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NCPG READY TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY EXCLUSION ORDERS

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) announced that it is ready to accept applications for Family Exclusion Orders with immediate effect. Family Exclusion Orders are a type of exclusions available within the Casino Exclusion scheme, and enables a family to apply for exclusion of a problem gambler from casinos. It serves as a social safeguard to prevent problem gamblers and those with financial difficulties from entering the casinos in Singapore.

Mr Lim Hock San, Chairman of the NCPG said: "The Family Exclusion empowers family members to help problem gamblers within their family. Wishing the problem away, excusing the gambling addiction, bailing problem gamblers out repeatedly, or suffering in silence, will only prolong family agony. Problem gamblers can be helped. Family members should not feel helpless or hopeless, or guilty of the choice they make in the best interest of the family unit."

The Family Exclusion is available to immediate family members defined as spouses, children, parents and siblings, including adopted and step relations. Minors below 21 years of age or are incapacitated due to physical or mental impairment could apply for the Family Exclusion with an extended family member or a Minister-appointed person. This is to ensure that their interests are protected.

Family members may apply by calling Tanjong Pagar Family Service Centre (FSC) at 6593 6489. Tanjong Pagar FSC is currently located at 298 Tiong Bahru Road #03-06 Central Plaza Singapore 168730 (above Tiong Bahru MRT Station). Other enquiries pertaining to issues on problem gambling can be made through the National Problem Gambling Helpline at 1800-6-668-668.

Added Mr Lim: "Issuing Family Exclusion Orders by itself will not resolve the difficulties of problem gamblers and their families. Problem gamblers need help to overcome their gambling urges and habits and family members undoubtedly play a crucial role in the recovery process." Under the Family Exclusion, families and problem gamblers would be required to undergo counselling at the Tanjong Pagar Family FSC.



The NCPG has appointed a Panel of Assessors to consider and decide on the applications. A Committee of Assessors comprising a NCPG Council Member as Chair and two members from the Panel of Assessors, comprising grassroots/community leaders and helping professionals would convene to decide on all Family Exclusion applications once a month. They would need to prove that serious harm was inflicted to the family due to gambling. This is to prevent frivolous or wilful actions.

Under the Casino Control Act, besides Family Exclusion, the NCPG also has the authority to issue two other types of Casino Exclusion Orders, namely Self-Exclusion and Third-Party Exclusion to Singaporeans or Permanent Residents aged 21 and above. The NCPG will be releasing details of the other two types of Casino Exclusion in the second half of 2009.

About the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG):

The NCPG was appointed in August 2005 as part of Singapore's national framework to address problem gambling. It is a council comprising 20 members with expertise in public communications, psychiatry and psychology, social work, counselling and rehabilitative services. The Council's role is to provide advice and feedback to the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) on public education programmes on problem gambling and on the effectiveness of treatment, counseling and rehabilitative programmes; to decide on funding for these programmes; preventive and rehabilitative programmes; and on the applications for exclusion of persons from casinos. Stop Problem Gambling. Call 1800-6-668-668. For more information, please see www.ncpg.org.sg.