



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 1, 2024

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March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month — Help Raise Awareness of Resources to Combat Problem Gambling

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Gaming (ADG), Division of Problem Gambling (DPG), in collaboration with the National Council of Problem Gambling (NCPG), recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. 2024 marks the 21st anniversary of Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

“Problem gambling is a serious addiction that affects an estimated two percent of adults and five percent of youth in Arizona,” said Katie Hobbs, Arizona Governor. “That is why I have issued a proclamation announcing March 2024 as Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Month — through education and outreach, we can spread the word and support those in Arizona who may suffer from problem gambling by getting them the help they need.”

Problem gambling is defined as all gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family, or vocational pursuits. Approximately 2 million U.S. adults (1% of the population) are estimated to meet criteria for severe problem gambling. Another 4 to 6 million (2-3%) meet the criteria for mild or moderate problem gambling.

This year, DPG will be hosting the 16th Annual Symposium on Problem Gambling. With the theme, “A Closer Look at Problem Gambling in Arizona Through Diverse Populations,” this year’s symposium will be taking a closer look at problem gambling and how it relates to other behavioral health topics and the research and experience of diverse populations.

“There is great importance in bringing together innovators, leaders, and decision makers in person, going beyond virtual interactions,” said Jackie Johnson, ADG CEO. “Our goal is that our conference provides an opportunity for meaningful discussions, sharing of leading best practices, and strategic collaborations essential to our organization’s mission and objectives.”

Problem Gambling Awareness Month is designed to coincide each year with March Madness, during which Americans are expected to wager over \$3 billion. For the majority of adults, gambling can be a fun and entertaining experience, but there are risks involved. Sports bettors are at a particularly high-risk for developing a gambling problem. According to the National Survey on Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experiences 2.0, 4 out of 5 sports bettors reported often needing to gamble more to get the same feeling of excitement.

“We are more than grateful that Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs has once again proclaimed March as Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Month,” said Elise Mikkelsen, Director of DPG. “We know the disparities in both access to services as well as treatment outcomes have become increasingly evident for individuals from historically underrepresented communities and we want you to know that you are not alone. By utilizing DPG’s free, 24/7 confidential helpline or visiting our website, those in the state can take the next step and access information and resources critical in addressing a problem with gambling.”

The Arizona Department of Gaming is not the only State agency that works to alleviate problem gambling. “The Arizona Lottery recognizes that gambling addiction can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic status,” said Arizona Lottery CEO Alec Thomson. “We are committed to doing our part to promote responsible gaming by raising awareness on the signs of problem gambling and providing resources to help those who may struggle with a gambling problem.” To date, the Lottery has provided \$5.7 million to ADG to contribute to effective statewide problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, DPG urges you to get help now by calling 1-800-NEXT-STEP (1.800.639.8783), DPG’s confidential helpline, texting “NEXTSTEP” to 53342, or utilizing a chat feature on the DPG website. DPG’s helpline provides confidentiality and connects callers with a master’s level counselor who can connect them with available resources, including statewide treatment providers who specialize in problem gambling. The helpline is available 24/7 to everyone facing a problem with gambling – individuals and affected family members, friends or co-workers. Learn more and access DPG resources: <https://problemgambling.az.gov/>.

About ADG

Established by the Arizona State Legislature in 1995, ADG is the state regulatory agency for [tribal gaming](#), [racing and pari-mutuel/simulcast wagering](#), [event wagering/fantasy sports](#) and [unarmed combat sports](#). ADG also provides and supports education, prevention and treatment programs for people and families affected by problem gambling through its [Division of Problem Gambling](#) and 24-hour confidential helpline, 1-800-NEXT-STEP.

About the National Council on Problem Gambling

NCPG is the national advocate for people and families affected by problem gambling. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling and works with all stakeholders to promote responsible gambling. For information on NCPG’s 38th National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling: www.ncpgambling.org/training/national-conference/.

About the Arizona Lottery

Since 1981, the Arizona Lottery and its retail partners have generated more than \$5.5 billion in net funding to support programs that help to improve the quality of life for the people of Arizona. Proceeds from Lottery ticket sales fund programs in higher education, economic development, environmental conservation, and health and human services. The mission of the Lottery is to support Arizona programs for the public benefit by maximizing net revenue in a responsible manner. Learn more at ArizonaLottery.com.

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Proclamation

WHEREAS, many forms of legalized gaming exist in Arizona, including the Arizona Lottery, Indian gaming, racing pari-mutuel/simulcast wagering, event wagering, fantasy sports, charitable gaming, amusement gambling, and social gambling; and
WHEREAS, Arizona Indian gaming provides substantial funds to support problem gambling programs throughout the State; and
WHEREAS, an estimated 2 percent of adults and 5 percent of youth in Arizona have a problem with gambling and adults who seek problem gambling treatment often report gambling from an early age; and
WHEREAS, the Arizona Department of Gaming provides and supports education, prevention, and treatment programs for people and families affected by problem gambling through its Division of Problem Gambling and 24-hour confidential helpline, 1-800-NEXT-STEP; and
WHEREAS, since 1998, the State of Arizona has had a formal statewide responsible gambling program; and
WHEREAS, the National Council on Problem Gambling and the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators have declared the month of March as National Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and
WHEREAS, through education and programming, potential, and existing gambling-related problems can be addressed by individuals, organizations, and state and tribal governments.
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Katie Hobbs, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim March 2024, as

ARIZONA PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

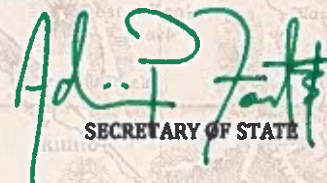
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona



GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this twentieth day of February in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Four and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Forty-Eighth.

ATTEST:



SECRETARY OF STATE

