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## Michigan Gaming Control Board issues cease-and-desist letter to Bovada

DETROIT, May 30, 2024 — The Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) has taken decisive action against an overseas gaming company in Curaçao that is operating illegal online gaming sites, Bovada.com and Bovada.lv (Bovada), accessible to Michigan citizens. Following an investigation into the matter, the MGCB sent a cease-and-desist letter to Harp Media B.V., which operates Bovada, on May 29.

“The proliferation of online gaming platforms has led to increased scrutiny from regulatory bodies worldwide, and this action serves as a stern warning to overseas companies that flouting local regulations will not be tolerated,” **MGCB Executive Director Henry Williams** said. “The MGCB remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding Michigan’s laws and regulations and will continue to actively monitor and enforce compliance within the state to ensure a fair and secure gaming environment for all.”

Due to the unregulated and unlicensed online gaming offerings on Bovada, Harp Media B.V. is in violation of Michigan gaming laws, including the:

- [Lawful Internet Gaming Act](#), which states that internet gaming may only be offered by a licensed internet gaming operator. Only casinos that are currently licensed under the Michigan Gaming Control and Revenue Act and federally authorized tribal casinos within Michigan can apply for an internet gaming operator license or a sports betting operator license.
- [Michigan Gaming Control and Revenue Act](#), which prohibits a party from conducting a gambling operation without a license issued by the MGCB. A party who operates an unlicensed gambling operation is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for up to 10 years or a fine of up to \$100,000, or both.
- [Michigan Penal Code](#), which broadly prohibits any form of gambling, which generally involves the elements of consideration, prize, and chance. For example, accepting money, or anything of value, with the understanding that money, or anything of value, will be paid to any person based on the outcome of an uncertain event is prohibited.

Harp Media B.V. has 14 days from receipt of the letter to take steps to prevent Michigan residents from gambling on their websites or the MGCB will take legal action.

In light of these developments, the MGCB urges residents to exercise caution when engaging in online gaming activities and to verify the legality of gaming sites before participating. [A list of licensed internet gaming providers can be found on the agency’s website at Michigan.gov/MGCB](#). Residents are also encouraged to report any suspicious or unlicensed gambling operations to the MGCB for prompt investigation and action. Tips can be reported by calling 1-888-314-2682 or sending a message to [MIGamblingTip@michigan.gov](mailto:MIGamblingTip@michigan.gov).

*Gambling in any form is for entertainment purposes only. If you or someone you know may have a gambling problem, contact the National Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER, text 800GAM, or visit [www.1800gamblerchat.org](http://www.1800gamblerchat.org). Help is available 24/7 and is free and confidential. Michigan citizens can also visit the [Responsible Gaming page of the MGCB website](#) for information on self-exclusion programs including the Disassociated Persons List and the Internet Gaming and Sports Betting Responsible Gaming Database, and [DontRegretTheBet.org](http://DontRegretTheBet.org) for additional tools to game responsibly.*

*The Michigan Gaming Control Board shall ensure the conduct of fair and honest gaming to protect the interests of the citizens of the state of Michigan. Learn more at [Michigan.gov/MGCB](http://Michigan.gov/MGCB).*