

It's Time to Talk About Problem Gambling

Gambling takes many forms.

Gambling takes many forms, and many people don't even realize they're gambling. What seems like a harmless pastime for some can cause serious problems for others including:

- Casino games, like slot machines, table, or card games
- Lottery or scratch tickets
- Sports betting, including online fantasy sports betting
- Bingo
- Horse or dog race betting
- Raffles

Did you know?

Over 75% of adult MA residents had gambled BEFORE the arrival of Casinos.¹

What is problem gambling?

Gambling that harms people is called problem gambling, and it's a mental health condition that can be addressed through support and treatment. It can be hard to know when gambling has become a problem, but there are signs that can help you understand what it looks like:

- Needing to gamble with more money to keep gambling exciting
- Feeling irritated or restless when trying to cut back on gambling
- Trying to cut back or stop gambling, but not being able to
- Thinking about gambling a lot
- Gambling when upset
- Chasing losses (gambling more to win back money after losing)
- Trying to hide gambling by lying
- Having problems with relationships, work, or school because of gambling
- Needing to borrow money because of gambling losses

Some people might experience just a few of these signs. These signs can also present themselves at different levels of severity for each individual.

What are the facts?

110,000 adult Massachusetts residents are experiencing problem gambling and approximately 440,000 adult Massachusetts residents are at risk of experiencing problem gambling.¹

49% of respondents with gambling-related problems reported receiving mental health treatment, but none reported receiving treatment for gambling problems.²

Problem gambling is a common co-occurring disorder.

Co-occurring disorders may include any combination of two or more substance use disorders and mental disorder identified in the DSM-5.

- 96% percent of individuals with Gambling Disorder have at least one other psychological disorder.²
- Individuals with a Gambling Disorder are at much higher risk for having substance use or other mental health problems.²

Problem gambling can be treated – and there's help available.

M-TAC offers free trainings, courses and resources that help clinicians and health allied professionals learn how to support people experiencing problem gambling.

The MA Problem Gambling Helpline offers treatment and other resources to help people who experience problem gambling or their loved ones start on the path to recovery.

Call 800.327.5050 or visit gamblinghelplinema.org to speak to a trained specialist.

References:

¹ Volberg, R. A., Williams, R. J., Stanek, E. J., Houpt, K. A., Zorn, M., Rodriguez-Monguio, R. (2017). Gambling and Problem Gambling in Massachusetts: Results of a Baseline Population Survey. Amherst, MA: School of Public Health and Health Sciences, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

² Kessler, R. C., Hwang, I., LaBrie, R., Petukhova, M., Sampson, N. A., Winters, K. C., & Shaffer, H. J. (2008). DSM-IV pathological gambling in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Psychological medicine*, 38(9), 1351–1360.



Massachusetts Problem
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