

## ACT Labor's Community Clubs Plan

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will reduce the harm caused by gambling addiction and build a sustainable, long term community clubs sector for Canberra's future.

ACT Labor will continue to reduce the number of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) authorisations in community club venues. Under Labor's plan, we will reduce the number of EGMs by 500 authorisations every four years, starting with a mandated reduction to 3500 in July 2025.

Under a re-elected Labor Government, the cap on authorisations would be reduced to the following levels through a legislated model:

- The cap on authorisations in the ACT is 3000 or fewer before 1 July 2029
- The cap on authorisations in the ACT is 2500 or fewer before 1 July 2033
- The cap on authorisations in the ACT is 2000 or fewer before 1 July 2037
- The cap on authorisations in the ACT is 1500 or fewer before 1 July 2041
- The cap on authorisations in the ACT is 1000 or fewer before 1 July 2045

**ACT Labor believes that the most effective way to reduce the harm caused by EGMs is to reduce the number of machines available, and their geographic availability alongside the introduction of mandatory harm reduction measures in venues.**

ACT Labor already has a proven track record on reducing the number of machines in the capital. Under Labor Governments in the ACT, the number of machines in Canberra has reduced from 5022 in 2015 to 3790 today.

**Alongside this legislated compulsory reduction system, ACT Labor will continue to work with the local community clubs to move towards a more sustainable sector that delivers a long-term community benefit.**

We will work with the club sector to diversify their revenue streams through planning and development support. This will include:

- A review and consolidation of the various funds, schemes, subsidies and concessions that currently exist in respect of clubs and poker machines.
- The establishment of a Community Clubs Diversification Team in ACT Government. The team will:

- Provide clubs with a single point of contact interacting with ACT Government Directorates and agencies.
- Provide support for master planning of club sites and support social impact assessments by clubs looking to diversify and de-concessionalise all or part of their existing leases.
- Review permissible uses for Gaming Machine Offsets.
- An Innovation fund for clubs that provides seed funding for clubs to support diversification efforts.
- A review of the long-term impacts of divestment on the community contribution scheme.
- Support for workers employed by community clubs, with a particular focus on ensuring workers receive mandated training.

**ACT Labor will also work with the club sector to establish a ‘club of the future’ in the Molonglo Valley.**

This is an opportunity for innovation in the club sector, demonstrating how community clubs may operate in an environment with reduced EGMs authorisations.

**ACT Labor’s practical plan to reduce the harm caused by gambling addiction through EGMs also includes the introduction of mandatory, account based cashless gaming in all ACT venues.**

ACT Labor’s cashless framework would be legislated to commence in 2026-27, and would allow the establishment of harm reduction measures such as digital wallets, personal spend limits, time limits and breaks, player activity statements in real time, and restrictions on access to credit cards and transfers from overdrawn accounts.

Under Labor’s plan, community clubs would be required to cover the implementation costs of cashless gaming.

**ACT Labor’s plan will also look to revolutionise self-exclusion in the ACT.**

Under an ACT Labor Government, self-exclusion will no longer be a venue-based exclusion. The cashless framework will provide the opportunity for people who wish to exclude themselves from gambling areas to exclude themselves from establishing an account. A self-excluded person would be suspended from their account, and/or setting up a new account, for a period of time that they decide. That means self-excluded people would still be able to utilise the other community club functions such as dining or events.

A re-elected Labor Government will also explore the establishment of a process to allow third party exclusions.

**A re-elected ACT Labor Government will ban ATMs and EFTPOS withdrawals in clubs.**

Multiple withdrawals of cash (through ATMs or EFTPOS) in a venue are a prominent red-flag behaviour of problem gambling. Patrons will still be able to purchase food and drink with cash. However, they will not be able to withdraw cash at clubs.

As well as being a harm-minimisation measure, a ban on ATMs and EFTPOS will support the transition to cashless gaming in community clubs.