



# INDUSTRY MATTERS

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## WHY DOES THE COMMISSION CONSIDER DEBT A CONCERN?

By **Brandon Carey**  
*Licensing Analyst*



While debt does not necessarily mean an applicant is not suitable for licensure, a large amount of delinquent debt can be an indicator that an applicant may not be financially responsible. Concern exists that if an applicant does not demonstrate financial integrity and responsibility in their personal affairs, the same could carry over to their professional affairs as well. As gambling establishments generally conduct business wherein there is a frequent exchange of cash, chips, and other easily-convertible forms of currency, applicants' finances are reviewed very closely by the Bureau of Gambling Control and the Commission.

Another reason the Commission conditions debt is to minimize risk to the employer and the public. An employee with substantial debt could potentially pose a threat of theft or other occupational misconduct.

Because of the concerns debt may raise, the Commission may place conditions on an applicant's license requiring them to show proof of ongoing efforts to satisfy their delinquent debts.

Typically, conditions require an applicant to provide the Bureau of Gambling Control with proof of ongoing payments to satisfy their outstanding debt every 90 or 180 days. When an applicant's renewal application is being considered, failure to comply with the conditions during the initial licensure period may result in the denial of an applicant's renewal license. For these reasons, if you have a condition to provide updates to the Bureau of Gambling Control, it is important to provide them and keep a copy of your correspondence for your records. If you have any questions about the condition process in general, please call the Licensing Division at (916) 263-6292.

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### CGCC Calendar

#### Upcoming Licensing Meetings

- January 10
- January 24
- February 7
- February 21
- March 7
- March 28

#### Gaming Policy Advisory Committee

February 21 (1:30 p.m.)(Tentative)

#### Upcoming State Holidays (Office Closed)

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 21)
- Presidents' Day (February 18)
- Cesar Chavez Day (Observed April 1)

### NEW YEAR, NEW LAWS!

The Commission has recently updated its website to include the new compendium of gambling-related legislation chaptered in 2018. The compendium includes information about all the bills the Governor signed that either impact the Commission or are related to gambling, including what the bills do and their effective dates. [Check it out!](#)

## California Gambling Control Commission

### Chairman

*Jim Evans*

### Commissioner

*Paula LaBrie*

### Commissioner

*Gareth Lacy*

### Commissioner

*Trang To*

### Commissioner

*Vacant*

### Executive Director

*Stacey Luna Baxter*

### Chief Counsel

*R. Todd Vlaanderen*

### Deputy Director, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs

*Julia Bishop*

### Deputy Director, Licensing Division

*Adrianna Alcalá-Beshara*

### Deputy Director, Administration Division

*Alana Carter*

### Public Relations Officer

*Fred Castano*

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## BEEN FIRED BEFORE? PLEASE TELL US!

By Fred Castano

*Public Relations Officer*

Far too often at Commission licensing hearings, the Commissioners consider an applicant who hid the fact that they were terminated from a previous place of employment. Sometimes applicants resort to euphemisms like “let go” or “separated” instead of clearly stating that their employment was terminated. Often, when the Commissioners ask the applicant why they were not forthcoming regarding their employment history, the applicant will state that they were afraid their license would be denied due to their derogatory employment history.



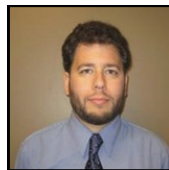
The Commission would like to remind applicants that there is no provision in the Gambling Control Act that would require the mandatory denial of a license due to being fired from a job. While the circumstances regarding the termination could form a basis for denial, the Commission has not denied a license based solely on the termination itself.

However, supplying untrue or misleading information to the Bureau or the Commission *is* cause for mandatory denial of an application. So in these cases, an applicant can open themselves to a mandatory denial while trying to cover up something that may not form a basis for denial at all. As they say, the cover-up is almost always worse than the crime.

## PUBLIC COMMENT FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HEARING PROCEDURE REGULATIONS NOW OPEN

By Joshua Rosenstein

*Regulatory and Legislative Specialist*



The Commission has begun the rulemaking process to amend existing regulations related to Hearing Procedures. The Commission’s hearing procedures define the processes used for approving, conditioning, and denying an application for licensure or other approval.

This proposed action has been drafted to supplement the current process to allow applicants to request to receive notices from the Commission via email; to create a process through which a new interim renewal license can be obtained; to allow for offsite livestreaming appearances for some parties or witnesses; and to create a clearer process for considering default decisions.

The Commission provided notice of the proposed regulatory action on December 14, 2018 to start the 45-day public comment period, which will close on February 8, 2019. A copy of the Notice of Proposed Regulatory Action, Initial Statement of Reasons, and Proposed Text can be found on the Commission’s [website under the Regulations tab \[Proposed Regulations\]](#).

## “EXCELLENCE IS NOT A SKILL, IT’S AN ATTITUDE”

By Stacey Luna Baxter  
Executive Director

As the Executive Director of the California Gambling Control Commission (CGCC), I am reminded daily, by the accomplishments we’ve achieved, how extremely fortunate I am, and the Commission as a whole is, to have a team of incredibly knowledgeable, dedicated, and positive staff members who radiate excellence.

At the end of each year, it is truly my honor to recognize individuals from our team for the exemplary attitude displayed throughout the year. This year, because I couldn’t decide on just one individual to receive the “Awesome Award,” I’ve chosen three: Information Technology Specialist **Ovi Bush**, Staff Counsel **Russell Johnson**, and Associate Governmental Program Analyst **Niecesha Williams**. Ovi consistently addresses each task with a smile and a “can do” attitude no matter the situation; Russell somehow finds a way to add appropriate humor to each situation, while still managing to keep everyone focused on the task at hand; and Niecesha pitches in on whatever is needed, whenever it’s needed, and with a positive attitude.



L-to-R: Russell Johnson, Niecesha Williams, Ovi Bush



Alana Carter

The recipient of the 2018 Director’s Award is the Deputy Director of Administration, **Alana Carter**. Since her hire at the Commission, Alana has consistently brought her infectious positive attitude to work each day. She takes on many roles at the Commission, including acting as a mentor, a voice of reason, or just someone to go to when you need a bit of positivity.

Did you know that 45% of the Commission staff has been with the Commission for 10 years or more...some for over 15 years! Amazing! Staff Counsel **Jason Pope**, Management Services Technician **Lisa Chimento**, and **Ovi Bush** were recognized and honored for reaching their 10-year mark with the Commission.

Last but certainly not least, the Commission took the opportunity to recognize former Commission Chief Counsel, the **Honorable Joginder (Joe) Dhillon**. Joe has been a Senior Advisor on gaming matters in the Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown since leaving the Commission in 2013, and was recently appointed to a judgeship in the Sacramento County Superior Court. Many of us here at the Commission have had the pleasure of working with Joe, either as Chief Counsel or a Senior Advisor. Joe was recognized by the Commission for his dedication to the State of California and gaming matters, and for his constant professionalism, positive outlook, and his ability to make each and every person feel equally important no matter what the issue.



L-to-R: Ovi Bush, Jason Pope, Lisa Chimento

Congratulations to all recipients and a huge **THANK YOU** to all CGCC staff for their daily commitment to excellence.

\* Please note that no State funds were used for the purchase of the awards presented.

### HAIL AND FAREWELL

The Commission sends a very grateful farewell to **Anna Carr**, who was the Deputy Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs for over 14 years! We will miss her wisdom, humor, patience, and keen eye for Halloween decorations and costumes. The Commission cannot thank her enough and wishes her a relaxing retirement.

The Commission welcomes **Julia Bishop**, who was appointed as Deputy Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs on October 8, 2018. Before coming to the Commission, Julia worked at the Department of Consumer Affairs in the Legislative Affairs Division for over six years in various positions, including Assistant Deputy Director. Prior to state service, Julia worked for a private legislative research company. Julia holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of California at Santa Cruz and a Master of Public Policy and Administration from Sacramento State University.

The Commission would also like to send a fond retirement farewell to **Lisa Ramirez** and **Jeanine Velasquez** of the Bureau of Gambling Control. Lisa was an administrative assistant and Jeanine was the Staff Services Manager of the Key Employee Unit, and we and their coworkers at the Bureau will miss them and wish them well.



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**OFFICE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL TRAINING SUMMIT IN SACRAMENTO ON MARCH 4-5**

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) is pleased to announce its annual training summit on March 4-5th, 2019, at the [Hilton Arden West](#) in Sacramento. The training summit promotes National Problem Gambling Awareness Month and provides workshops to 200 treatment providers, the recovery community, industry representatives, community leaders, government agencies, and law enforcement. The summit is open to the public.

The theme of this year’s summit is “10 Years of CalGETS: A Retrospective Look and Bridge to the Future” celebrating 10 years of no-cost problem gambling treatment to Californians. Highlights include a historical and current overview of the overarching mission, vision, and accomplishments of the CalGETS program, provided by Dr. Richard Rosenthal and Dr. Timothy Fong of the UCLA Gambling Studies Program, and CDPH Center for Healthy Communities Assistant Deputy Director Terri Sue Canale-Dalman.

Additional keynote speakers include Dr. David Ledgerwood, who is a licensed clinical psychologist and recognized expert in the study of pathological gambling disorders and will present on “Gambling Disorder and Trauma,” and Brett Abarbanel, Director of Research at the UNLV International Gaming Institute, will deliver her keynote on “Online Gambling and Sports Betting.”

The training summit offers licensed health professionals a chance to earn free continuing education units, and provides multiple networking opportunities during a meet-and-greet reception following the March 4 session.

For more information about the Office of Problem Gambling, visit the [OPG website](#) or call (916) 327-8611.



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**HEARING RESULTS**

(October 1 – December 31)

**Key Employee License:**

- Bouakeo Phouminavong, denied November 1
- Sai Saechao, denied December 12
- Zack Esmaili, denied December 13

**Third-Party Player License:**

- Hilary Brummett, approved October 4
- Sweeney Williams, denied October 4
- Raymond Smith, denied October 18
- Abigail Morales, denied November 1
- Amanda Olson, denied November 1
- Frank Vang, denied November 1
- Joel Muniz, denied November 1
- Jeffrey Stubblebine, denied November 8
- Liqin Qian, denied December 7

**Work Permit:**

- Thea Bun, denied November 1
- Sai Saechao, denied December 12
- Ramon Lopez, denied December 13

**GPAC VACANCY — APPLY TODAY!**

[The Commission is looking for a representative of large cardrooms](#) to fill the Category D seat vacancy on the Commission’s Gaming Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC). Eligibility for Category D is a licensee, agent, or employee from a cardroom with 25 tables or more. The Commission is accepting applications through January 24, 2019, and interviews will be conducted shortly thereafter.

[Click here](#) for the GPAC Application and Selection Process. Applications can be submitted via email to [GPAC@cgcc.ca.gov](mailto:GPAC@cgcc.ca.gov) or by mail, and must be postmarked no later than January 24, 2019. If you have any questions, please email [GPAC@cgcc.ca.gov](mailto:GPAC@cgcc.ca.gov) or call the Commission at 916-263-0700.

Comments, suggestions, questions, or ideas for future articles or newsletter topics are always accepted and can be submitted directly to the Commission at the address above or by emailing them to [fcastano@cgcc.ca.gov](mailto:fcastano@cgcc.ca.gov).