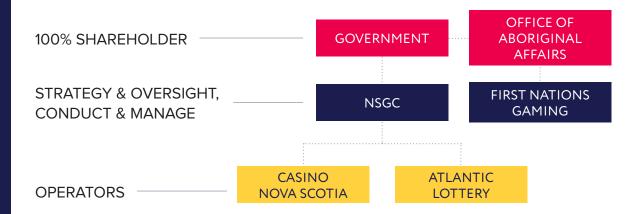
Respectfully submitted,

Robert MacKinnon
President and CEO
Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation



BACKGROUND

- NSGC is responsible for managing for profit regulated gambling in the
 province. NSGC is a Crown corporation governed by Part I of the Gaming
 Control Act, charged with leading a viable and socially responsible gambling
 industry for the benefit of all Nova Scotians. NSGC works hard to meet the
 needs of Nova Scotians and to earn their trust. NSGC's vision is to have a
 gambling industry Nova Scotians are proud of and enjoy.
- Our role is to ensure gambling in Nova Scotia is socially responsible and safe
 while making reasonable profits for government. In carrying out this role, NSGC
 oversees its operators, Atlantic Lottery Corporation (ALC) and Casino Nova
 Scotia, who carry out the day-to-day business on our behalf in partnership
 with third party retail and video lottery terminal operators. NSGC also provides
 support to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs who manages the Province's
 relationship with the gaming business in First Nation Communities. The
 Government, and ultimately the people of Nova Scotia are the shareholders
 and owners of the industry.





BACKGROUND

- The public demands that government offer regulated gambling in a socially responsible and safe manner that protects both players and employees in these unprecedented times. Nova Scotians have the right to expect the highest ethical standards, integrity, and social and fiscal accountability from NSGC. Corporate social responsibility is a critical part of NSGC and its pledge to being socially responsible means giving players the information they need to play responsibly, ensuring the integrity of the industry, and giving back to the people of Nova Scotia.
- Our operating network employs and serves the communities they operate in with many of the patrons being known to staff. More than 50% of casino revenue is generated through Player's Club members or known players. Each year, 100% of NSGC's profits go back to the Province and provide major benefits to Nova Scotians through the funding of programs and services including education, transportation and healthcare. Prior to COVID-19, NSGC budgeted \$147 million for the Province that would fund vital programs and services. The industry creates and supports employment for more than 500 people, adds millions in retail commissions for local businesses and is a significant own source revenue source for First Nation communities supporting community programs and services on reserve land.



INTRODUCTION

- The COVID-19 virus has been spreading globally and has presented a serious risk to public health in Nova Scotia. Given the concern of COVID-19 and guidance from the provincial government and public health officials, the two casinos and Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) in the province were shut down as of 12:00 a.m. on March 16, 2020 including those in First Nation Communities.
- The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation (NSGC) has developed the following high-level plan that operators in the gambling sector will adhere to in addition to guidelines outlined by federal and provincial health authorities.
- Restaurants Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia submitted a Restaurant COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Guide for Nova Scotia to government on May 20, 2020. This document will form the foundation for our operators and retailers in the delivery of gaming products, in conjunction with the food and beverage service industry. That plan indicated that a protocol for re-activating VLTs would follow from the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation.
- Operators will use this document as the foundation for the safe operation of
 the gaming aspects of their business. All gambling sites and operators will
 be required to develop a COVID-19 Operating Plan that follows Restaurants
 Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's guidance as
 submitted in the Restaurant COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Guide for Nova Scotia
 and adheres to public health directives. These plans represent an initial
 reopening of the gambling industry and over time, these protocols may be
 adapted as health protection measures continue to change based on guidance
 from public health officials.
- It is expected that all gambling operators will continue to adhere to and remain compliant with all regulatory and reporting requirements in a highly regulated industry and that all facilities will continue to have well ventilated and serviced facilities that provide clean air to employees and patrons.



1. CASINO NOVA SCOTIA

- NSGC is responsible for overseeing Nova Scotia's two full-service casinos
 (Halifax and Sydney) that are operated under contract by Great Canadian
 Gaming Corporation (GCGC) under the Casino Nova Scotia brand. Between
 the two properties, Casino Nova Scotia employs more than 420 Nova Scotians
 who provide a variety of entertainment options including, table games, slots, a
 full suite of full-service food and beverage offerings and entertainment such as
 shows and concerts.
- NSGC and GCGC are committed to ensuring the highest level of health and safety for its patrons and employees and will continue to place health and safety ahead of all other priorities.
- GCGC is developing a COVID-19 Operating Plan that includes both the Halifax and Sydney casinos that is well informed by a range of critical contributions, including:
 - > The foundational components in this document;
 - > Provincial and Federal government direction and guidance;
 - > Extensive industry experience; and,
 - External experts in the fields of pandemic science and epidemiology and risk management, including:
 - » Iridia Medical: an organization that specializes in emergency medical response preparation with previous experience with H5N1, H1N1 and COVID-19. Iridia will review and certify the health and safety elements of GCGC's COVID-19 Operating Plans for Nova Scotia based on science and epidemiological evidence.
 - » Marsh & McLellan Risk Management: is a global professional services firm that will provide expert advice from their risk consulting practice to certify GCGC's COVID-19 Operating Plans for Nova Scotia.



In order to safely reopen and resume casino operations in Nova Scotia, each site must have a COVID-19 Operating Plan that adheres to public health directives and recommendations. GCGC will abide by COVID-19 protocols and procedures outlined in this document and are preparing a multi-faceted detailed reopening plans that will align with the following principles:

A. PHYSICAL DISTANCING: While in a casino, patrons and employees will need to adhere to physical distancing guidelines. Every effort will be made to maintain two-meter (six-foot) distance between patrons and staff. Where sixfoot spacing is not possible, alternative measures will be put in place to protect patrons and staff.

The following will ensure physical distancing is maintained and will be re-evaluated over time to make adjustments if required based on health authorities and public health protection measures:

- Reconfiguring operating areas to maintain six-foot spacing for gaming related assets (i.e., slots and table gaming seating). This will require regulatory approval for floor plan changes from the Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco Division of Service Nova Scotia (Provincial Regulator);
- Limited use of transparent barriers like plexi-glass is permitted where sixfoot spacing is not possible in gaming areas or as a barrier to protect staff (see below);
- Use of arrows / tape / floor decals to identify traffic flow from entry to exit
 of areas that have multiple entry points or confined areas that will not
 accommodate six-foot distancing based on detailed floor plans (e.g., exit
 and entrances, parking garage, pedway system, washrooms, etc.);
- Use of arrows / tape / floor decals for any area where line-ups may occur (e.g., washrooms, elevators, cash cage, etc.);
- Removal of chairs from non-operational gaming areas to reduce potential gathering of patrons;
- Physical distancing for table games will be achieved through a mixture of table and seat configurations that will allow no more than three patrons at one table (four for baccarat given the larger table size);
- Poker rooms will not operate in the initial reopening phase and will be reassessed at a future date to determine if it can and will be opened;
- Plexi-glass barriers may be used in limited circumstances in non-gaming areas and in key limited situations in gaming areas where needed;



- Concerts and other live entertainment events will not be permitted for the foreseeable future and will be re-assessed as public health direction allows; and,
- Food and beverage will be limited to small number of quick serve items with no physical menus (digital and poster menus only) and no buffet will be offered.
- Side service (i.e., food service or drinks, cash-out, etc.) at the slot or table games may be permitted if staff follow protective measures such as wearing a mask and cleaning all surfaces after each use as outlined in the Restaurants Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's guidance, and public health guidelines.
- **B. SITE CAPACITY:** Each casino site must consider and identify the maximum number of individuals the casino can safely accommodate based on social distancing guidelines in the Casino COVID-19 Reopening Plan and public health orders in force at any given time.
 - Site security will monitor and control the number of patrons within the facility at any time to ensure they fall within the capacity guidelines based on the COVID-19 Operating Plan for each site.
- C. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING: Both staff and patrons must trust that the casinos are practicing appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures to ensure the risk of COVID-19 transmission is minimized. The two locations were deep cleaned soon after the mandated closing in March 2020 and the following cleaning protocols will be implemented in daily casino operations:
 - Cleaning protocols have been developed and will follow a mandated and frequent time schedule and be logged at both facilities.
 - Operators staff and/or patrons will be required to clean all gaming related assets (slots, table games, dice, cards, etc.) after each use with 1-10 bleach solution or certified disinfectant. Proper cleaning materials will be made available to meet this requirement;
 - Casino management will review incident details of anyone suspected of displaying COVID-19 symptoms and advise precautions for any employees that may have been involved;
 - If there is reasonable suspicion of the infectious disease, sites will ensure routine cleaning with approved disinfectant is completed and documented in the cleaning log and any staff member or patron suspected of having COVID-19 will be directed to contact 811; and,



- If a casino is identified as a potential location for COVID-19 transmission, strong consideration should be given to temporarily closing the facility. The casino will be required to follow the guidance of public health officials and any public health orders.
- D. PERSONAL HYGIENE: Employees and patrons will want to know that people within the site are taking personal hygiene seriously. The following protocols will be considered:
 - Non-medical or personal masks will be made available for patrons and employees if requested;
 - Operators are expected to adhere to legislation, regulations, contracts and policies. Protocols will be in place to temporarily remove a patrons mask while maintaining proper social distance in the event the identify of a patron is required; and,
 - Hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes will be in all high traffic and high touch areas throughout both casinos and the use of gloves should be discouraged for both staff and patrons.
 - The Casino operator will establish a patron registration program to assist Public Health with contact tracing efforts. Considerations in developing the patron registration program include but are not limited to:
 - > Compliance with legislation, including Privacy legislation;
 - At a minimum, tracking of when patrons entered the facilities including day and time;
 - At a minimum record information to assist with tracing name and contact information;
 - Secure retention records of each operating day for a minimum period of 28 days.
 - Casino employees and patrons are expected to maintain excellent hand hygiene and all employees and patrons will be reminded to wash their hands regularly with soap and warm water and/or sanitize their hands if hand washing is not possible.
 - Promote the use of technology to reduce exchange of cash or chips where possible and where hand washing is not possible after each cash transaction, establish clear protocols to have separate staff handle cash transactions than those dealing with patrons.



- Passive employee and patron screening at Casino sites is recommended.
 Casino sites are expected to monitor and take action for employees and patrons for COVID-19 symptoms.
 - No employees or patrons with symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted in any site;
 - A passive screening of employees to self-assess for symptoms and note any recent travel history should be utilized and Casinos are expected to utilize all security resources available to assist in this process;
 - As part of the overall COVID-19 Operating Plan, sites are expected to keep employee schedules to better understand who may have been exposed and conduct contact tracing where required.
- E. COMMUNICATIONS AND SUPPORT: Adjusting to a "new normal" will require time and on ongoing effort to change behavior. Operators are expected to develop communications plans in coordination with NSGC. A key consideration will be to gain the public trust. Additional communication and marketing support pieces will be used to support the following areas:
 - Posters at the entrances to educate patrons and employees how to safely work and/or play within the casinos;
 - > Maintain a physical distance of two-meters (six-feet);
 - > Clean surfaces or equipment prior to use;
 - Wash hands with soap and warm-water frequently, including prior to playing; and,
 - > Only one patron playing a slot at a time.
 - Updated policies and procedures provided to employees;
 - Training for employees and third-party suppliers as required;
 - Limited marketing, social media and promotions, focusing on reopening status and expected protocols for patrons unless approved by NSGC;
 - Resources available to employees and patrons for complaints and questions related to COVID-19 matters; and,
 - Sites will be provided with Federal and / or Provincial government COVID-19 related materials (Attachment A).



- **F. COMPLIANCE**: The regulated gaming industry ensures all operators adhere to legislation, regulations, contracts and policies. Careful oversight of operations allows NSGC and provincial and federal regulators to ensure the industry is managed to the highest standards of integrity, public confidence and safety.
 - Compliance to COVID protocols mentioned above will be required of Casino staff. Internal resources, such as Internal Audit testing will be used to ensure process and protocols are being followed.



2. VIDEO LOTTERY TERMINALS

- The current model in Nova Scotia is to offer Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) through licensed bars, lounges and restaurants owned and operated by a holder of a valid liquor license granted under the *Liquor Control Act* (non-First Nations sites), or by First Nation communities as authorized through Band Gaming Agreements with the Province.
- As of March 2020, there were 2,679 VLTs operating in Nova Scotia in 300 retailer locations as noted in the following table:

RETAILER TYPE	# OF SITES	# VLTS
Community Minded Organizations	29	129
Royal Canadian Legions	82	387
Private Enterprise Retail Locations	157	1,512
First Nation Community Retailers	32	651
Total	300	2,679

NON-FIRST NATION SITES

- The "Designated Gaming Area" is an area within each retailer location where VLTs are located and all activities associated with playing VLTs are contained. Retailers will be required to develop operating plans that meet public health protection measures and protocols for their overall business. This document addresses the Designated Gaming Areas within those sites and forms a component of the Restaurants Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's Restaurant COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Guide for Nova Scotia submitted to Government on May 20, 2020.
- ALC will receive a copy of each COVID-19 Operating Plan for all sites and keep a repository for future reference.



FIRST NATION SITES

- Video Lottery in First Nation communities is authorized through Band Gaming Agreements between the Province and each of the 13 Bands in the Province. The negotiation and management of the Band Gaming Agreements is led by the Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) who also acts as the liaison between First Nation communities and the Province on all gaming related matters.
- There can be multiple sites within each First Nation community with varying hours of operations and smoking inside some of the buildings. OAA will receive a copy of each Bands COVID-19 Operating Plan and will keep a repository for future reference.



OVERALL APPROACH TO REOPENING

NSGC will work with ALC, OAA, First Nation Communities, Nova Scotia, Nunavut Legion Command and the restaurants, bars and lounges in Nova Scotia to begin re-activating VLTs in both non-First Nation and First Nation sites in the following manner:

STEP 1: Overarching Guidelines and Protocols

- NSGC, OAA and / or ALC will contact each VLT site to communicate the requirements for reopening and outline expectations for VLT sites going forward regarding public health protection measures noted in this document.
- ALC will assess each site and in collaboration with site owners and operators, determine the number of terminals to be enabled upon re-opening.

STEP 2: Technical Operations

ALC field technicians will visit each site to perform operational activities in preparation for reopening, including:

- Power on VLTs;
- Triage / troubleshoot any technical issues with the re-starting of VLTs;
- Perform preventative maintenance (as required); and,
- Deep cleaning of VLTs.

A deep cleaning of the overall site will be the responsibility of site owners including the Designated Gaming Area for non-First Nation sites.

STAGE 3: Resumption of Operations

ALC staff will visit each site to perform the following activities:

- Place COVID-19 related signage;
- Outline gaming area for each VLT;
- Review new protocols / procedures for VLTs with operator / staff; and,
- Train staff on how to properly clean VLTs.



In order to safely re-activate VLTs and resume operations, each site will be required to have a COVID-19 Operating Plan that adheres to public health directives and recommendations (Attachment D). Owners and/or Managers must sign-off and agree to abide by COVID-19 protocols and procedures outlined in this document, which includes:

A. PHYSICAL DISTANCING: While in a VLT site, patrons and employees will need to adhere to physical distancing guidelines. Every effort will be made to maintain two-meter (six-foot) distance between patrons and staff

The following will ensure proper physical distancing is maintained:

- Reconfiguring operating areas to maintain six-foot spacing for gaming related assets. A site visit by ALC will be conducted to ensure the six-foot distance requirement is in place;
- Outline patron areas (i.e., tape or floor decals to show proper distance between VLTs);
- Use of arrows / tape / floor decals to identify traffic flow from entry to exit of areas containing VLTs that have multiple entry points or confined areas that will not accommodate six-foot distancing;
- Removal of chairs from non-operational VLTs to reduce potential gathering of patrons; and,
- Suspend terminal side service (i.e., food service or drinks, cash-out, etc.)
 at the VLT, unless staff follow protective measures such as wearing a mask
 and cleaning all surfaces after each use as outlined in the Restaurants
 Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's guidance, and
 public health guidelines.



- **B. SITE CAPACITY:** VLT sites must consider the maximum number of individuals that their site can accommodate. Unless otherwise required by local authorities, floor plans should be configured to accommodate six-foot spacing to then determine maximum capacity.
 - Retailers should discourage patrons from waiting for specific VLTs in their establishments; and,
 - Retailers should discourage holding of VLTs by patrons.
- C. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING: The following cleaning protocols must be adhered to in relation to areas where VLTs are offered:
 - Operators staff and/or patrons will be required to clean all gaming related assets (VLTs, etc.) after each use with 1-10 bleach solution or certified disinfectant. Proper cleaning materials will be made available to meet this requirement;
 - Training on how to properly clean terminals will be provided by ALC;
 - As an additional measure, certified disinfectant wipes should be available for players to self-clean & sanitize terminals before and after each use;
 - ALC employees will be on site to sanitize and clean all VLTs/chairs prior to resuming operations; and,
 - If a site is identified as a potential location for COVID-19 transmission, ALC will be notified and VLTs will be shut-down until a rigorous cleaning regiment has been conducted throughout the site (including VLTs). Once complete, the site will be required to follow the guidance of public health officials and any public health orders.



- **D. PERSONAL HYGIENE:** Employees and patrons will want to know that people within the site are taking personal hygiene seriously. The following protocols should be considered:
 - Staff and patrons should wash hands frequently with soap and warm water.
 - All ALC and retailer employees will be reminded to wash their hands regularly with soap and warm water and/or sanitize their hands if hand washing is not possible.
 - Hand sanitizers should be available when patrons come into any area containing VLTs;
 - ALC will provide all sites with a one-time supply of hand sanitizer to initiate operations (from local Nova Scotia supplier); and,
 - All ALC employees are expected to maintain excellent hand hygiene and must wash hand prior to entering and upon leaving a video lottery area and/or sanitize hands prior to entering and after leaving any VLT location if hand washing is not possible.
 - Operators are expected to support Public Health authorities with any tracing efforts, including consideration of the establishment of a voluntary patron registration program, while operating within legislation including but not limited to Privacy legislation.
 - Promote the use of technology to reduce exchange of cash where possible and where hand washing is not possible after each cash transaction, establish clear protocols to have separate staff handle cash transactions than those dealing with patrons.
 - Non-medical or personal masks will be optional for staff or patrons;
 - ALC field staff and suppliers working on behalf of ALC will be equipped with appropriate masks and gloves which may be worn based on NS Public Health guidelines; and,
 - Masks and gloves for sites and site staff is the responsibility of the operator if they choose to provide them.



- Passive employee and patron screening at VLT sites is recommended.
 VLT sites are expected to monitor and take action for employees and patrons for COVID-19 symptoms as considered in Restaurants Canada and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's Restaurant COVID-19 Rapid Recovery Guide for Nova Scotia.
 - No employees or patrons with symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted in the VLT gaming area in any site. For the most up-to-date list of symptoms refer to https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/when-to-seekhelp/;
 - As part of the site COVID-19 Operating Plan, sites are expected to keep employee schedules to better understand who may have been exposed and to conduct contact tracing where required.
- E. COMMUNICATIONS AND SUPPORT: Adjusting to a "new normal" will require time and on ongoing effort to change behavior. Additional communication and marketing support pieces will be provided to VLT sites as follows.
 - ALC will install posters at the entrance to the Designated Gaming Area in non-First Nation sites and will provide them to First Nation sites. Objective is to educate patrons how to safely play VLTs (Attachment B):
 - Maintain a physical distance of two-meters (six-feet);
 - Grab a wipe and clean the VLT prior to playing;
 - > Wash hands with soap and warm water prior to playing; and,
 - > Only one patron playing a VLT at a time.
 - Signage will be placed on VLTs to remind patrons to wipe down VLT prior to playing (Attachment C);
 - Sites will be provided with Federal and/or Provincial government COVID-19 related materials (Attachment A);
 - Operator and staff training materials will be provided to each site on how to properly sanitize and clean VLTs; and,
 - Key messages and Q&A's for ALC staff and site operators.



- **F. COMPLIANCE:** The regulated gaming industry ensures all operators adhere to provincial and federal legislation, regulations, contracts and policies. Careful oversight of operations allows NSGC to ensure the industry is managed to the highest standards of integrity, public confidence and safety, and is a critical piece of NSGC mandate
 - Compliance to COVID-19 protocols mentioned above will be added to VLT site standards review process. ALC will conduct a VLT COVID-19 compliance review in its sites on a periodic basis.
- G. HOURS OF OPERATION: The operating hours for VLTs in First Nation communities is inconsistent with non-First Nation sites as permitted in the Band Gaming Agreements. Many First Nations sites are open 24 hours a day while non-first Nation sites are open no more than 14 hours per day (10:00am to 12:00 midnight).
 - First Nation VLT sites may amend operating hours to provide enough time to clean VLT areas each day.



IN CLOSING

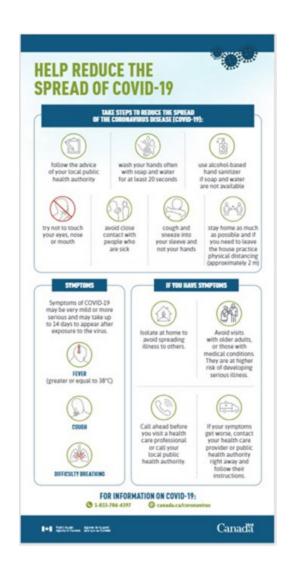
As businesses prepare to reopen as part of Nova Scotia's relaunch strategy, resources are available to help keep staff, and patrons safe. All businesses and organizations operating during the COVID-19 pandemic are required to have an operational plan. A template is being developed by Restaurants Canada and the Nova Scotia Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia for licensed VLT retailers.

Additional provincial resources are available at the following: https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/working-during-covid-19

To be successful during the economic relaunch, businesses should continue acting responsibly by following public health and physical distancing measures and using good hygiene and disinfecting practices. Contact your local Public Health Officer for more information.



ATTACHMENT A







ATTACHMENT B





ATTACHMENT C



THIS TERMINAL IS OFF to support physical distancing & your safety





ATTACHMENT D

REQUIREMENT	YES	NO	COMMENTS
A documented operational plan for the site to operate during COVID-19, such as: Outlined cleaning procedures and protocols Ability to accommodate physical distance throughout the site Identified traffic flow			
Cleaning procedures and protocols			
Log book of cleaning and disinfecting procedures and protocols			
COVID-19 Self- assessment for staff			
Communications material to remind staff to self-monitor			
Communication material to remind staff and players to social distance			
Hand washing posters and reminders			
Personal Protective Equipment for staff and players			
Appropriate hygiene supplies (soap, paper towels, toilet paper, etc.)			





