

Minors Posing Challenge To Encore Boston Casino Operators

Written by Administrator

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At Encore Boston Harbor in Everett, security personnel turn away between 600 and 800 people with fake or invalid IDs each month and the new casino contends with "very, very good fake IDs" as it tries to keep minors off the gaming floor, company officials told regulators Thursday.

Between the casino's opening in late June and the end of September, more than 2,500 minors were prevented from entering the gaming floor and 128 minors -- about 5 percent -- got through and spent an average of one hour and 12 minutes on the gaming floor, which is restricted to people 21 or older.

"We will continue to address the minors on the gaming floor at every level," EBH Vice President Jacqui Krum told commissioners as part of an update to the casino's last quarterly report. Krum and EBH Executive Director of Security and Investigations Richard Prior said the casino has reduced the number of entrances to the gaming floor and is planning to install hardwired ID/passport scanners at each access point within the next 12 weeks.

In the most extreme case reported to the commission, a person younger than 21 got onto the gaming floor and was able to spend three and a half hours there before being removed. Krum said that was a case of table game dealers assuming patrons had already been ID checked on their way onto the floor and not checking IDs at each table.

Encore officials are expected to give the commission a fourth-quarter update on a whole host of issues within the next month, but Prior said the amount of time minors spend on the gaming floor before being removed has already "taken a drastic turn down."

"Sometimes what happens, the very short ones are people coming through past our security officers, they get up to the nightclubs where they have the hardwired VeriDoc machines that are better equipped to check and then they are immediately taken off the floor so there is no gaming and no drinking," Prior said. "That's the vast majority of the people that got on. The number of people that were actually gaming is very, very small."

He said that most of the 600 to 800 IDs rejected each month are either fakes -- which Krum said are "very, very good fake IDs" -- or belong to an of-age family member of the minor trying to use

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Krum said the commission's Gaming Enforcement Unit, which includes State Police, has been very helpful in "helping us run down some of these fake IDs, which as Rich said, are very, very good fake IDs." Prior added, "As you could imagine, the number of colleges in the area, underage ... we reject at least 600 to 800 IDs a month."

When the casino opened and before it installed stanchions at each gaming floor entrance, some minors were able to get onto the floor by "hiding behind other people pushing strollers" when passing security agents, Krum said.

When MGM Springfield opened in 2018, that casino dealt with a [similar issue](#), leading MGM to implement a ban on unattended minors and a policy that considers anyone under the age of 16 to be an unattended minor. The casino also put in place a curfew of midnight, at which time only adults 21 or older are to be allowed into the facility.

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