

Problem Gambling Awareness Month Raises Awareness, Promotes Understanding

RICHMOND, VA, UNITED STATES, February 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Virginia Council on Problem Gambling \(VCPG\)](#), in partnership with the [National Council on Problem Gambling \(NCPG\)](#), recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM).

- Calls to Virginia Council on Problem Gambling's helpline increased 49% in 2024
- VCPG connected 1,002 callers directly to a problem gambling treatment provider
- Support is available 24/7/365 at VCPG's free, confidential helpline: 1-888-532-3500



“

With gambling more accessible online, recognizing problem gambling signs is crucial. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone struggling or concerned about a loved one.”

*Dr. Carolyn Hawley, President,
Virginia Council on Problem
Gambling (VCPG)*

This year's theme, “Seeking Understanding,” focuses on increasing awareness of problem gambling as a serious but often misunderstood mental health condition. The PGAM campaign seeks to foster greater awareness and empathy, break down barriers to treatment, and provide support for individuals and families impacted by gambling-related harm.

Problem gambling, defined as gambling behaviors that disrupt or damage personal, family, or professional lives, affects millions of Americans. Nationally, approximately 2.5 million U.S. adults meet the criteria for a severe gambling problem, with an additional 5-8 million individuals experiencing mild to moderate gambling problems.

PGAM is designed to coincide each year with March Madness, when many Americans will take advantage of the expansion of legal online sports wagering. For the majority of adults, gambling can be a fun and entertaining experience, but there are risks involved. In a 2024 report on American Attitudes Towards Gaming, published by the American Gaming Association (AGA),

research shows that more than half of all American adults (55%) participated in some form of gambling in the past year and 21% placed a sports bet.

“As gambling has become even more readily accessible through online platforms on laptops and smart phones, the Council’s mission to increase the well-being of Virginians impacted by gambling becomes even more critical,” said Dr. Carolyn Hawley, President of VCPG. “It’s important for all individuals to be aware of the [signs of problem gambling](#), whether it’s for themselves, a loved one, or someone they know. We want anyone who might be struggling with a gambling issue to know that help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”



Dr. Carolyn Hawley

Some highlights from the VCPG’s 2024 Annual Report include:

- In 2024 alone, 15,841 calls were made to the VCPG’s free 24-hour helpline, representing a 49% increase in call volume from 10,608 calls in 2023.
- In 2024, every caller age bracket showed an increase in percentage from the 2023 report, especially ages 18-24 (grew from 9.1% to 13%) and ages 25-34 (jumped from 17.9% to 28%).
- VCPG connected 1,002 callers directly to a problem gambling treatment provider.
- Gambling on online non-sports websites was cited as the #1 type of gambling activity that callers had engaged in.
- Gambling at slot machines at casinos and sports gambling were tied for the #2 type of gambling activity for callers. Other types of gambling activities included playing the lottery, skill games, and table games.
- Prominent financial ramifications from the callers’ experiences with problem gambling included spending all their extra money, being late on bills, spending their savings, borrowing from friends/family, and incurring additional credit card debt.

“As the landscape of gaming in Virginia continues to evolve, the work that the Virginia Council on Problem Gambling does every day for the Commonwealth is more important than ever, and we at the Virginia Lottery stand by them as proud partners in their efforts.” said Virginia Lottery Executive Director Khalid Jones. “Together, we are working to shine a light on available resources, like the Virginia Problem Gambling Helpline, for those who may have a gambling problem, or those worried about a loved one.”

The Virginia Problem Gambling Helpline, 1-888-532-3500, is a free, 24/7/365 service that refers callers to peer recovery specialists who are experienced in gambling and/or substance use. These specialists can answer questions, provide support and direct callers to valuable resources in their geographic area. The helpline is easily accessible by call, text or even by online chat at vcpg.net. All callers who allow follow-up calls receive regular contacts via phone, text and email after 48 hours, one week, one month and six months.

###

About VCPG:

The Virginia Council on Problem Gambling (VCPG) aims to increase the well-being of Virginians impacted by gambling. The Council accomplishes this through raising public awareness of problem gambling, communicating that help is available for problem gamblers and their families, and providing research and programs for prevention and education. VCPG maintains a neutral stance on gambling and is the only nonprofit in Virginia dedicated to this issue. The Council exists solely through membership support. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, please call or text 1-888-532-3500 or visit vcpg.net to chat online.

Annual members of the VCPG are committed to supporting safer gambling practices and services for problem gamblers and their families. Current Platinum-level Members include Bristol Casino Portsmouth, Caesar's Entertainment, Draftkings, Fanduel Group and Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol. Barstool Sports/Penn National Gaming, Inc. and the Virginia Lottery are Gold-level Members. BETMGM is a Silver-level Member. Colonial Downs Racetrack is a Bronze-level Member. Local Community Service Board (CSB) Members include Chesterfield Mental Health Support Services, Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services, Highlands Community Services, Hopestarter Rappahannock Area CSB, Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck CSB, Northwestern CSB, Loudoun County CSB, Prince William Community Services, Southern Virginia Problem Gambling Collaborative, and Southside Behavioral Health.

About the National Council on Problem Gambling:

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) is the only national nonprofit organization in the US that seeks to mitigate gambling-related harm. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling. If you or someone you know may have a gambling problem, contact the National Problem Gambling Helpline, which offers hope and help without stigma or shame.

Dr. Carolyn Hawley
Virginia Council on Problem Gambling
+1 804-827-0922
cehawley@vcu.edu

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/789073961>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.