

Michigan Casino Revenue Plunges After Mandated Shutdowns

Written by Administrator
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Detroit's three commercial casinos were on [pace to set a revenue record for 2020](#) , continuing the momentum from 2019 and bolstered by a nascent Michigan sports betting market.

Then March happened.

All three commercial casinos in Detroit – the MGM Grand Detroit, MotorCity Casino and Greektown Casino – closed on March 16 to comply with government orders for all non-essential businesses to shut down during the coronavirus pandemic.

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As a result, Michigan casino revenue from the three Detroit facilities fell drastically, drawing a combined adjusted revenue of \$57,445,827, according to [figures reported by the Michigan Gaming Control Board](#) . That was down 52.8% from February's haul of \$121,761,104 and down 59% year-over year as the drew \$140,386,270 in March 2019.

Michigan Casinos Usually Peak in March

That year-over-year figure represents an especially difficult reality for Detroit's casinos because March was the peak month for total adjusted revenue in each of the previous four years. And the March 2019 total was a monthly record for the casino's in Michigan's biggest city.

In fact, March has been the best revenue month for Michigan casinos in 12 of the past 13 years and in 15 of the 20 years since 2000, the first full year of Detroit commercial casinos being operational. The state's casino revenue has topped \$130 million in a month six times: March 2019 (\$140.4 million), March 2018 (\$138.6 million), March 2012 (\$135.3 million), March 2013 (\$134.8 million), March 2011 (\$132.8 million) and March 2017 (\$131.2 million).

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In 2019, Michigan casinos set a [state record with \\$1.454 billion](#) in total adjusted receipts and after two months, 2020 revenues were ahead of that pace. And March should have promised the best month yet, thanks to a new betting addition to the market.

Michigan Sports Betting Becomes Legal

The three commercial casinos in Detroit had just started offering sports bets when the coronavirus closures happened. Michigan sports betting became legal late in 2019 and the three Detroit casinos took their first legal sports bets on March 11. Tribal casinos scattered throughout the state were also working on timetables for when they could take sports bets.

That opening date should have been a coup for the three casinos, coming just days before the NCAA Basketball Tournament got underway. March Madness has traditionally been the most lucrative sports betting event in America, surpassing even the Super Bowl. And with Michigan and Michigan State both locks for the men's tournament, local interest would have been very high.

As it was, [Detroit's casinos took in \\$105,548 in sports betting revenue](#) in just a few days before sporting events were postponed or, as with March Madness, canceled in compliance with social distancing and public health guidelines to help avoid spreading the coronavirus.

The addition of Michigan sports betting should have made a typically lucrative March even rosier for the three Detroit commercial casinos, which have contributed [more than \\$2 billion in taxes](#) to Michigan's coffers over the past 20 years. Nonetheless, when major sporting events and casinos can open their doors again, eventually the addition of sports betting should help take Michigan casino revenue back to record-setting levels.

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