



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES

New Employee Survey at Plainridge Park Casino: Analysis of Fiscal Year 2018

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The findings of this report are based on an analysis of the third year of data collected from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) New Employee Survey administered at Plainridge Park Casino in Plainville, Massachusetts. The period captured in this analysis is fiscal year 2018, which roughly spans the time from the summer of 2017 to the summer of 2018. During this period, 193 survey responses were collected. This study follows the *New Employee Survey at Plainridge Park Casino: Analysis of First Two Years of Data Collection* report that documented new employee characteristics during the first two years of operation. Survey respondents in both studies include newly hired employees of different types: employees who already worked for Plainridge Racecourse before the Commission designated it as the Commonwealth's only slots parlor; those who are new to the gaming industry; employees who were permanently transferred from other gaming properties operated by the casino licensee, Penn National; and employees of food-court vendors. Respondents completed the survey during the fingerprinting process, which is the only step in the gaming-licensing process where they appear in person.

In general, we find that the new employment opportunities created at Plainridge Park Casino have benefited people who have experienced unemployment or underemployment and those with little educational attainment, experience, or training. Hiring at Plainridge Park Casino has also generated interest in employment in this industry, evident from the career-related reasons new employees provided for seeking employment at Plainridge Park Casino.

The main findings of this report include:

Plainridge Park Casino is creating employment opportunities in areas of the Commonwealth where these did not previously exist.

- *Unemployed and Underemployed*: 51 percent of respondents sought a job at Plainridge Park Casino for one or more of the following reasons: 1) needing an additional job for supplementary income; 2) being unemployed and needing work; and 3) being part-time or underemployed and needing more work. Almost half (46 percent) of respondents hired in the past year reported being previously unemployed or employed only part-time. Forty-two percent of those who previously worked in part-time jobs now work full-time at the casino. Seventy-six percent of people who were previously unemployed are in full-time positions at the casino.
- *Movers from out-of-state*: Movers represented about five percent of new employees hired in the past year and almost seven percent of all employees hired at Plainridge Park Casino since its opening. Most movers tended to come from full-time positions prior to working at Plainridge Park Casino, did not have a gaming background, and moved from other New England states.
- *People with little educational attainment or experience*: Seventy-five percent of new employees in the most recent year¹ have less than a Bachelor's degree. Eighty-two percent of casino employees lacked previous casino-related experience. Most new employees used to work in the *Accommodation and Food Services* and *Retail* industries and had experience that was transferrable to their casino jobs.
- *People with low levels of pre-employment training*: Eighty-four percent of new employees hired in the past year did not receive pre-employment training prior to their employment at Plainridge Park Casino. For new employees who did receive training, most of that training took place at the casino itself. Community colleges in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and regional partnerships in the state also provide opportunities for new employees to train for casino employment.

¹ The data in this report cover Fiscal Year 2018.

Most new employees wanted to work at Plainridge Park Casino for reasons related to career planning and readiness.

- Reasons for Seeking Casino Employment: The three major reasons why recent hires want to work at Plainridge Park Casino include: 1) the opportunity for career advancement; 2) improved pay; and 3) the opportunity to learn new skills or receive training.
- Interest in Training: Eighty-one percent of new employees hired in the past year are interested in training. The top categories of casino-related training that new employees would like to receive include: 1) casino operations; 2) customer service; 3) food and beverage operations; and 4) general management. New employees are also interested in leadership training, management training, and technical and computer training.

Most new employees live in Massachusetts, but some commute from out-of-state.

- Commuters from Rhode Island: Most people hired in the past year live in Massachusetts; however, 33 percent of new hires across the three years of data collection now commute from out-of-state and mainly from Rhode Island. The top municipalities of residence are North Attleborough (MA), Attleboro (MA), Pawtucket (RI), and Providence (RI).