

Gambling and the Justice System

People with gambling problems enter the system due to drug possession, bankruptcy, or family issues.

What is Gambling?

Any act of betting something of value on an unknown outcome. It doesn't require money or even possessions in order to be considered gambling.

- Lottery
- Card games
- Casino games
- Office pools
- Slot machines
- Internet gambling
- Fantasy sports
- Bingo
- Bets between friends
- Race tracks

Evidence of a Gambling Problem

- Credit card statements showing cash advances
- Charged with embezzlement
- Receipts from payday loans
- Pawn shop tickets
- Sworn testimony from family members who consistently loaned money to the gambler

If you have a defendant in your courtroom who has committed the following, it is recommended to order a gambling evaluation:

- Fraud of any sort
- Money laundering
- Theft from employer
- Embezzlement
- Bankruptcy
- Theft to fund gambling activities

How to Tell if Someone has a Problem?

A simple Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS) provides clarity. A yes to any of these questions indicates a need for gambling disorder assessment:

1. During the past 12 months have you become restless, irritable, or anxious when trying to stop or cut down on gambling?
2. During the past 12 months have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled?
3. During the past 12 months, did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends or welfare?

Problem Gamblers by the Numbers

- 96%** Problem gamblers have co-occurring disorders such as substance abuse or psychiatric disorders
- 85%** People with a gambling disorder who never seek treatment
- 55%** Compulsive gamblers who also have been involved in some type of illegal activity
- 14%** Incarcerated population that has a gambling disorder compared with roughly 1 percent for the general population

How to Get Help?

To speak to a problem gambling treatment professional with questions or to refer for an appointment, please call (866) 322-1407.



Problem Gambling Prevention Program
(712) 325-5617 | HeartlandFamilyService.org



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