

**STATE OF OHIO
CASINO CONTROL COMMISSION**

In re:

BLAKE MORGAN,

Party.

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Case No. 2026-IVEL-001

**ORDER FOR PLACEMENT ON SPORTS GAMING
INVOLUNTARY EXCLUSION LIST**

The Ohio Casino Control Commission ("Commission") may include any person on the sports gaming involuntary exclusion list who before, during, or after a sporting event, threatens violence or harm against any person who is involved in the sporting event, where the threat is related to sports gaming, or whose participation in the play of sports gaming poses a threat to the interests of the state, to achieving the intents and purposes of R.C. Chapter 3775, or to the strict and effective regulation of sports gaming, as provided for under R.C. 3772.031(B).

On or about October 28, 2025, Blake Morgan ("Morgan") made harassing and threatening statements about Toronto Blue Jays Manager John Schneider while on a phone call with Major League Baseball's ("MLB") customer service line. Morgan's statements were recorded as a part of his conversation with the MLB customer service agent and included threats of violence or harm against Toronto Blue Jays Manager John Schneider who was involved in a sporting event (that being the 2025 World Series between the Toronto Blue Jays and Los Angeles Dodgers) and the threats related to Morgan's sports gaming activities. Based upon Morgan's conduct, on or about October 30, 2025, MLB imposed an indefinite ban upon Morgan from all Major League Baseball stadiums, offices, academies, and other facilities.

Thereafter, the Ohio Casino Control Commission ("Commission") issued Morgan a Notice of Intent to Place on the Involuntary Exclusion List and Opportunity for Hearing ("Notice"). Upon proper service of the Notice, Morgan had a right to a hearing if timely requested within 30 days of the Notice's mailing. Morgan so requested, and the Commission held a hearing before Hearing Examiner Margaret Brewer ("Examiner"). Morgan was not present for the hearing, and the Commission held the hearing as scheduled before the Examiner.

After presentation and submission of the evidence, the Examiner closed the hearing record and prepared a Report and Recommendation ("R&R") for Commission consideration. Review of the R&R finds that the Examiner recommends that Morgan be excluded from sports gaming for threatening violence and harm against a person involved in a sporting event and be placed on the list of persons who are to be excluded from a sports gaming facility and from participating in the play or operation of sports gaming in Ohio. A copy of the R&R was duly served upon Morgan, giving 30 days therefrom to file objections, *see* R.C. 3772.04(A)(2). Morgan timely submitted written objections to the Examiner's R&R, and the Commission considered each of the objections.

In his first objection, Morgan alleges that Ed Tomba (a retired law enforcement officer who investigated this matter as a contractor for MLB), told him during a phone conversation that "this all stops and end with me." Morgan argues that Tomba's statement led him to believe no further action would be taken against him, including presumably the Commission's action to place Morgan on the involuntary exclusion list for sports gaming. After Morgan admitted to making the phone call to MLB where he threatened the Toronto Blue Jays Manager after Game 3 of the World Series, Tomba testified that he explained the seriousness of the situation to Morgan. Evidentiary records do not reflect that the alleged statement was ever made by Tomba. Regardless of what Tomba may or may not have said to Morgan, it does not bind the Commission. The Commission has an independent statutory responsibility to ensure the integrity of sports gaming and protect the interests of the State.

In his second objection, Morgan claims that the video submitted into evidence as Exhibit 3 which prompted his initial call to MLB lacked authentication because there is no evidence that this was the video that Morgan was referring to when he made his call to MLB. Even if true, and Morgan was referring to a different interview with the Blue Jays Manager in his threatening call to MLB, it is of no import to the merits of the case. Both the video that Morgan referenced in his threatening call to MLB and the video included as Exhibit 3 relate to statements made by the Toronto Blue Jays Manager about pitching to Shohei Ohtani in future World Series games. More fundamentally, whether Morgan watched a given video or not cannot change the testimony and evidence that clearly establishes that Morgan, who was engaged in sport gaming related to the 2025 World Series, made threats of violence or harm against the Toronto Blue Jays Manager.

In his third objection, Morgan asserts that no one spoke to him "in person" about this investigation, including Sheriff deputies that came to his house. This contention, whether true or not, is likewise irrelevant and does not undercut MLB's investigation. The threats of violence or harm that Morgan aimed at the Toronto Blue Jays Manager speak for themselves, pose a threat to the interests of the State, and fundamentally imperil the integrity of sports gaming and the health and welfare of the participants in sporting events.

In his fourth objection, Morgan contends that the Commission did not serve him with a hard copy of the Hearing Notice. Hearing exhibits clearly establish that Morgan repeatedly used the same yahoo email address to send emails to the Commission (including a March 17, 2026, email acknowledging receipt of the Notice, an April 13, 2026, email requesting a hearing, and a May 21, 2026, email entitled "Better treat me with respect!") that he used to send in his objections to the R&R.

Morgan's email address constitutes his Last Known Address, as that term is defined in R.C. 119.05(A)(1), which is his "electronic mail address appearing in the Commission's official records." *Id.* The Commission properly served Morgan with the Hearing Notice on May 6, 2026, by sending it by "electronic mail" to his "last known address." R.C. 119.05(B)(1). Under R.C. 119.05(C)(1), the Commission completed service of the Hearing Notice on Morgan on May 7, 2026, as this is the date receipt of the Hearing Notice was relayed electronically to the Commission. For these reasons, Morgan's objection that he was not served with a hard copy of the Hearing Notice wholly lacks merit.

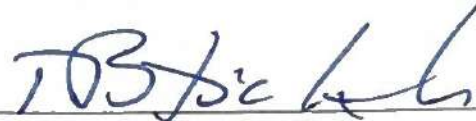
The matter is now before the Commission for final adjudication.

WHEREFORE, the Commission **ADOPTS** the Examiner's R&R without modification.

WHEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and upon a quorum and majority vote of the members, the Commission **ORDERS** as follows:

- 1) Morgan shall be **PLACED** on the Commission's Sports Gaming Involuntary Exclusion List and is **PROHIBITED** from entering any sports gaming facility in this state or participating in the play or operation of sports gaming in this state.
- 2) A certified copy of this Order shall be served upon Morgan in accordance with section R.C. 119.05 of the Revised Code.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Thomas J. Stickrath, Chair
Ohio Casino Control Commission

NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

The Party is hereby notified that pursuant to R.C. 119.12, this Commission Order may be appealed by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Commission setting forth the Order that the Party is appealing from and stating that the Commission's Order is not supported by reliable, probative, and substantial evidence and is not in accordance with law. The Notice of Appeal may also include, but is not required to include, the specific grounds for the appeal. The Notice of Appeal must also be filed with the appropriate court of common pleas in accordance with R.C. 119.12. In filing the Notice of Appeal with the Commission or court, the notice that is filed may be either the original Notice of Appeal or a copy thereof. The Notice of Appeal must be filed within 15 days after the service of the notice of the agency's order as provided in section R.C. 119.05 of the Revised Code.