



**FLORIDA COUNCIL ON
COMPULSIVE GAMBLING
888-ADMIT-IT**

**24-HOUR PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE
ANNUAL REPORT
(July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)**

**GAMBLING PROBLEM?
888-ADMIT-IT**

 **FLORIDA COUNCIL ON
COMPULSIVE GAMBLING** gamblinghelp.org

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DEFINITIONS

To get started, it is important to understand the definitions of various words so that when they are encountered within this report, the meaning will be clear and serve as a foundation for understanding.

1. **FCCG** – The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling.
2. **Fiscal Year** – The FCCG’s fiscal year begins July 1st and ends June 30th of each calendar year.
3. **Gambling** - Gambling is the act of risking any item of value when the outcome is unknown or relies on chance. This means that gambling does not always require “real world money” and can take many forms, some of which may present as less obvious than others. For example, while playing slot machines and placing a wager on a horse race may be widely viewed as “gambling,” other activities, such as purchasing lottery tickets, participating in bingo at the local senior center, betting on a basketball game with friends, or buying a loot box in a video game, are frequently not perceived as ‘gambling’.

Simply, whether a person gambles at a land-based casino; via the Internet in the privacy of their own home via a mobile app or computer; at an internet café, at a card room or bingo center; at a convenience store; in an office pool at work; or any other location, if anything of value is being risked on an unknown outcome that relies on chance, it is gambling.

4. **“Problem Gambling vs. Compulsive Gambling vs. Gambling Addiction vs. Gambling Disorder”** – Interchangeable terms to define disordered gambling or someone who does not have the ability to gamble with control and/or experiences difficulties in their life due to their gambling. **Compulsive gambling** is a synonym for the clinical term, “**disordered gambling**”, which is classified as a Substance-Related and Addictive Disorder in the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) Diagnostic Statistical Manual, 5th edition. Initially recognized by the APA beginning in 1980, and previously referred to as “**pathological gambling**”, today “**disordered gambling**” is typically viewed and treated as an addiction. Like drug and alcohol addiction, compulsive gamblers often report a physical arousal/“rush” when engaged in or thinking about gambling. Additional similarities to other addictions include being preoccupied with the activity, a decrease in tolerance that feeds the need to increase time and money spent gambling, engaging in illegal activities due to gambling, and experiencing withdrawal-like symptoms when forced to stop.

Disordered gambling is defined by the APA as a persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as indicated by the individual exhibiting four (or more) of the following in a 12-month period, and the behavior is not better explained by a manic episode. The following criteria are used:

1. Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement.
2. Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
3. Has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling.
4. Is often preoccupied with gambling (e.g., having persistent thoughts of reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next gambling venture, thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
5. Often gambles when feeling distressed (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
6. After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even (“chasing” one’s losses).
7. Lies to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling.
8. Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
9. Relies on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

The term “**problem gambling**” is an all-inclusive term that refers to all gambling behavioral patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits and range from serious to severe difficulties. The symptoms include increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently and with increasing amounts of money, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, “chasing” losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior despite mounting, serious, negative consequences. In extreme cases, problem gambling can result in financial ruin, legal problems, loss of career and family, mental health issues, and even suicide.

5. “**Prevalence**” - Prevalence refers to the total number of individuals in a population who have a disease, health condition or risk factor at a specific period of time or over a specified period of time, usually expressed as a percentage of the population. Prevalence rates are important, because it makes it possible to calculate age and gender-adjusted rates, as well as other variables that can be subsequently used to draw comparisons over a limited or a broad range of data for a set time or over a long-term period of time. Further, in the gambling addiction field, knowing the prevalence rates for different sub-groups within a population enable more targeted prevention, education, treatment, research, while empowering other professionals to tailor programs, services, outreach approaches, and treatment programs.

Prevalence studies completed in the gambling addiction field use different screening tools based upon the 9 diagnostic criteria, so while the APA only assesses for disordered gambling, which is a strict baseline, it is important to understand that researchers often determine reasonable ways to also assess for at-risk and problem gambling rates (1 APA criteria and 2-3 APA criteria respectively). Finally, social or recreational gamblers, also referred to in prevalence and other research, are individuals who participate in gambling occasionally but do not experience any adverse impacts and can partake in the activity safely without experiencing difficulties. These individuals typically set and maintain time and money limits while finding gambling and the gambling venue enjoyable.

6. “**Methods for Reaching the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine**” - To assure that anyone in need of information or assistance for a gambling problem can obtain the help they need, in a format they in which they are comfortable, the FCCG’s Problem Gambling HelpLine can be contacted by calling or texting 888-ADMIT-IT, initiating a live chat (gamblinghelp.org) e-mailing (fccg@gamblinghelp.org), or reaching out on social media platforms (e.g., Facebook and X).
7. “**Cognitive Distortions**” - Cognitive distortions are common among compulsive gamblers – typically untrue and self-serving thoughts that a person’s mind creates in order to justify negative behaviors or actions as rational and appropriate. As one example, many problem gamblers use the term “borrowing”, which requires that permission is granted by the lending source. When such permission is not authorized, whether the money is “borrowed” from loved ones, employers, or elsewhere, it is “stealing”. The fact that someone may have intended to pay the money back, or has paid it back, is irrelevant, and doesn’t change the fact that “stealing” is an illegal act.
8. “**Continuous Forms of Gambling**” - Gambling games referred to as continuous forms of gambling (e.g. slot machines and online casino gambling) present greater risks to the gambling population, because they involve rapid cycles of play, allow for the reinvestment of winnings, are often done in isolation, and do not encourage breaks in play. Moreover, the speed in which these games occur typically leaves gamblers unaware of the amount of money spent and/or lost and frequently will present difficulties in a problem gambler’s life faster than other more traditional forms of gambling. Most recently, sports wagering has moved from a discontinuous form of gambling (e.g., betting on the outcome) to a more continuous form of gambling (e.g., prop bets on specific plays or players, wagering on who will be ahead in the first period, etc.

9. **“Loot Box”** - The term gambling also includes video games that contain gambling-like features, such as loot boxes. A loot box is a virtual treasure chest embedded in video games containing randomized in-game items of varying rarity and desirability. Players have opportunities to purchase loot boxes with in-game currency or real money to have a chance at winning items of perceived value. Some games require players to spend money as a means of continuing play or to unlock features necessary to be competitive in multiplayer matches. While these games are typically referred to as video “gaming”, it should be clear that most researchers and clinicians suggest that they meet the definition of “gambling” as outlined above. This is also true of other video games, which require purchases and provide winnings (prizes) that cannot be converted to cash.
10. **“Prop Bets”** - In gambling, a "proposition bet" (prop bet, prop, or a side bet) is a wager that is not tied directly to the outcome of a sporting event, but rather a bet on an individual player’s performance or event in that game. Prop bets enable a person to place a bet on almost every play of the game.
11. **“888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Contact Types”** - The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) operates the statewide 24-hour confidential and multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine, 888-ADMIT-IT, which provides supportive intervention, information, and resource referrals to individuals seeking help or information for a gambling problem. The service further responds to contacts from gamblers themselves, from a broad range of professionals who service problem gamblers, gamblers’ loved ones and others, and individuals seeking information and/or training opportunities in the field, inquiring about innovative outreach approaches, and more.

The FCCG maintains strict protocols regarding the designation and associated recording of 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts. The Agency has defined a total of five (5) unique contact types, which combined, make up the category **“Total Agency Contacts”**. The **“Help Services Contacts”** category consists only of contacts from individuals in the State of Florida who are requesting help and/or information related to problem gambling. The current annual report primarily focuses only on **Florida “Help” Contacts**, specific to just this one (1) contact type.

*See following page.

Help Services – Types of Contacts

FCCG uses and reports five (5) unique contact types, with specifics about each provided as follows:

1. **Help Contacts** – Individuals reaching out for assistance with a gambling problem who are provided supportive intervention, information, and/or referrals for problem gambling specific supports. These contacts are received from either the gambler themselves, a loved one or affected other, a family member, concerned friend, or employer.
2. **Information Contacts** – Population specific contacts from professionals for training or other information related to problem gambling, occur from varying audiences. Examples include medical or mental health providers, the media, gambling industry employees, educators, legal professionals, and law enforcement.
3. **Office Contacts** – General contacts received from vendors, advertising agencies, banking contacts, payroll contacts, reference checks, etc. Examples include the office supply vendors, advertising and design companies, HelpLine software database providers, etc.
4. **Inappropriate Contacts** – A contact placed by someone who is reaching out to the FCCG for false or unrelated purposes. These include hang-ups, robo-calls, wrong numbers, abusive callers, pranks, and other erroneous contacts.
5. **Peer Connect Contacts** – Peer support contacts that connect problem gamblers and loved ones with other problem gamblers and loved ones that are in in recovery, as an additional support option.

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING 2023-2024 HELPLINE REPORT

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) independent corporation, established in 1988, whose primary mission is to increase public awareness about problem and compulsive gambling, to advocate for services and supports for persons in need of assistance for a gambling problem, and to provide information and resource referrals to diverse populations seeking problem gambling help or information. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling while also seeking to assist citizens in need of problem-gambling-specific supports. As the only statewide organization of its kind in Florida, the FCCG has served under contract with the Florida state government for more than three decades.

The FCCG owns and operates the statewide Problem Gambling HelpLine service 888-ADMIT-IT, providing free, confidential, and multilingual problem gambling assistance via telephone call, text message, email, and live chat available on the FCCG's website (gamblinghelp.org) to thousands of contacts each year, from gamblers and their loved ones, to professionals and affected others, such as employers, mental health treatment providers, educators, law enforcement and judicial authorities, probation departments, bankruptcy and financial counseling organizations, gambling industry operators, state government, policymakers, and others. However, although the FCCG is recognized by most through its 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, this is only one of the many services and programs it provides.

Since its inception, the FCCG's approach to development of problem gambling prevention, education, awareness, responsible gambling, and other related problem gambling programming initiatives, continues to be research driven. FCCG programs are evidence-based and conducted throughout the State of Florida to assure widespread coverage. Ongoing and extensive research efforts to improve the lives of problem gamblers, their families and all those impacted have been and will continue to be undertaken. Its findings are disseminated through research journals, conference presentations, industry publications, brochures, posters, pamphlets and outreach workshops and forums. FCCG staff remain abreast of legislative initiatives and changes, technological advances in science and practice, clinical trials, and problem gambling related prevention and treatment programs, as well as evidence-based outreach methods and approaches while continuing to work with the Gambling Commission and treatment and prevention providers.

FCCG's published research consists of a combination of HelpLine data collected through the FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, in addition to statewide prevalence studies, think tanks, program outcome evaluation reports, and other program-specific independent analysis, conducted by researchers and field/content experts under contract with the Agency. Findings and recommendations from these studies, clinical insights, and reviews have guided the FCCG in identifying areas of need and have resulted in the development of new programming and/or modifying existing services or offerings. Key partnerships have been developed in areas based upon field expertise or geographic location, determining viable therapeutic modalities, and implementing effective methods and approaches to problem gambling prevention activities, training, advertising, messaging, and overall material/collateral preparation and production. The FCCG's staff remains abreast of recent developments and is continuously developing new approaches to working with different populations and the Florida gambling industry. The FCCG remains astutely aware of the public's changing attitudes, preferences, and behaviors as they relate to gambling.

Based upon national prevalence rates of disordered gambling of 1.2% (Williams, Volberg & Stevens, 2012), and U.S. Census Bureau estimates of persons aged 18 and over in Florida, more than 200,000 individuals have a significant gambling problem in Florida. There is considerable evidence that problem gamblers negatively impact between 8-10 additional people (spouses, family members, employers, etc.). This would suggest that over 1.8 - 2.2 million Floridians (gamblers, loved ones, family members, employers, etc.) are negatively impacted due to excessive problem/disordered gambling. The fact that many problem gamblers fail to seek out necessary help, experience significant concomitant mental health and familial problems, and are involved in criminal behaviors remains a concern and important public health issue.

During the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year, Florida made history as it became the 37th – and largest – state to offer sports betting in casinos, with craps, roulette, and sports betting becoming available at three Seminole casinos in South Florida starting on December 7th, 2023. The games were live at all six of the Tribe’s casinos by December 11th. Florida’s gaming compact, which allows for the expansion of casino games on tribal land, also legalizes online sports betting in Florida, to be controlled exclusively by the Tribe, with profit-sharing opportunities to be negotiated with pari-mutuels such as jai alai frontons, horse tracks, and cardrooms to participate in the new venture.

Finally, there were updates to the federal regulations on Indian gaming compacts in early 2024 that could affect Florida’s chances of adding online casinos. The most notable change is that the Bureau of Indian Affairs will now approve gaming compacts, including online wagering outside of tribal lands. That means the federal government recognizes Florida’s hub-and-spoke model for online sports betting as an acceptable method for Class III gaming compacts. These changes went into effect on March 22, 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gambling opportunities in Florida have rapidly increased throughout the years, as has the population. Florida continues to rank as one of the top three states in the country for both population and for consumer spending on gambling activities. Additionally, after rapid population increases, recent U.S. Census Bureau data reflects Florida as the nation's fastest-growing state in the country. There continues to be a documented need for increased problem gambling services and supports in the State of Florida.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG) has a longstanding history in the state and three decades of experience in the gambling addiction field. The FCCG is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) independent corporation whose primary mission is to increase public awareness regarding the risks and consequences associated with gambling; help problem gamblers, their families, and others adversely impacted; and advocate for programs, services, funding, and other supports to address population-specific needs. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling while also seeking to assist citizens in need of problem-gambling-specific supports.

The FCCG is committed to monitoring and adapting to the many changes in gambling patterns and behaviors that are developing, and to addressing the associated challenges and harms facing problem gamblers and their families in the State of Florida.

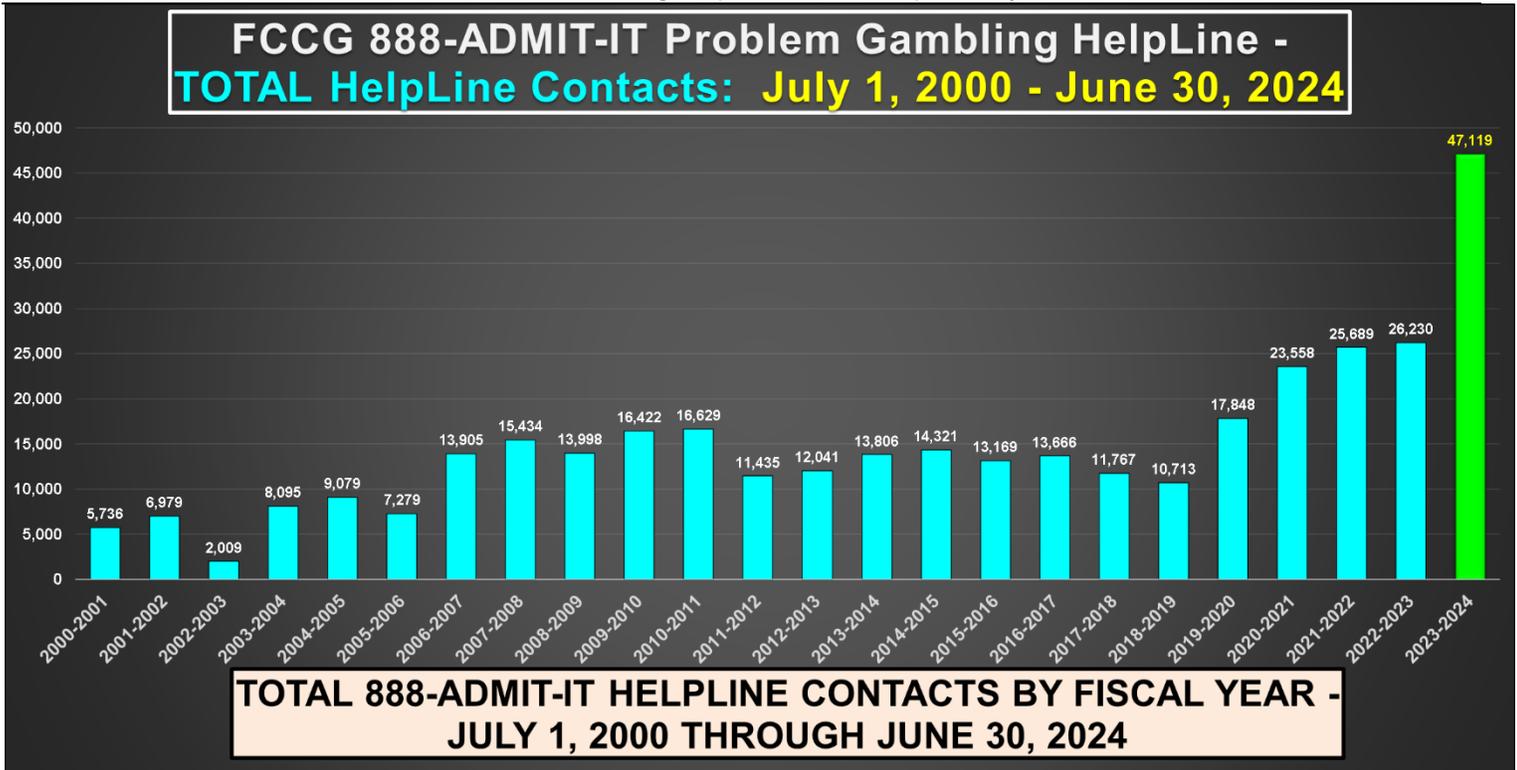
The FCCG continues to play a pivotal role in directly helping problem gamblers and their loved ones, the training of professionals to work with problem gamblers and their families, and in providing a wide diversity of services throughout the state. The confidential and multilingual 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine, one of the largest in the nation, continues to operate 24-hours per day/365 days per year, meeting an important need for Florida residents. The information contained in this *2023-2024 Fiscal Year Annual HelpLine Report* attests to the fact that the FCCG continues to fulfill an essential statewide need.

On a larger level, the FCCG has helped develop and promote national standards of excellence both for problem gambling helplines and for professionals working with problem gamblers and their families. During the most recent July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 period, the FCCG continued to offer a wide variety of problem gambling services and supports to Florida residents via the 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine.

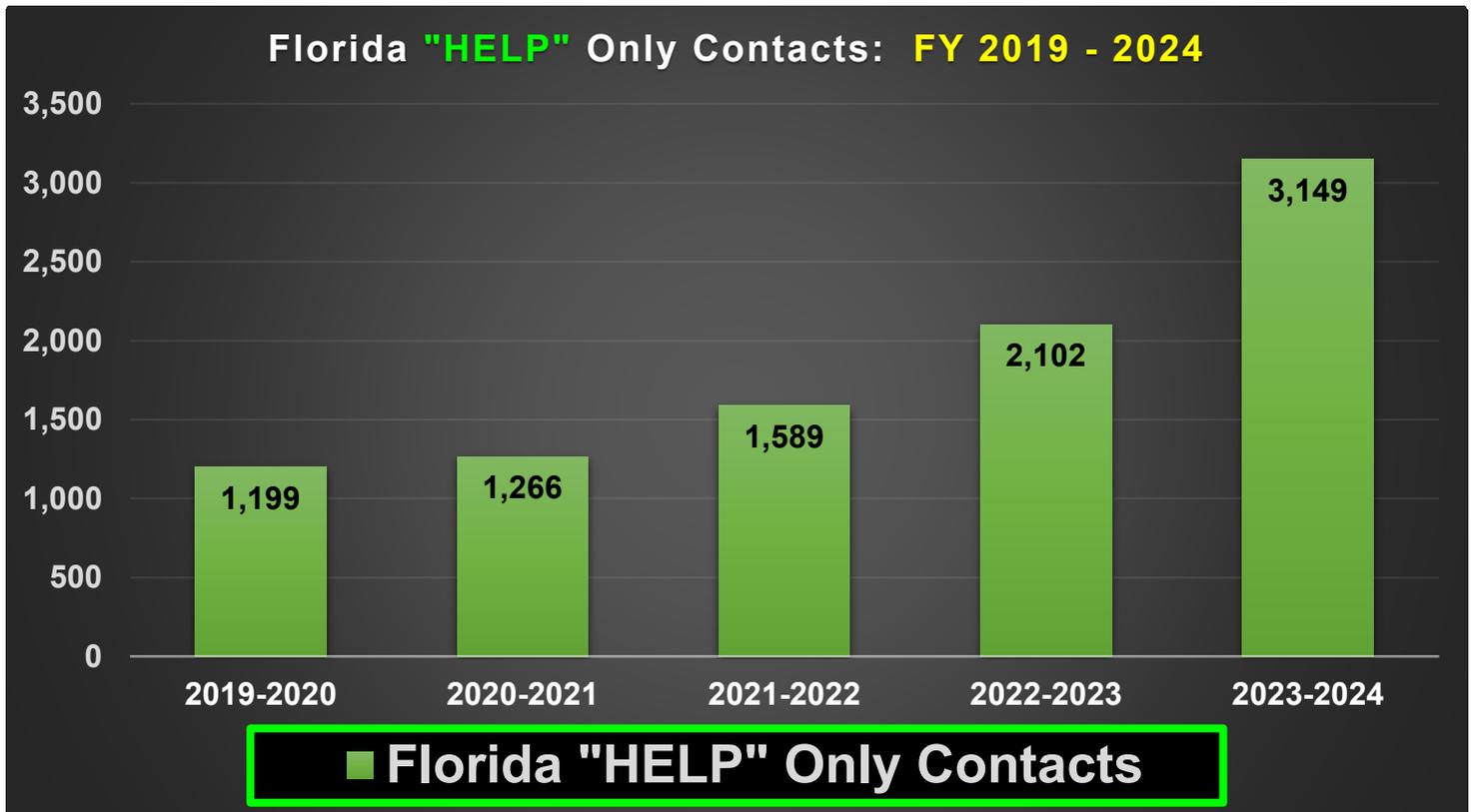
Some of the most notable findings in the HelpLine data analysis from this time period include the following:

- **TOTAL CONTACTS** – During the 2023/2024 fiscal year, the FCCG received a total of **47,119** contacts, from all available contact platforms (i.e. telephone calls, emails, text messages, and live chats), of which **6,588** were “**Help Services Contacts**” consisting of only **individuals in Florida requesting problem gambling help and/or information**. This data reflects an average of approximately eighteen (18) “Help Services Contacts” received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine each day from Floridians in need of problem-gambling-specific help or information. This data also represents a continued increase in total Agency contacts of all types each year over the past five fiscal years, with an overall increase in total contacts of 164% since the 2019/2020 fiscal year.

(See chart on following page)



- FLORIDA “HELP ONLY” CONTACTS** – During the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, the FCCG’s HelpLine received 3,149 contacts for Help with a gambling problem in Florida. When comparing this data with **only** legitimate Florida “Help” contacts received over the past five (5) fiscal years, since FY 2019-2020, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has seen a 163% increase in Florida help seekers in need of assistance with a gambling problem as of June 30, 2024.



- **ALTERNATIVE PLATFORMS FOR HELP - TEXT & CHAT** – There have been notable shifts, amongst Florida “Help” contacts, of an increased use of alternative platforms available for seeking help. This is reflected in 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data from the 2023/2024 fiscal year, with 10% of Florida help seekers reaching out for help via text message and 5% utilizing the FCCG’s live chat feature available on its website (gamblinghelp.org), to access necessary problem gambling resources and supports. If comparing this information with HelpLine data from the same twelve-month period of time over the past five (5) fiscal years, this represents an overall increase in text message contacts from Florida help seekers of 430%, and in live chat contacts for help from Florida help seekers of 306%, since the 2019/2020 fiscal year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020).
- **CONTACT ORIGIN BY REGION & COUNTY** – Based upon 5,979 help and information contacts received during the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, where contact location information was available, the data revealed that Southeast Florida accounted for the area that the largest share (50%) of these contacts originated from, followed by Central Florida (19%), and West Coast Florida (9%). Overall, contact to the HelpLine (for problem gambling help or information only), was made by individuals from fifty-seven (57) unique counties across the state during the 2023/2024 fiscal year.
- **CONTACT’S AGE** - Age differences in contacts were quite noticeable this year, with seventeen percent (17%) of HelpLine contacts under the age of twenty-six (26), up five percent (5%) from the previous 2022-2023 fiscal year, when only 12% of contacts were 25 or younger.
- **CONTACT’S RELATIONSHIP TO THE GAMBLER** – As is historically the case, the majority (82%) of contacts for help received from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, were from the gambler. Spouses, cohabitants, and significant others comprised 6% of the total, representing the second-most frequently cited relationship to the gambler, followed by parents (4%), children (2%), friends (2%), and siblings of the gambler (2%). It is also important to note; research has confirmed that each problem gambler can impact 8-10 others.
- **CONTACT’S PRECIPITATING EVENT FOR SEEKING HELP** – Not surprisingly, financial-related issues were the most frequently cited reasons for initially contacting the HelpLine this year, with 42% of help seekers reporting financial difficulties caused by gambling being their primary reason for seeking help. The largest share of these (17%) stated that they contacted the HelpLine due to a recent substantial gambling-related loss; 11% reported overspending; 9% cited difficulty paying household bills due to gambling; and 5% conveyed overextended debts caused by gambling as their primary reason for seeking help.
- **CONTACTS’ “HOW HEARD” – HOW DID PROBLEM GAMBLERS OR THEIR LOVED ONE BECOME AWARE OF FCCG’S HELPLINE?** – The 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine provides a variety of immediate services, recommendations, and ways for contacts to receive help. The HelpLine is accessed by calling or texting the widely publicized toll-free telephone HelpLine number (888-ADMIT-IT (236-4848), through a Live Chat feature on the agency’s website (www.gamblinghelp.org), by email (fccg@gamblinghelp.org), through the 888-ADMIT-IT mobile app, or by reaching out to the FCCG on social media platforms such as Facebook and X to ensure that regardless of one’s comfort level and preferred mode of communication, individuals can gain quick access to the help needed. All FCCG materials and advertisements prominently feature and display the 888-ADMIT-IT number. The most frequently cited methods of learning about the HelpLine number this year included (#1) through online Internet searches (58%); (#2) from advertisements and notices in land-based gambling venues (13%); (#3) from a family member or friend (9%); (#4) seeing it on the back of a Lottery ticket, in Lottery advertising, or at a Lottery ticket retailer/point of sale (3%); and (#5) from radio and television advertisements (3%). A notable difference from past years is the increasing number of help seekers who heard about the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine from an Online Gambling Website/App, nearly tripling last year’s number. This trend should be monitored as Florida’s online sports betting market matures.

- **CONTACTS’ “RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED”** – This year, the top three resources provided to 888-ADMIT-IT help seekers varied slightly from traditional trends we have seen over recent years. During the 2023/2024 year, the #1 top most frequently provided resource to HelpLine contacts was FCCG HelpLine Literature Packets (75%), which include the FCCG’s *A Chance for Change* Recovery Workbooks series (available for Gamblers, Loved Ones, or Senior Gamblers), as well as the FCCG’s *Financial Debt and Budget Toolkit*, provided in multiple languages and a variety of formats, pending the contact’s preference. This is the first time over the past five (5) years that referrals to the Self-Help Support Group Gamblers Anonymous was not the most frequently provided resource. It ranked second during the current 2023-2024 fiscal year, followed closely by "Financial Resources" at number three (3). Financial Resources only first entered the "top three recommendations provided" list during the previous 2022-2023 fiscal, as "Counseling Services" was a more frequently provided resource during the three (3) years prior to that. There has been a 317% increase in "Financial Resources" provided to 888-ADMIT-IT Help Seekers since the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. Counseling Services, while still amongst the top five (5) resources offered to help seekers, showed a slight decrease this year compared to last and could be reflective of help seekers opting for alternative supports outside of traditional mental health counseling services. Other notable differences this year in the top recommendations provided to help seekers, include a continued increase (since COVID-19 pandemic times) of online/virtual resources requested by help seekers.

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHICS, PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEM, AND RELATED IMPACTS

- **GAMBLER’S GENDER** – During the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, a total of 2,175 help contacts identified the gender of the gambler, revealing that 73% of problem gamblers were male and 27% were female. Over the past five (5) fiscal years, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has observed a consistent increase in male gamblers.
- **GAMBLER’S AGE** – Over the past five (5) fiscal years, younger gamblers in need of problem gambling supports have continued to increase, with 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data from the most recent 2023/2024 fiscal year reflecting that nineteen percent (19%) of gamblers were age 25 and under, compared to only 8% during the 2019/2020 fiscal year. Conversely, older adult gamblers (ages 55 and up), have decreased over the past 5 fiscal years but at a slightly lower rate, with 2023/2024 fiscal year data yielding a 10% decrease of gamblers in this age bracket since the 2019/2020 fiscal year.
- **GAMBLER’S RACE** – The distribution of the problem gambler’s race as reported by 1,074 HelpLine contacts this fiscal year, included the following information. Almost half (48%) of gamblers were White (approximately the same as last year (47%), 26% were Hispanic/Latino, 18% were Black/African Americans, and 4% were Asian. This distribution is similar to the past several years.
- **PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEM** – During the 2023-2024 fiscal year and for the first time ever, Online Gambling surpassed all other types of gambling activities (INCLUDING electronic gambling machines, both legal and illegal combined) as being the most frequently cited primary gambling problem of the gambler. This was also the first year we have seen legal slot machine gambling (available only at a casino or racino) DECREASE in popularity as the gambler’s primary gambling problem (27% this year, down from 33% last year). Illegal gambling machines (arcade/amusement games, internet sweepstakes machines, video lottery terminals, etc.) available at convenience stores, bars/clubs or at other illegal gambling establishments also decreased in popularity for the first time, down 3% as the gambler’s primary gambling problem from last year (9% in 2022/2023 vs. 6% in 2023/2024). While traditional cards/table games (also available at brick and mortar gambling facilities) did not decrease in popularity this year compared with last (19% in both fiscal years), there has been a steady decrease in cards or table games as the gambler’s primary gambling problem when comparing HelpLine data from the past 5 years (24% in 2019/2020 vs. 19% in 2023/2024). This data may indicate

that gamblers who have traditionally gambled in brick and mortar gambling facilities are transitioning to online gambling. Average increases in online gambling as the gambler's primary gambling problem over the past 5 fiscal years reveals a 56% increase. If comparing HelpLine data from 5 years ago (2019/2020 fiscal year) with this most recent fiscal year (2023/2024), online gambling has increased by 427% as the reported primary gambling problem.

- **EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE GAMBLER** – The overwhelming proportion of gamblers contacting the HelpLine continues to be engaged in full-time work (65%), with 11% unemployed, 9% being retired, and 5% disabled or on workers' compensation. This data is consistent with previous years. Occupations held by problem gamblers were quite diverse.
- **INCOME OF THE GAMBLER** – The average reported income of problem gamblers from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024, was \$69,780, reflecting a considerable increase in income compared with data from the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year (\$56,786). Forty-eight percent (48%) of gamblers during this time period earned \$50,000 or more. This represents a 13% increase of gamblers in this income bracket since the 2019-2020 fiscal year. In spite of a large percentage of gamblers (28%) having a reported income of less than \$25,000 per year, they still reported gambling excessively during the past fiscal year.
- **MONEY LOST DUE TO GAMBLING** – Average lifetime gambling losses of the gambler are reported at \$184,463 during the current 2023/2024 fiscal year, reflective of a slight increase from 2022/2023. Reported average lifetime gambling-related losses of the gambler peaked during the 2020/2021 fiscal year at \$206,246.
- **MONEY OWED DUE TO GAMBLING** – This year, one-third (33%) of all HelpLine contacts reported some type of household debts due to gambling. This year, 59% of problem gamblers are reported to have significant gambling-related credit card debts (similar to the past two years), and 40% owed money to family members and friends due to gambling. Additionally, 28% reported gambling debts owed to non-traditional loan companies (steadily increasing from 26% last year and 20% the year prior). Others owed money to banks or credit unions (10%), while some were indebted to bookmakers, casinos, loan sharks, and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Many reported being delinquent on bills covering basic necessities, such as their rent or mortgage (13%), car payments (8%), and utilities (6%). Notably, this year FCCG began separately tracking money taken from 401k Retirement Accounts to fund gambling, which was reported by 2% of contacts. Of those contacts reporting gambling-related debts, the average amount owed due to gambling increased to \$41,616 during the 2023/2024 fiscal year period.
- **GAMBLERS' ILLEGAL ACTS** – When gamblers have exhausted all personal and family finances, credit, and bailout options, they often turn to criminal activities as a continued means of gambling to recoup losses. In most cases, these problem gamblers have never committed illegal acts prior to their gambling debts. This reflects the magnitude, devastation, and desperation many problem gamblers and their families commonly experience. This year, it was reported that 20% of gamblers had committed illegal activities due to their gambling, which is a 4% increase from last year. Of those contacts (gamblers and loved ones) reporting that the gambler committed illegal activities due to their gambling problem, the majority of the gamblers were online sports bettors (35%), male (68%) (an increase from 60% in 2022/2023), white (63%), and between the ages of 31 and 49 (51%). It is important to note that 8% of seniors (ages 65+) were also reported to have committed illegal acts.

- **GAMBLERS' LEGAL CONSEQUENCES** - Problem gamblers (and their loved ones) are often faced with multiple legal consequences and challenges resulting from a gambling addiction. This year, 27% of HelpLine contacts reported legal consequences (civil or criminal) due to gambling, a slight increase from 23% in the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Overall, 27% of individuals reporting legal consequences cited a divorce due to gambling, up significantly from 17% last year. During the current period, there was also an increase in reported vehicle repossessions (28%) (up from 24% in 2022/2023). A significant decrease was reported this year in bankruptcies due to gambling (31%) (compared to 44% in 2022/2023). Criminal behaviors and consequences continued to increase this past fiscal year (14% had been arrested as a result of a gambling problem; 9% served jail time).
- **GAMBLERS' MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS** – Problem gamblers and their loved ones frequently face a host of mental health issues, along with various other emotional and domestic problems. Increases were found across all types of mental health, emotional, and domestic areas during the current fiscal year (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024), reflecting both the magnitude and severity of difficulties experienced in households with problem gamblers. This year's data reveals higher levels of anxiety (67%) and neurological disorders (24%) compared to the 2022/2023 period, while depression (65%) and suicidal thoughts/attempts (23%) also remain high.
- **GAMBLERS' FAMILY CONFLICT, VIOLENCE, & NEGLECT**– Problem gambling has been extensively reported to negatively impact family relationships and is a consistently cited reason for reaching out to the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. Overall, seventy-two percent (72%) of all HelpLine contacts reported family conflict this year, while 50% indicated family neglect (an increase from 40% in the prior fiscal period), and 6% reported family violence due to a gambling problem in the home. The percentage of individuals reporting familial conflict of all types was generally found to have increased from the last fiscal year and remains an ongoing concern.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The FCCG continues to be the primary state resource for Florida's problem gamblers, loved ones, and affected others, and works closely with gamblers, family members, treatment providers, professionals, the gambling industry, and organizations to raise public awareness about problem/disordered gambling. HelpLine Specialists are trained to assist individuals negatively impacted due to their excessive gambling. The FCCG remains committed to continuing its efforts to help individuals in need, train professionals in the field, and work with gambling operators, regulators, governmental agencies, mental health and medical treatment providers, and legal and financial professionals, while raising awareness among other professionals who service the disordered gambling population. The FCCG maintains excellent relationships with slot-licensed gambling industry operators and the casino industry in Florida. As the number of contacts continues to increase, the demands placed upon FCCG staff continue to grow. The 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine provides a platform for many problem gamblers, loved ones, and concerned others to gain a better understanding of gambling disorders. The resources provided are invaluable. All evaluations by contacts show a remarkably high satisfaction rate.

The HelpLine is only meaningful when people know that help and hope for a gambling problem exists. In an effort to educate Florida's diverse population, the FCCG has utilized a broad spectrum of communication and outreach strategies which are costly and involve various degrees of expertise (e.g., translation services, program development and design services), to ensure that residents of all ages, from all backgrounds, utilizing varying means of communication, are reached, and in their language of choice (e.g., billboards, radio and television advertising, text messaging, social media). Such programs are costly and should be supported by state funds.

From a public health perspective, the dramatic increase in HelpLine contacts from gamblers and their loved ones across the state attests to the urgent need for continued financial support. With likely over 200,000 disordered gamblers each impacting an additional 8-10 other individuals, the need for HelpLine is urgent. There is little doubt that the needs of Floridians are currently not being met and satisfactorily addressed. The state receives considerable funds from the lottery, gambling facilities, and its compact with the Seminole Tribe. Such funds need to be used to support the FCCG.

HelpLine contacts have been shown to vary during the year and can vary widely both in severity and in volume. Sports wagering in particular is frequently driven by certain major sporting events. Sports betting is often impacted by the timing of popular televised sports events (e.g., March Madness, the Super Bowl, the NBA Championship, the World Series, the World Soccer Cup, and others). Due to the seriousness of each HelpLine contact, many of which are from individuals in active crisis at that specific moment, adequate and appropriate staffing supports are not only necessary but imperative. This requires qualified and trained personnel to appropriately respond to HelpLine contacts. As the proliferation of sports wagering increases, so will demands be placed upon the FCCG. The frequency of online sports wagering will grow exponentially. Responsible gambling ads now appear on all National Football League games. This is designed to raise awareness among the general population, which ultimately will result in greater demands on the FCCG.

Florida offers a multitude of gambling opportunities. While the minimum age to gamble varies depending upon the gambling activity offered, young people have always found ways to circumvent age prohibitions. Whether making false IDs or getting an older sibling or family member to place a wager for them, the number of underage gamblers continues to grow. The HelpLine data shows an increasing trend of younger gamblers engaged in online gambling. No longer does one have to go to the casino to gamble. Gambling apps can be easily downloaded on smartphones, enabling individuals to gamble 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Smartphones have in essence become a walking casino. A significant and steadily increasing number of HelpLine contacts reported some form of online gambling as their primary or secondary gambling activity. This data is consistent with gambling HelpLines nationally and trends reported by the gambling industry.

Online gambling has quickly become the most often used vehicle for gambling. This is particularly true for young males and sports gamblers. Multiple forms of online gambling continue to grow. The introduction of prop bets and parlays has dramatically increased the number of players. Online gambling has moved it from a discontinuous form of gambling to a continuous form of gambling. From a mechanics perspective, online gambling mimics a slot machine. No longer does one have to wait for the outcome of a sporting event, as hundreds of bets can be placed on every facet of a single game.

A recent meta-analysis has revealed that approximately 1% of underage minors are experiencing a gambling disorder (Montiel et al., 2021), and this was before the surge in popularity of sports wagering. There is ample evidence that young adults are amongst the highest risk for a gambling problem – yet they are also the group least likely to seek help. Online gambling increases household debt, familial discord and disruption, and further economic hardships. Mental health issues, as well as criminal behaviors, have been shown to be related to increased gambling problems.

Together, this data points to the urgent need for the development of specialized prevention programs for our young people and greater public awareness among adults. Without such programs, the number of contacts to the FCCG HelpLine will grow exponentially. The five-year Florida data tracking requests for help shows a dramatic increase. The FCCG is in urgent need of funds to support its bilingual 24-hour HelpLine. With substantial funding, the FCCG is well positioned to address the needs of Floridians.

Finally, it is important to note that treatment for a gambling problem has never been state funded (for gamblers and loved ones). There remains a need to refer HelpLine contacts to trained and certified professionals for treatment of compulsive gamblers and loved ones adversely impacted. The FCCG has developed an Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG) which is frequently utilized by individuals with a gambling disorder. While it does not replace direct face-to-face therapeutic intervention, it has been shown to be effective for some problem gamblers. Additional funding could help minimize the problem.

The FCCG provides a much-needed community service throughout Florida. Given the growing problem of online gambling, and online sports gambling particularly amongst young males, new initiatives and prevention programs need to be developed. The FCCG can provide expertise in the development and delivery of such programs. The issue of problem/disordered gambling has become a public health imperative.

BACKGROUND

Gambling opportunities in Florida have rapidly increased throughout the years, as has the population. Florida currently ranks as one of the top three states in the country for both population and for consumer spending on gambling activities. Additionally, after rapid population increases, recent U.S. Census Bureau data reflects Florida as the nation's fastest-growing state in the country. There continues to be a documented need for increased problem gambling services and supports in the State of Florida.

Florida has a long history of licensed, regulated gambling. In addition to pari-mutuel gambling, slot machine gambling is licensed in Broward and Miami-Dade counties at eligible pari-mutuel facilities. The Florida Gaming Control Commission (FGCC) is the regulatory body that is responsible for exercising all governing and executive powers of the state with respect to gambling, excluding the state lottery. The Commission regulates certain legal forms of gambling in the State of Florida and enforces the state's criminal gambling prohibitions. FGCC's Division of Pari-mutuel Wagering regulates pari-mutuel racing and games, cardrooms, and slot machine gaming, and oversees the compact between the State of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. FGCC's Division of Law Enforcement targets illegal gambling activities occurring throughout the state.

In Florida, a variety of gambling activities are currently regulated and approved. These include:

- Pari-mutuel wagering on live and intertrack horse and jai-alai activities at licensed racetracks and jai-alai frontons.
- Casino gambling, including slots and multiple table games, on certain Indian tribal lands.
- Lottery games offered by the state.
- Poker and dominoes played for money, but only in a licensed cardroom.
- Penny-ante games including poker, pinochle, bridge, rummy, canasta, hearts, dominoes, and mahjong.
- Slot machine gaming at one of the eight licensed pari-mutuel facilities located in Miami-Dade or Broward counties.
- Bingo, sweepstakes, and drawings for chance, if they comply with state law.
- Online sports wagering.

Gambling opportunities and revenues are generated in Florida from a variety of venues, including land-based casinos, cardrooms, electronic gambling machines, pari-mutuel and racing facilities, the lottery, sweepstakes, charitable gambling, and tribal gambling. Beginning this fiscal year (2023/2024), online/mobile wagering on sports first became legal in the Sunshine State. The new Florida law allows gamblers anywhere in the state to place sports bets on smartphones or other online devices, with the bets run through servers on Seminole Tribe property.

In 2023-2024, the Florida Gaming Control Commission Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering administered forty (40) annual pari-mutuel operating licenses, which vary by pari-mutuel activity. Of the twenty-nine (29) active operating licenses in the 2023-2024 fiscal, two (2) were for thoroughbred racing, one (1) was for harness racing, six (6) were for quarter horse racing, ten (10) were jai-alai permits, and nineteen (19) were greyhound permits. Greyhound pari-mutuel licenses are prohibited by law to conduct live greyhound races in Florida. Thirty-five (35) permit holders were issued cardroom licenses in the 2023-2024 fiscal year (this includes both state and tribal casinos). The Division also issued four (4) slot machine licenses to pari-mutuel locations in Broward County and four (4) slot machine licenses to pari-mutuel locations in Miami-Dade County (referred to throughout this report as "Racinos").

Currently, the State of Florida has 16 land-based casinos (8 commercial casinos and 8 tribal casinos), including six (6) casinos owned and operated by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and two (2) casinos owned and operated by the Miccosukee Tribe. The new Miccosukee Little Trail Casino, which opened its doors on February 14, 2024, and is located at the Miccosukee Service Plaza on I-75 and Snake Road in Ochopee, Florida, features an 8,500-square-foot entertainment space with 150 slot machines. As part of a multi-million-dollar expansion of the Miccosukee Tribe's operations, the Everglades-themed facility also sells beer and wine.

HISTORY & RECENT DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO GAMBLING IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

State-regulated forms of gambling have a long and contentious history in Florida. In 1931, the legislature approved horse and dog racing (dog racing was later prohibited in 2018) and in 1935, slot machines and betting on Jai-Alai was approved. However, legalized slots only lasted 2 years before conservatives repealed the legislation (it was later re-approved in 2004). Small stakes bingo was legalized in 1970, the state lottery was approved in 1986 with net revenues designated to go toward education, and poker was legalized in certain facilities in 1996.

The twenty-first century witnessed a rapid expansion of gambling in Florida and beyond. As part of the 2004 General Election, Florida voters approved a limited constitutional amendment to legalize slot machines at certain pari-mutuel facilities, such as horse racing, greyhound racing, and jai alai exhibitions, that existed and were licensed during the two years prior in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. The amendment further required an affirmative vote of the electors in each county before the slot machines could actually be authorized for that county. Broward's referendum was successful on March 8, 2005, and Miami-Dade's was successful on January 29, 2008. These referenda authorized slot operation at 7 facilities, and Florida law was amended to authorize operation at an 8th facility.

In 2007, Governor Charlie Crist signed a compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, allowing the tribe to operate Las-Vegas-style slots, blackjack, and baccarat at 7 tribal casinos. While contentious, this was finally approved by the legislature in 2010. The compact ultimately allowed the Seminole Tribe to operate blackjack and allow real slot machines, baccarat, and blackjack at five Seminole facilities through 2015 and required the tribe to share revenue with the state.

2018 (May 14, 2018) - U.S. Supreme Court Overturns Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, 28 U.S.C. § 3701, (PASPA) in 2018

On May 14, 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, 28 U.S.C. § 3701, (PASPA). PASPA prohibited state governments from allowing sports betting, with limited exception for states that had previously authorized sports wagering. The decision opened the door for state governments to pass legislation to regulate the activity if they choose to do so.

2018 (November 6, 2018) – Florida Amendment 3, Voter Approval of Casino Gambling Initiative

Florida Amendment 3, the Voter Approval of Casino Gambling Initiative, was on the ballot in Florida as an initiated constitutional amendment on November 6, 2018. It was approved. This amendment confirmed that Florida voters shall have the exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling by requiring that in order for casino gambling to be authorized under Florida law, it must be approved by Florida voters pursuant to Article XI, Section 3 of the Florida Constitution. Under the measure, card games, casino games, and slot machines are considered casino gambling, while pari-mutuel wagering on horse racing, dog racing, or jai alai exhibitions are not considered to be casino gambling. The measure did not have any impact on the ability of Native American tribes to enter into compacts with the state concerning casino gambling on Native American tribal lands.

2021 (January 1, 2021) – Amendment 13 – Decoupling of Dog Racing

Next, under Amendment 13, enacted January 1, 2021, it is now prohibited to offer live dog racing or to bet on any live dog racing occurring in the State of Florida. Pari-mutuel facilities still have the option to accept wagers on simulcast races conducted elsewhere. The measure also stipulates that pari-mutuel facilities that no longer offer greyhound racing will still be eligible to offer other gaming activities authorized by the law.

2021 (May) – New Tribal-State Gaming Compact and Extended Operating Hours for Florida Pari-Mutuel Gambling Facilities

In May 2021, legislation authorizing land-based and mobile sports wagering was signed into law. The legislation ratified a new tribal-state gaming compact and created a new framework for legalizing sports wagering subject to operation by the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The 30-year historic compact also allowed for the addition of craps and roulette and the building of more tribal casinos.

An addendum to the compact left it up to the federal government to decide if the landmark agreement that includes online sports betting comports with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) of 1988. The addendum took a commitment to future negotiations over online casino games out of the compact and delayed the launch of sports betting, which at the time eased the concerns of lawmakers who were getting cold feet about voting for such a massive expansion of gambling in a politically conservative state.

In addition, the House and Senate finalized their approval of a 50-page bill making several reforms to Florida gambling laws, including allowing 24-hour gambling at commercial facilities and permitting non-thoroughbred racetracks and jai alai frontons to continue offering slot machines or card games without hosting live racing or jai alai games.

2021 (November 1, 2021) – First Launch of Online Sports Betting in Florida – but Only Until November 22, 2021

Online sports betting launched in Florida on November 1, 2021. On November 22, 2021, a U.S. District Court judge invalidated the gaming compact, ruling that the gaming compact violates the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (IGRA) by authorizing gaming outside Indian lands. During the appeals process, the Seminole Tribe was prohibited from offering sports wagering. While the compact remained under review by the court in 2021-2022, the eight (8) State of Florida slot-licensed Racinos continued to be permitted to extend their operating hours, and Cardrooms were also authorized to operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

2021 (December 6, 2021) - Online Horse Racing Begins

Online horse racing began (legally) in Florida on December 6, 2021, when BetMGM's horse racing app was launched, and on June 2, 2022, Caesars Racebook launched its new mobile app to accept horse racing bets on more than 250 tracks globally from users in the State of Florida. Caesars offered new customers a one-time 100% deposit match of up to \$500 during its opening. It also integrated the Caesars Rewards program into the platform.

2022 (July 1, 2022) - Florida Gaming Control Commission Assumed all Gaming Regulation Statutory Powers

Another recent significant development in Florida's gambling landscape was the establishment of the Florida Gaming Control Commission within the Department of Legal Affairs, Office of the Attorney General. The Florida Gaming Control Commission is a five-member regulatory body that is responsible for exercising all regulatory and executive powers of the state with respect to gambling, including pari-mutuel wagering, cardrooms, slot machine facilities, oversight of gaming compacts, and other forms of gambling authorized by the State Constitution or law. On July 1, 2022, the Florida Gaming Control Commission assumed all statutory powers, including those matters currently within the scope of the jurisdiction of the Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering.

2022 (November) – Ballot Initiatives to Expand Commercial Gambling Fail to Qualify for Statewide Referendum

During 2022, Floridians also saw two ballot initiatives to expand commercial gaming in Florida fail to qualify for a statewide referendum. In February, an effort to expand commercial casino gaming to locations outside of Miami-Dade and Broward counties fell short when proponents were unable to gather a sufficient number of signatures to qualify for the November 2022 statewide ballot. The proposed initiative would have authorized existing pari-mutuel racing facilities in counties throughout Florida to be licensed to offer casino gambling, provided they agreed to invest at least \$250 million in developing a casino-resort and were located a minimum of 130 miles away from any of the Seminole Tribe's casinos. The ballot petition was supported by more than 814,000 Florida voters but needed approximately 80,000 additional voter signatures in order to qualify for a statewide referendum. A separate voter petition to authorize statewide mobile sports betting via commercial sportsbook operators also failed to qualify for the ballot [AGA 2023].

2023 (January 12, 2023) – Seminole Tribe to Build New Hotel-Casino at Seminole Brighton Casino Location

On January 12, 2023, the Seminole Tribe announced that they plan to build a new hotel-casino northwest of Lake Okeechobee at their current Seminole Brighton Casino location. The complex will include the first hotel built on the Brighton Seminole Reservation. It will feature 100 guest rooms in a four-story building, totaling 72,000 square feet. The gaming area will include 640 slot machines and 18 tables for blackjack, craps, roulette, and other house-banked card games. Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino will replace the existing Seminole Casino Brighton and is set to open in early 2025.

2023 (August) – Miccosukee Tribe Broke Ground on Future Ochopee “Miccosukee Little Trail Casino”

In August of 2023, Miccosukee tribe officials broke ground on the site of a new casino, which opened its doors on February 14, 2024. Located at the Miccosukee Service Plaza on I-75 and Snake Road in Ochopee, the new Miccosukee Little Trail Casino features an 8,500-square-foot entertainment space with 150 slot machines. As part of a multi-million-dollar expansion of the Miccosukee Tribe's operations, the Everglades-themed facility also sells beer and wine.

2023 (September) - Payments Modernization – Cashless Gaming

Florida regulators also took several steps in 2023 toward allowing cashless gaming in the state's commercial casino gaming facilities. In September 2023, the Florida Gaming Control Commission hosted a formal workshop with stakeholders to map out specific regulations that would enable patrons at commercial gaming facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties to fund electronic gaming devices via digital wallets. Formal regulatory changes are expected to be adopted at some point in 2024.

2023 (October 25, 2023) – Seminole Tribe Online Sports Betting – Stay Lifted by U.S. Supreme Court

On October 25, 2023, the US Supreme Court lifted the stay in the Seminole Tribe online sports betting appeal that Chief Justice John Roberts placed Oct. 12, on a ruling by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, in a lawsuit about the gambling deal reached in 2021 by the tribe and the state. The largest legal sports betting operation in the country is approved in the State of Florida through the compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

2023 (November 7, 2023) – Online Sports Betting Relunched by Seminole Tribe via the “Hard Rock Bet App”

On November 7, 2023, online sports betting, which previously began in Florida for a brief period of time in 2021 until stopped by a Supreme Court ruling, was relunched by the Seminole Tribe through its new *Hard Rock Bet* mobile sports betting app, making it the only legal online sportsbook in the state. Everywhere else, customers have a wide variety of sports wagering options. The Seminole Compact contains exclusivity for the tribe to offer statewide online sports betting through servers located on tribal lands. Wagers are permitted on any professional or collegiate sport available. There are no restrictions on in-state colleges. There are very few restrictions at all when it comes to Florida sports betting.

2023 (December 7, 2023) – Craps, Roulette, & Online Sports Betting Available at Seminole Tribe Casinos & Select Pari-Mutuel Operators in Florida

On December 5, 2023, Florida made history as it became the 37th – and largest – state to offer sports betting in casinos, with craps, roulette, and sports betting becoming available at three Seminole casinos in South Florida starting on December 7. Florida’s gaming compact, which allows for the expansion of casino games on tribal land, also legalizes online sports betting in Florida, to be controlled exclusively by the tribe, with profit-sharing opportunities to negotiate with pari-mutuels such as jai alai frontons, horse tracks, and cardrooms to participate in the new venture.

Pari-mutuels that enter contracts with the tribe will market sports betting at their facilities. The pari-mutuels will use the Hard Rock sportsbook brand at their own facilities. As agreed to in the Florida gaming compact, the pari-mutuels will keep 60% of the profits that are generated from sports betting at the sportsbooks. The compact called for a minimum of three pari-mutuel partnerships when it was approved.

2023 (December) – Economic Impact from Florida’s Casinos

The State of Florida has just 16 total casinos – eight commercial casinos and eight tribal casinos. The economic impact from casinos in Florida was \$7.55 billion. That ranked The Sunshine State fourth in the US and led to \$1.56 billion of tax impact in 2023.

2024 (March 22, 2024) – Updates to Federal Regulations on Indian Gaming Compacts

Finally, there have been updates to the federal regulations on Indian gaming compacts in early 2024 that could affect Florida’s chances of adding online casinos. The most notable change is that the Bureau of Indian Affairs will now approve gaming compacts, including online wagering outside of tribal lands. That means the federal government recognizes Florida’s hub-and-spoke model for online sports betting as an acceptable method for Class III gaming compacts. These changes went into effect on March 22, 2024.

PROBLEM GAMBLING IMPACTS

While gambling provides considerable employment opportunities and much needed tax revenues, it does not come without its social costs. While most adults gamble within their means, generally respecting both time and money limits, there is ample evidence that an identifiable minority of youth and adults are experiencing severe gambling-related problems. Others may be suffering from the adverse effects from a family member, loved one, employer, or another person's gambling problem, and are in need of problem gambling specific supports. This report highlights the use of the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's (FCCG) 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine by Florida citizens in need of problem gambling help or information, throughout the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year. Comparative data from previous years is included where possible.

GAMBLING AMONG ADULTS IN FLORIDA

One way to measure the extent of gambling in Florida is to examine annual revenues generated by industry operations. However, it's important to note that these figures do not account for money gambled through illegal, non-licensed gambling operators. During 2023, total statewide commercial casino gambling revenues from state-regulated racinos/casinos amounted to \$690.883 million [AGA, 2024]. The Seminole Tribe of Florida, which does not have to publicize its gambling revenues, oversees 6 tribal casinos in the state and effective November 2023, operates Florida's only legal online sportsbook, Hard Rock Bet. Hard Rock Bet's monopoly on sports betting in Florida has helped the sportsbook become a Top 5 operator nationally. [Play FI, 2023]. Hard Rock's Florida handle and revenue numbers haven't been made publicly available, but reports surfaced in March that Florida's share of 2024 sports betting revenue since November 2023's soft launch was already at \$120 million. Under terms of its compact with the Seminoles, Florida receives 10% of Hard Rock Bet's statewide revenue [Play FI, 2024]. The revenues generated by the one remaining tribal facility, operated by the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida, were not available. Further, in 2023 the Florida Lottery ranked first in the country in overall ticket sales, with record sales of \$9.8 billion [Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, 2024].

The culture of gambling in Florida is undergoing a significant transformation with the introduction of online, mobile sports betting. At the root of the change is increased accessibility, with Floridians now able to place a legal bet easily from anywhere in the state. Combined with the ubiquity of mobile devices today, the casino has moved to the pocket – or perhaps more accurately – to the eyeballs and fingertips. The same device one uses to check the time, set reminders, call friends and family, send emails to coworkers, scroll through social media, and browse the Internet is now sports-betting-enabled. For many – especially young adults – the smartphone is the center of the day. According to a 2023 survey by Reviews.org:ⁱ

- The average person checks their phone 144 times per day.
- The average person spends an average of 4 hours and 25 minutes per day on their phones.
- 60% of people sleep with their phones.
- 89% of people check their phones within 10 minutes of waking up.
- 75% of people use their phones on the toilet.
- 75% of people look at notifications within five minutes.

For someone with an online gambling problem, all of this (and likely more than the averages) has potentially become gambling time. Online sports betting also offers an unending opportunity to place wagers, with sporting events across leagues happening nonstop, not to mention the opportunity to bet on future and international events. Watching and following sports has always been a social activity, so it isn't easy to escape the echo chamber – especially if friends or family are betting on sports, too. Last but not least, being a sports fan today means you are being heavily exposed to betting advertisements while watching games and checking scores and schedules...perhaps, on your phone.

PROBLEM/DISORDERED GAMBLING PREVALENCE RATES AMONG ADULTS IN FLORIDA

Gambling Disorder is a psychiatric condition with a behavioral addiction diagnosis, introduced in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders fifth edition (DSM-5), and recognized as a diagnosable and treatable illness by the American Psychiatric Association.

Based upon national prevalence rates of disordered gambling of 1.2% (Williams, Volberg & Stevens, 2012), and U.S. Census Bureau estimates of persons aged 18 and over in Florida, approximately 210,000+ individuals have a significant gambling problem in Florida. Considerable empirical evidence exists that problem gamblers negatively impact between 8-10 additional other people (spouses, family members, employers, etc.). This would suggest that over 1.8 million Floridians (gamblers, loved ones, family members, employers, etc.) are negatively impacted due to excessive problem/disordered gambling. The fact that many problem gamblers fail to seek out necessary supports, experience significant concomitant mental health and familial problems, and are involved in criminal behaviors is evidence that problem/disordered gambling is a growing public health concern amid increasing gambling participation in the State of Florida.

Of further importance is that while disordered gambling prevalence rates have been relatively stable, the population of adults in Florida continues to increase, ultimately resulting in more individuals and families having gambling and gambling-related problems. There is unequivocal evidence and robust findings suggesting harm to individuals and their families continues to grow.

All problem gambling prevalence research conducted to date in the State of Florida among adolescents, college students, and adults, as well as among inmates within Florida Department of Justice facilities, identifies sports betting as a top form of gambling most often participated in by at-risk, problem, and disordered gamblers.

While the FCCG conducted its prevalence study among college students in 2008, and gambling has expanded significantly since this time, the survey found that Florida college students then had twice the number of problem gamblers than previous adult research. In addition, college students were twice as likely to be classified as gambling addicts. More specifically, they were twice as likely as adolescents, and four times as likely as adults, to be disordered gamblers (referred at the time of the research as pathological gamblers). In addition, those students experiencing gambling-related problems were more likely to report abusing illegal substances (i.e. cocaine) and prescription drugs, to have more mental health disorders, and were more likely to report having relatives with gambling problems. They were also far less likely to seek help. (This is generally true, in that few adolescents and college students seek help for gambling treatment.)

It is further important to note that this independent research sponsored by the FCCG in July 2008 among Florida college students revealed that “sports-related gambling emerged as a very popular form of gambling amongst male students.” When considering the rates of participation for all three types of gambling [placing bets on professional (26.0%) and non-professional (18.1%) teams as well as participating in sports pools (17.9%)], the popularity of this pastime becomes evident. In short, it was estimated that approximately 21,000 Florida college students were likely experiencing “significant” gambling and gambling-related problems in 2008. Again, this was before the proliferation of various forms of gambling now accessible by this population and others.

Equally alarming, Florida college students are significantly more at-risk for developing gambling problems than adult residents (14.5% vs. 7.1%), and 5.2% of state university students are classified as problem or disordered gamblers. Based upon these findings, conducted over a decade ago, per Florida Board of Governor's numbers of enrolled students in state universities in Florida, approximately 50,000 college students are already experiencing some of the symptoms listed in the diagnostic criteria for disordered gambling.

Additionally, sports betting was the number two form of gambling engaged in by problem and disordered college student gamblers. More specifically, 47.1% reported wagering on professional sports, 34.3% on non-professional sports games, and 33% in sports event pools. Further, among these populations, 37.4% gambled on the Internet. The same was true for adolescent gamblers, as these underage problem and compulsive gamblers also identified sports betting as the number two most common form of gambling.

Annually, the FCCG receives thousands of contacts from gamblers and loved ones seeking help for problems due to excessive/problematic gambling. The methods of contact to the HelpLine and the types of individuals seeking assistance vary widely. The 888-ADMIT-IT confidential and multilingual HelpLine is accessible via telephone call, text, live chat, email, and on social media and offers comprehensive support and resource referral services to anyone in the State of Florida experiencing the impacts of problem gambling. Contacts received regularly include persons who are unemployed, homeless, experiencing mental health issues, undergoing a divorce, facing financial devastation, and/or are struggling with legal consequences – among other impacts – resulting from their own or a loved one's gambling problem. Yet, they all share one common theme – they are seeking immediate relief and support. Each person reaching out for help is seeking some type of information and/or guidance to help get their lives back on track, to understand how to cope with presenting impacts, and/or where to obtain professional counseling, self-help supports, or other critical services. The FCCG's HelpLine Specialists receive ongoing training and routinely respond to these contacts, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

Over the last 20 years, the number of Floridians seeking problem gambling help or information through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine have exponentially increased by 583%. According to the National Association of Administrators for Disordered Gambling Services (NAADGS) "2021 Survey of Publicly Funded Problem Gambling Services in the United States", a report which presents the most comprehensive compilation of information on publicly funded problem gambling services in the United States, Florida ranked #1 in the Country for total number of help contacts received to the 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine (out of the 28 states reporting 2021 Helpline data).

The number of contacts received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine does not equate to the prevalence of problematic gambling in a population, but rather is reflective of only the small percentage of the people who experience problems related to gambling and actually reach out for supports (less than 1%). According to research, the estimated general population help-seeking prevalence for gambling problems is 0.23%.

These results all point to the importance of the FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine as an essential support for problem gamblers, their families, and the mental health community.

GAMBLING ATTITUDES & GAMBLING EXPERIENCES – HOW DOES FLORIDA COMPARE?

In 2018, a national online survey was conducted by IPSOS to examine “National Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experiences” (NGAGE Survey) across America. It is important to first understand, per the “Definitions” section appearing at the beginning of this report, the research team used only 4 of the 9 criteria established by the American Psychiatric Association to determine disordered gambling for purposes of the NGAGE study, which follow:

1. Needs to gamble more frequently and with larger amounts of money
2. Relied on others to pay debts/bills
3. Lied to conceal gambling behaviors
4. Felt restless or irritable when trying to quit or cut back gambling

National as well as state-specific data were collected during this survey, revealing that Floridians like to gamble, with 79% of Florida adults reporting gambling during the past year (compared to 73% on a national level) (NGAGE, 2018). Using a sample of 500 Floridians, more adults in Florida reported gambling on every form of legalized gambling in the state. The average Floridian wagered on 6 forms of gambling, with 49% wagering on 7 or more different activities. At that time, the Lottery was the most popular form of gambling (74% of adults surveyed), with most reporting gambling for fun or entertainment. However, the survey demonstrated that a high percentage of Floridians misunderstood problem/disordered gambling. More than three quarters (77%) of Floridians surveyed believe that a lack of willpower is *the* cause of a gambling problem. Almost half (49%) of Floridians reported that if someone in their family had a gambling problem, they would say nothing and/or advise them not to discuss it with anyone outside of the family.

The results of the National Survey on Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experience (NGAGE, 2018) revealed that Floridians were among the 12 states with the highest level of gambling. Past-year gambling by both males and females in Florida exceeded the national average. It is important to note that this study was completed before major expansion of gambling in the state, and that sports wagering was not yet a regulated form of gambling.

In spite of the lack of legalized sports wagering at the time of the survey, 33% of Florida survey participants reported wagering on traditional sports and 14% of participants indicated wagering on fantasy sports, with a considerable number wagering amongst friends, gambling with online sportsbooks, and placing bets at “brick and mortar” sportsbooks (outside the state), and with local bookmakers. Of importance was that 57% of Floridians believed that if Florida was to legalize sports wagering, it would be important to establish dedicated revenues for public awareness. While the FCCG has made great strides toward public awareness of problem/disordered gambling, more work needs to be done. According to the 2021 Survey of Publicly Funded Problem Gambling Services in the United States, Florida ranked #34 out of 42 states in per capita funding for problem gambling services. With state-legalized sports wagering flourishing, the FCCG remains ready and committed to helping a growing number of problem gamblers.

In 2021, the National Council on Problem Gambling commissioned a second national study to examine overall gambling trends (NGAGE 2.0, 2022). A third national study was conducted in 2023, and the data is expected to be released by August 2025.

National research suggests that the risk of problem gambling has DOUBLED since 2018 and is highly concentrated on young male sports fans who are betting online.

The Main Risk Factors Identified for Problematic Sports Betting Were:

- 1) Youth Gamblers
- 2) Having Poor Gambling Literacy
- 3) Betting Online

The NCPG's 2nd National NGAGE Study (2021) revealed a rise in problematic play since 2018, especially among young online sports bettors. The number of Americans betting on sports grew by 30%, representing an increase of 15.3 million bettors in 18 months. While no specific data was provided by state in the 2021 survey, general national findings included:

- The number of people displaying risky gambling behavior increased from 2018 to 2021 on a national basis. The number of adults replying that they experienced at least one of four potentially problematic behaviors many times rose from 7% in 2018 to 11% percent in 2021, an increase of approximately eight million people nationally.
- The greatest predictors of risk identified included the number of gambling activities in which people engaged, agreeing that gambling is a good way to make money, participation in fantasy sports or traditional sports betting, frequently trading investments, gender (males are particularly prone to gambling and problem gambling), and age (younger males have a higher prevalence rate of problem gambling disorders). Those gambling on 10 or more activities were three times more likely to report signs of problematic behavior than the average gambler and seven times more likely than those gambling on between one and six activities.
- Young adults continue to be at a high risk of gambling problems. One-quarter of individuals under the age of 35 reported frequently experiencing at least one problematic play behavior (of the four assessed) compared to 3% of individuals 55 or older. While problematic play remained constant for those 45 and older between the 2018 and 2021 surveys, it increased substantially for those under 45. Dr. Rachel Volberg and her colleagues have completed multiple prevalence studies across the U.S., including within the State of Florida, and frequently report that young males (ages 18-25) have the highest prevalence of problem gambling.
- Gambling continues to remain a popular leisure pastime. Despite the pandemic-related disruptions in the gambling industry during 2020 and 2021, overall gambling participation showed no significant change from 2018 (73%) to 2021 (71%) on a national level, with most gambling venues experiencing significant increases in revenues upon reopening.
- The expansion of legalized sports betting appears initially to have had little impact on sports wagering behavior or problematic gambling. However, the authors concluded that in many states legalized sports betting was still very new, and the impacts of widespread legalization may well take more time to become apparent. There is ample evidence that calls to state problem gambling helplines have significantly increased in states where sports wagering is permitted (Derevensky, 2022).
- Online wagering at the time of the second survey in the U.S. had grown at a rapid rate. While online wagering was legalized in only a few states (mostly in limited forms), online gambling participation grew from 15% in 2018 to 25% 2021, suggesting that 25 million more people were gambling nationally online in 2021.
- Most forms of gambling showed either minimal change in participation or significant growth. Lotteries, casino attendance, gaming machines, and card games showed little change, while sports betting, fantasy sports betting, online wagering, betting on pari-mutuel racing, roulette, and craps experienced increases in annual participation of 5% or more.

- The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on gambling behavior. Almost half of the respondents in the 2021 study reported gambling less during the pandemic while 18% reported gambling more, and 36% gambled the same. Increases in gambling were found to be strongly associated with problematic play (as were decreases in gambling, though to a lesser extent), and were concentrated heavily among young adults (the age cohort most prone to problematic gambling behavior).
- Investors who trade commodities frequently were also found to be frequent gamblers with high levels of problematic play. More than two-thirds of those trading weekly or more reported needing to gamble more to achieve the same levels of excitement and enjoyment. They were also more likely to lie to hide their gambling and felt restless or irritable when trying to quit or cut down on their gambling.
- A large share of the population continues to misunderstand or stigmatize problem gambling. A majority of adults continue to attribute gambling problems, at least in part, to moral weakness and/or lack of willpower.

FLORIDA'S ONLY 24-HOUR, CONFIDENTIAL, & MULTILINGUAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE: 888-ADMIT-IT

Annually, the FCCG receives thousands of contacts from gamblers and loved ones seeking help for problems due to excessive/ problematic gambling. The methods of contact to the HelpLine and the types of individuals seeking assistance vary widely. The 888-ADMIT-IT confidential and multilingual HelpLine is accessible via telephone, text, live chat, email, and on social media and offers comprehensive support and resource referral services to anyone in the State of Florida experiencing the impacts of problem gambling. Contacts received regularly include persons who are unemployed, homeless, experiencing mental health issues, undergoing a divorce, facing financial devastation, and/or are struggling with legal consequences – among other impacts – resulting from their own or a loved one's gambling problem. Yet, they all share one common theme – they are seeking immediate relief and support. Each person reaching out for help is seeking some type of information and/or guidance to help get their lives back on track, to understand how to cope with presenting impacts, and/or where to obtain professional counseling, self-help supports, or other critical services. The HelpLine does not directly provide counseling or treatment services to contacts but rather serves as a primary source for information and resource referrals for individuals experiencing gambling-related difficulties. The FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT confidential and anonymous HelpLine responds to contacts from residents throughout Florida, many of whom are in immediate crisis when they place their initial contact. FCCG's trained HelpLine Specialists routinely respond to these contacts, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

In light of marketplace changes and conditions, the addition of new gambling operations, the increased availability and accessibility of online and mobile gambling, and other technological shifts over the past 30 years, the FCCG's programs have evolved and assumed critical importance. The FCCG not only operates the 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine but continues to conduct ongoing evaluations of its HelpLine service to ensure it is meeting ongoing client needs. The FCCG's services are also important to family members, friends of problem gamblers, and employers. As a single-stop resource center, the FCCG essentially serves as an educational body, assuring necessary research, outreach, public awareness, prevention, education, and training services.

The **888-ADMIT-IT** HelpLine provides a multitude of immediate services, recommendations, and ways for contacts to receive help. The HelpLine is easily accessed by calling or texting the widely publicized toll-free telephone HelpLine number (888-ADMIT-IT (236-4848), through a Live Chat feature on the agency's website (www.gamblinghelp.org), by email (fccg@gamblinghelp.org), or through the 888-ADMIT-IT mobile app. The FCCG HelpLine is also featured on social media platforms via Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, Reddit, and LinkedIn to ensure that regardless of one's comfort level and preferred mode of communication in connecting, individuals can gain quick access to the help needed. The **888-ADMIT-IT** telephone number was secured many years ago as a means of branding the service and enabling easy recognition and recall while communicating a clear message that "the first step to getting help for a gambling problem is admitting that it **is** a problem." All FCCG materials and HelpLine-related advertisements prominently feature and display the 888-ADMIT-IT number.

888-ADMIT-IT HELPLINE SPECIALISTS

Throughout the past thirty-six (36) years of operation, the FCCG has hired HelpLine and other staff from a variety of different backgrounds, and with varying levels of education and clinical experience, from master's level trained counselors to volunteers and recovering individuals. Telephone counseling services should not be confused with HelpLine services provided, since these programs serve entirely different purposes and require different training and protocols.

Helplines are not for counseling callers, as this would place an enormous liability on the helpline itself and would also prohibit the ability to provide true, confidential services. Our HelpLine para-professionals are paid employees who have been highly trained to handle the problem gambling population only. The most important component of making the helpline effective is the training and protocols that are in place for operation.

HelpLine Specialists realize the appropriateness and need to refer to certified professionals for counseling purposes and expert advice. Supportive intervention and the ability to provide viable resources to individuals without offering advice or counseling is a perfectly acceptable and responsible way to operate a HelpLine. This practice also ensures that gamblers and loved ones do not become dependent on the HelpLine for continued services and will be more apt to take the next step towards recovering, be it seeking help through peer supports, from a treatment provider, attending 12-Step or other self-help meetings, utilizing social service organizations, reaching out for legal assistance, participating in financial credit counseling through a professional institution, enrolling in self-exclusion programs, or taking advantage of many other resources that may be available depending on one's location and specific needs.

FCCG 888-ADMIT-IT HELPLINE SPECIALIST TRAINING

FCCG's HelpLine Specialists are professionally trained regarding issues relating to problem and compulsive gambling, including the scope, diversity and severity of difficulties experienced by individuals, families, and concerned others. The HelpLine is staffed around the clock by these specially trained staff, in the course of providing supportive intervention and information to individuals who are adversely affected by a gambling problem at any given moment. All agency personnel are trained to handle help and information calls related to gambling addiction from individuals in crisis.

All of this is done through the completion of specific modules in a formal HelpLine Training Manual. The training is hands-on demonstration, as well as an overview of the data collection and proper database usage, viewing of problem gambling specific docudramas and videos, ‘mock” call scenarios, phone shadowing, and finally handling live calls with management oversight. The HelpLine Manual is also provided to Specialists for future reference. In addition to providing background information about who we are, our role in the state, and available services and programs, we walk participants through the HelpLine process, Agency protocol, types and classifications of contacts, and standard operating procedures. While the handling of the contacts and the dialogue approach we use to have the conversation is the focus of the training, the background information and database training portions are also integral. The goal of the FCCG’s HelpLine training program is to ensure HelpLine Specialists are comfortable and confident in their ability to provide appropriate supports to individuals in crisis.

Upon completion of the FCCG’s HelpLine training program, all FCCG employees have the knowledge to:

- ✓ Be helpful, supportive, and compassionate to all individuals contacting the HelpLine;
- ✓ Utilize the Agency’s database to collect and record necessary data points from HelpLine contacts;
- ✓ Identify any special services needed based upon individual circumstances;
- ✓ Understand and empathetically discuss the issues faced by both the gambler and loved ones due to a gambling problem;
- ✓ Determine appropriate resource referrals based upon unique individual circumstances (e.g. family member supports, distance counseling, web-blockers, self-exclusion, etc.);
- ✓ Demonstrate an ability to think outside the box when confronted with unusual circumstances (e.g. suicide warning signs, abusive callers, service disruptions, etc.).

FCCG HelpLine Manual

Resource referral information is continually updated and housed in a computerized database program, as well as in the FCCG HelpLine Manual, for easy access and reference by agency and after-hours personnel. The Manual includes all known problem gambling specific resources in Florida. Furthermore, the Manual serves as backup when emergency situations arise from the loss of electrical power, computer difficulty, or other technological failures.

FCCG HelpLine Database

In addition to the HelpLine Manual, all Agency and after-hour personnel are supported by a computerized database which allows the FCCG to assess service effectiveness. The HelpLine database is the only location where all information relating to these contacts is found. The plethora of reports that are generated from the database are based on information housed within the system. Such reports are used to compile contact demographics and related information, to identify areas of need, and serve as a basis for comparison between past, present, and future problem gambling trends and statistics in the State of Florida.

The use of the computerized database enables personnel to quickly find resource referrals to accommodate help seeker needs. It houses resources in each of Florida’s 67 counties and includes information for community resource lines, social service organizations, crisis and mental health centers, medical facilities for veterans, and legal aid organizations, to name a few.

888-ADMIT-IT FCCG Developed & Produced Resource Guide for FLORIDA HELP SEEKERS – REFERRAL BASED RESOURCES – RECOVERY PROGRAMS AND TOOLS: FCCG’S OPPG (Copyright © 2021 [COPYRIGHT - Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling]. All Rights Reserved.; **FCCG’s PEER CONNECT PROGRAM** (Copyright © 2008 [COPYRIGHT - Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling]. All Rights Reserved.; **FCCG’s FINANCIAL DEBT & BUDGETING TOOLKIT** (Copyright © 2021 [COPYRIGHT - Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling]. All Rights Reserved.; **A CHANCE FOR CHANGE RECOVERY WORKBOOK SERIES** (Copyright © 2004 [COPYRIGHT - Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling]. All Rights Reserved.; & **FCCG POPULATION-SPECIFIC HELPLINE LITERATURE PACKETS (FOR GAMBLERS, LOVED ONES, AND SENIOR GAMBLERS)** (Copyright © 2020 [COPYRIGHT - Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling]. All Rights Reserved.

FCCG HelpLine Specialists are trained to provide resources catered to the contact’s unique situation, including immediate access to FCCG HelpLine programs that have been developed specifically for Florida help seekers, such as the **FCCG’s Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)**, the **FCCG’s Peer Connect Program**, the **FCCG’s Financial Debt and Budgeting Toolkit (Budget Tool)**, the **FCCG’s “A Chance for Change” Recovery Workbooks**, and the **FCCG’s Population-Specific HelpLine Literature Packets**, all of which are available only to Florida help seekers.

While certain types of resources are not accessible in every county, available resource information is contained in the FCCG’s HelpLine database in the following categories:

- Professional Counseling Services Referrals with Certified Treatment Providers
- FCCG’s Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)
- FCCG’s Peer Connect Program
- Self-Help Support Group Information and Referrals
- Self-Exclusion Program Options
- Financial Resources & Assistance Programs
- Legal Resources & Assistance Programs
- Population Specific Resources
- Impaired Professionals Resources
- FCCG Literature & Print Materials
- FCCG Website/Mobile App/Social Media Sites
- Employment Assistance Resources
- Online/Mobile App, Podcast & Video Resources & Supports
- Hotlines & Crisis Lines (Non-Gambling Specific Social Services and Emergency Assistance)
- Mental Health & Addictions Resources (Non-Gambling Specific)

All resource referrals are confirmed on an ongoing basis, and a system for re-verification remains in place.

The 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine is an ever-evolving resource for Floridians. The FCCG takes information from data collected and supplied by contacts to assist in the development of programs and future services. Additional data sets are added to or removed from the database based on feedback from people contacting the HelpLine. Further, comparing previous-year reports shows significant trends and changes in the landscape of Florida’s gambling environment and associated problem gambling impacts.

Data Analysis

The FCCG's iCarol HelpLine database contains valuable information on each contact received that is entered by FCCG HelpLine Specialists, categorized by contact type, and then separated into specific files for deeper analysis (e.g., total contacts, those seeking help or information, and those seeking help only). Given the sensitive nature of many questions, contacts may feel uncomfortable or reluctant to provide some personal information. As well, spouses/partners, and other loved ones who contact the HelpLine may not have sufficient information to provide answers to certain questions. All information provided is based upon self-reports. As such, individuals may furnish information that is less than forthright. Examples include information about debts owed due to gambling, illegal acts committed, history of alcohol and substance abuse, etc. This results in significant variability in the number of responses to topics discussed and is illustrated throughout this report. It is therefore important to note that all information may be conservative in nature. This report presents the information ascertained from HelpLine contacts received by the FCCG during the 2023-2024 fiscal year, with comparative data often presented from prior fiscal years to identify changing trends and patterns of gambling and gambling-related behaviors in Florida.

THE FCCG'S 24-HOUR CONFIDENTIAL AND MULTILINGUAL 888-ADMIT-IT HELPLINE OUTCOME EVALUATION SURVEY & REPORT

Each year, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) encourages 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts to provide feedback about the HelpLine services received to determine its efficacy and ways in which it can be enhanced. This annual outcome evaluation is designed to gauge the effectiveness of the FCCG's 24-hour HelpLine service in meeting its intended goals and objectives, to determine users' perceptions about their contact with the HelpLine Specialist, to identify the use and efficacy of recommended resources offered, and to assess the individual's overall experience and satisfaction with the HelpLine services. The annual evaluation continues to serve as an invaluable resource for program development needs, training, and the ongoing improvement of HelpLine operations.

This Annual HelpLine Outcome Evaluation Survey & Report remains relevant through the provision of fluid survey questions and continues to evolve with questions modified or added annually as deemed necessary, while assuring that comparative analysis with prior year studies remains uncompromised. This flexibility in both survey and outcome measures constitutes the overall evaluation report based upon the FCCG's 2023-2024 fiscal year.

888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Number

The 888-ADMIT-IT telephone number was secured as a means of branding the service, enabling easy recall and communicating a clear message that "the first step to getting help for a gambling problem is admitting it." All FCCG materials and HelpLine related advertisements produced feature the 888-ADMIT-IT number.

Over the years, the FCCG has made efforts to secure and promote a HelpLine telephone number that is easily identified with the issue of problem gambling. Such HelpLine "branding" has been a key element in promotion of the service, as well as ensuring that Floridians know who to call if they, or someone they know, are experiencing gambling related difficulties.

Branding is a very important concept, because once this occurs, organizations can become a household name. The 888-ADMIT-IT number has been branded throughout the State of Florida for decades, as the definitive “Problem Gambling HelpLine” service for the Sunshine State. This brand equity, built into the phone number, holds a priceless value in terms of its relationship with residents and communities throughout Florida.

24/7 Confidential, Multilingual, Problem Gambling HelpLine: TELEPHONE CONTACTS

During the **2023/2024 fiscal year**, a total of thirty-thousand, two-hundred and seventy-four (**30,274**) **telephone contacts (all agency contact types)** were received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, representing an astounding **314% increase in total telephone contacts** (all contact types) from the previous 2022/2023 fiscal (7,320). Of these, a total of two thousand seven-hundred and forty-four (**2,744**) **telephone calls were “Help Services Contacts”** (2,653 “Florida Help” Telephone Calls and 91 “Florida Info” Telephone Calls), also representing a significant **increase of 46% in “Help Services” telephone contacts** from the previous 2022/2023 fiscal (1,817). Telephone Calls received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine this year ranged from one (1) minute to one-hundred and eight (108) minutes long.

Alternative Platforms for the HelpLine: TEXT MESSAGES

The FCCG offers texting as another means by which individuals can reach out for help or information regarding a gambling problem. The FCCG’s 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine number is text-enabled and is advertised through various vehicles, such as brochures, signage, internet advertising, and on the FCCG’s website and social media pages.

When an individual texts the FCCG, staff is alerted through their phone and computer that a text has been received. The HelpLine specialists then answers the text through the messaging portal located in the HelpLine database (iCarol), and converses back and forth with the individual. Similar to telephone contacts, texting contacts can be for problem-gambling-related help or information. Texting contacts are handled in the same manner as telephone calls. Information is collected and recorded in the iCarol database and appropriate problem gambling resources are provided to the individual based upon the nature of the contact. Once the contact is complete, the database automatically populates a “Text” report form with the entire conversation transposed into the comments section of the form. Similar to the call database, the text form has drop down menus, check boxes, and text areas where the information collected is stored.

Frequently, help seekers are more comfortable utilizing alternative assistance platforms, like text messaging, for help with a gambling problem due to the sense of true anonymity it provides. When someone seeks help via text message on their cell phones, they are able to communicate this way privately and in an ongoing manner, which is common with all types of text message communications. These text contacts can be just as serious as telephone calls for help received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. Critical communication and/or responses to questions asked by FCCG HelpLine Specialists to determine a help seeker’s current state of crisis is solely dependent upon the responsiveness of the texter, which can be challenging when someone is nonresponsive for periods of time due to being busy at work while texting for help, for example.

During the **2023/2024 fiscal year**, a total of seven-hundred and seventy-eight (**778**) **text message contacts (all agency contact types)** were received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. Of these, a total of three-hundred and two (**302**) **texts were “Help Services Contacts”** (302 “Florida Help” Text Messages and 0 “Florida Info” Text Messages) with communication times ranging from one (1) minute to one-hundred and sixty-two (162) minutes. This data reflects a sixty-three percent (63%) increase in total text message contacts received by the FCCG this year compared to last, and **a nineteen percent (19%) increase in Floridians seeking problem gambling related help or information through the FCCG text messaging platform**, when comparing help service text contacts from this year with last year.

The continued increase in text messages received by the FCCG from Florida help seekers throughout the 2023/2024 fiscal year illustrates the importance of offering alternative assistance platforms for seeking problem gambling help and supports, such as text messaging.

Alternative Public Assistance Platforms for 888-ADMIT-IT: LIVE CHATS

In addition to telephone and text services, the FCCG offers Live Chat, a web-based program that allows users to connect with the FCCG for problem gambling help or information via their computer or mobile device. When an individual initiates a live chat with the FCCG through the gamblinghelp.org website, HelpLine Specialists are alerted via phone and computer that a live chat contact is in the queue. The HelpLine Specialist then responds to the chat through the messaging portal located in the HelpLine database (iCarol).

Like telephone and text contacts, live chat contacts can be for problem gambling related help or information. Live chats are handled the same way as telephone calls and texts, with information collected and recorded in the HelpLine database and problem gambling resources provided to the individual based upon the specifics of the contact. Once the live chat is complete, the database automatically opens up a “live chat” report form and auto-populates the conversation into the comments section of the form. The live chat database has drop down menus, check boxes, and text areas where the information collected can be placed.

During the **2023/2024 fiscal year**, a total of nine-hundred and fifty-seven (**957**) **live chat contacts (all agency contact types)** were received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. Of these, a total of one-hundred and fifty-seven (**157**) **live chat contacts were “Help Services Contacts”** (146 “Florida Help” Live Chats and 11 “Florida Info” Live Chats) with communication times ranging from one (1) minute to one-hundred and twenty-nine (129) minutes. This data reflects a ninety-three percent (93%) increase in total live chat contacts received by the FCCG this year compared to last, and **a fifty-one percent (51%) increase in Floridians seeking problem gambling related help or information through the FCCG live chat platform**, when comparing help service live chat contacts from this year with last year.

The FCCG continues to monitor and assess the various methods used to contact the HelpLine and its problem gambling supports in order to best use its resources.

THE ROLE OF THE FLORIDA COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING'S 888-ADMIT-IT HELPLINE

For more than three decades, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) has provided diverse and widespread services to individuals; families; institutions; addiction, treatment, and prevention providers; gambling operators; and others who have gambling-related issues or have been negatively impacted by a gambling problem or are seeking assistance for suffering persons. These services entail in-person, online, and mobile referrals and multiple forms of supports for problem gamblers, family members (in particular, spouses, cohabitants and/or partners), and other concerned persons (e.g., friends, colleagues, parents, children, employers, etc.). The FCCG further provides extensive training and outreach programs for diverse audiences throughout Florida.

Fundamental to the FCCG's operation has been the development and implementation of its 24-hour confidential and multilingual information and crisis Problem Gambling HelpLine service, 888-ADMIT-IT. Through its HelpLine, the FCCG provides information, supportive intervention, treatment and self-help referrals, diverse resources, literature, and a breadth of related supports 24 hours per day, 365 days of the year. The HelpLine offers a multitude of immediate services and ways for individuals to obtain additional help. The HelpLine can be accessed by phone or text, via the widely publicized toll-free telephone HelpLine number (888-ADMIT-IT (236-4848)), by live chat (gamblinghelp.org), email (fccg@gamblinghelp.org), through the 888-ADMIT-IT mobile app (<https://gamblinghelp.org/#mobile-app>), and via social media outlets. These diverse methods assure that regardless of one's comfort level in connecting, individuals can readily access help when needed via their preferred method of communication.

The FCCG, in collaboration with gambling operators, widely advertises the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine in racinos and casinos throughout the state (e.g., via posters, literature, collateral items, notifications on ATMs, in operator advertisements and facility programs, on their websites, on entryway kiosks, and through presentations with facility personnel, per FCCG training). The FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine service is promoted on lottery tickets, on billboards in select key locations, on multiple search engines, as well as on social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, Reddit, and LinkedIn).

Gambling throughout the state and internationally has become a socially acceptable recreational activity. Yet, there is ample evidence that there are individuals and families who experience harm due to excessive gambling. The FCCG has a primary goal to increase public awareness about problem, compulsive, and disordered gambling while advocating for services and supports for individuals in need of assistance. For clarification, while the terms problem and compulsive gambling are more commonly used, the formal diagnosis of disordered gambling is classified as a Substance-Related and Addictive Disorder by the American Psychiatric Association.

The FCCG HelpLine continues to serve as the primary statewide problem gambling resource center. Although the FCCG has provided problem gambling awareness, prevention, education, and training services since its inception, the need for ongoing development and implementation of new and diverse supports – made available through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine – has placed the organization in the forefront as a free and inclusive service to all residents of Florida while also assisting in national efforts to help problem gamblers and their families.

Government, industry, academia, health care, and other community-based service organizations and professionals continue to rely upon the FCCG to provide the necessary help and support to individuals and families struggling from the negative impacts and harms associated with excessive/problem/disordered gambling. In addition to operating the HelpLine, the FCCG continues to provide state-of-the-art training for mental health treatment providers, professionals and groups interested in reducing gambling-related harms. The 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine continues to serve as a one-stop resource for gamblers, their families, and others adversely affected, where they can obtain the help needed to recover from a gambling disorder, associated impacts, and resume a healthier life.

There is ample evidence from other jurisdictions that there has been an increase in contacts to state gambling helplines across the country with the growth of casinos, racinos, and other gambling venues, particularly within states regulating online gambling and sports wagering. As the landscape of gambling continues to evolve in Florida with the potential for gambling expansion, the need for ongoing support for the HelpLine and other FCCG programs remains essential. As the statewide advocate on issues related to problem, compulsive, and disordered gambling, the FCCG consistently monitors developments in the gambling industry and remains poised to add and/or modify its programs as required, and as funding permits.

In light of marketplace changes and conditions, the addition of new gambling operations, the increased availability and accessibility of Internet and mobile gambling, and other technological shifts over the past 30+ years, the FCCG's programs have evolved and assumed critical importance. The FCCG not only operates the 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine but continues to conduct ongoing evaluations of its HelpLine service to ensure it is meeting ongoing client needs. The FCCG's services are also important to family members, friends of problem gamblers, and employers. As a single-stop resource center, the FCCG essentially serves as an educational body, providing necessary research, outreach, prevention, education, and training services while assuring ample public awareness.

Florida's Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program

Long before the existence of what is now commonly known as “Florida’s Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program”, a program that was established by the Florida Legislature through F.S. 551.118 in 2007 in response to the authorization of slot-machine gambling in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG) has been the sole source provider of all problem gambling programming and supports for the state, dating back to the late 1980s. Beginning in the early 1990s and continuing to present, partnerships with the Florida Department of Lottery and other gambling operators throughout the state have provided Floridians with consistent access to problem gambling supports via the FCCG’s Problem Gambling HelpLine for more than three (3) decades.

Funding for **Florida’s Problem Gambling Prevention Program** (as provided by the FCCG) originally came from **the Florida Lottery, and began in 1992.**

Part of the agreement by the Florida Lottery, Governor Lawton Chiles, and former Representative Michael Langton, was a plan to offer assistance for the problem of compulsive gambling in the State of Florida. This was to be accomplished through participation of all Florida gambling industry operators, including the pari-mutuel industry, who were asked to voluntarily assist in this effort.

The FCCG was contacted by the Division of Pari-mutuel Wagering at this time and asked to present ways in which pari-mutuel facilities might assist in addressing the issue of compulsive gambling. In response to this request, FCCG suggested the implementation at each facility of a proactive “Responsible Gaming Program” to support problem gambling prevention. At a minimum, FCCG recommended that such a program should be certain to reflect sound policies (problem gambling specific), and include employee training, as well as customer prevention, education, and awareness strategies providing HelpLine access for problem gambling specific supports.

In 2001, three (3) years prior to the 2004 constitutional amendment to legalize slot machines at certain pari-mutuel facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, the FCCG, in partnership with Florida’s Pari-Mutuel Industry, hosted two (2) separate “Meeting of the Minds” forums in June and September, to convene Florida gambling industry members for discussions surrounding the development and implementation of responsible gaming programming at State of Florida licensed gambling facilities. With the majority of Florida’s gambling operators present at these forums, key representatives from dog tracks, horse tracks, jai-alai frontons, and floating casinos across the state participated in this groundbreaking process to discuss industry thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and concerns surrounding responsible gaming programming development and implementation with the FCCG. Other important topics and points of discussion, for both review during these forums and inclusion in responsible gaming programming, included self-exclusion, underage gambling, and employee gambling policy program guidelines, as well as patron access to cash and facility credit policies and procedures.

Through the information, feedback, and recommendations provided by industry participants at the “Meeting of the Minds” forums, a few months later in 2002, the FCCG finalized development of its proprietary “Responsible Gaming and Player Protection Program,” (RGPPP), and made it available for implementation by all State of Florida gambling facility operators. The FCCG’s 2002 RGPPP, as provided, included an employee training component, provision of 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine facility signage for patron and employee access to problem gambling supports, and verification of program compliance conducted through facility site visits. The program theme, “Gambling Is Not The Problem – Compulsive Gambling Is,” highlights myths about gambling, warning signs of a problem to look for, characteristics commonly associated with compulsive gambling behavior, and how to access help through the FCCG’s 24-hour HelpLine number.

2004 Statewide Referendum Allowing Slots in Broward & Miami-Dade Counties

As part of the 2004 General Election, Florida voters approved a limited constitutional amendment to legalize slot machines at certain pari-mutuel facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. The amendment further required an affirmative vote of the electors in each county before the slot machines could be actually authorized for that county. Broward's referendum was successful on March 8, 2005, and Miami-Dade's was successful on January 29, 2008. These referenda authorized slot operation at 7 facilities, and Florida law was amended to authorize operation at an 8th facility.

2005 - Chapter 551, F.S.; implementing s. 23, Art. X of the State Constitution

Chapter 551, Florida Statutes, implements the regulation of slot machine gaming as authorized by Section 23, Article X of the State Constitution. Slot machine gaming is authorized at existing pari-mutuel facilities in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties upon approval by local county referendum. These facilities will be eligible to conduct slot machine gaming by meeting the requirements of Chapter 550 and 551, Florida Statutes, Rules 61D-14 and 61D-15, Florida Administrative Code, and the granting of a slot machine gaming license by the Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering.

2006 – DBPR Issues First Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program Request for Proposal

As set forth in section 551.118, Florida Statutes, the State Legislature established a Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program ("Program"). The Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR; the Department), Division of Pari-Mutual Wagering (the Division) was responsible for regulating slot machine gaming and contracting for the provision of services related to the prevention of compulsive and addictive gambling as set forth in Chapter 551.118, Florida Statutes. The first Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Compulsive and Addictive Gambling Prevention Program was issued by DBPR on October 3, 2006. The purpose of this RFP was to establish a Compulsive/Addictive Gambling Prevention Program that encompasses an advertising program to encourage responsible gaming practices as well as publicizes a free problem gambling telephone helpline.

The Department anticipated that any respondent to this RFP would propose a program to comply with the requirements of Chapter 551, Florida Statutes, and that any proposal would address, and not be limited to: research, need identification, outreach, and program development and assessment. It was also anticipated that the services to be provided would vary based upon events and circumstances occurring during the term of the Contract, and that collaborative annual review activities would be necessary.

2007 – DBPR Awards Implementation of the Prevention Program to FCCG

Upon receipt of award of the first of three (3) competitive solicitations for compulsive gambling prevention programming issued through RFP by the Department, beginning in May of 2007, 2013, and finally in 2019, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) has been the sole provider of this programming for Florida citizens until the end of the current 2023/2024 fiscal year; July 1, 2024.

Funding for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program as Provided through Section 551.118, F.S.

Funding for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program began in fiscal year 2006/2007, as provided through Section 551.118, F.S., and was designated to support development of the compulsive gambling prevention programming first required at slot-licensed pari-mutuel facilities located in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, including employee training at the DBPR slot-licensed facilities, and HelpLine marketing and advertising in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties.

Funding is provided by the 8 slot-licensed Racinos in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, which pay \$250,000 each year to the Par-mutuel Wagering Trust Fund for the purpose of Compulsive Gambling Prevention Programming. None of other 26 state-licensed pari-mutuel gambling facilities or cardroom operators in Florida are required to participate in or fund the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program. The Florida Department of the Lottery does NOT contribute to the funding of the prevention program, despite statewide access to Lottery gambling products and more than 30% of 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts being lottery related.

Since 2005, Florida's Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program has NEVER received the full \$2 million in annual funding due to the legislature's annual sweep of the Trust Fund. The Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program has NEVER received more than \$1.25 million dollars out of this appropriation in any given year (only 6 out of the past 16 years have even been funded at the \$1.25 million level; most years were far less than that).

Toll-Free HelpLine Number Promoted by Florida's Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program as Provided through Section 551.114, F.S.

Florida law (Section 551.114, Florida Statutes) requires all slot machine licensed gambling facilities to post warning signs of the risks and dangers of gambling, the odds of winning, and the toll-free telephone number patrons can call for information and referral services regarding problem or compulsive gambling. **The FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has been the only toll-free telephone number posted and promoted for Floridians in need of problem gambling help to call, since long before the Statute's inception in 2005.**

The FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine has been branded throughout the State of Florida by governmental agencies, health care professionals, gambling industry operators, educators, and others, for more than three decades now, as the only Problem Gambling HelpLine service for Floridians.

2019 (April) – DBPR 3rd Competitive Solicitation “Request for Proposals” for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program

On April 5, 2019, the Department of Business and Professional Regulations issued the first of three (3) “Requests for Proposal” for the Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program for the upcoming July 1, 2019, fiscal, RFP-DBPR-03-19/20. However, the solicitation as originally issued contained significantly different terms from the existing contract and infringed upon the intellectual property and common law rights of the FCCG. Upon review and agreement by the Department, the original solicitation was removed and a subsequent solicitation, RFP-DBPR-04-19/20, was issued on May 3, 2019. Unfortunately, the second RFP (as issued) precluded the FCCG from being able to respond.

Under the terms of the second 2019 RFP, required tasks with minimum standards must be performed as per the Scope of Work requirements for deliverables relating to HelpLine, Advertising, Community Outreach, and Slot Machine Gaming Facility Training Services. The RFP further specified that “modifications proposed by the Respondent may not be considered”.

The required services contained therein represent contract deliverables originally developed by the FCCG under previous year contracts with DBPR, which had since been modified by DBPR to include unattainable performance measures, unrealistic reporting and response requirements, or were otherwise cost-prohibitive for a multitude of additional other reasons.

Further, the RFP contained requirements that no entity, other than the FCCG, could deliver (i.e. partnering with the National Council on Problem Gambling during Problem Gambling Awareness Month when, as previously noted, the FCCG is the state designated Affiliate to the NCPG and as such, no other entity would be at liberty to partner in that capacity). There are other requirements that place only the FCCG at a distinct disadvantage from other prospective respondents (i.e. requirement for retroactive posting of all web letters, blog posts, etc. to the website). The fact is that a new contractor would not incur this burden, as there would be no historical data in existence to post.

Additionally, the Scope of Work section as presented included outdated deliverables that were not reflective of Florida’s current helpline data, research, or trends in the problem gambling field. Reporting and response requirements were so extensive that a minimum of six (6) additional full-time staff would be required, just to meet minimum standards that had now been established. To illustrate, the 2018-2019 monthly narrative reports were on average 60-80 pages, and the correlating support binder for documents submitted as “proof” for only one month’s service has weighed up to 19 pounds (see March 2019 binder submissions from FCCG). These issues, which prohibited the FCCG from formally responding to this 2019 RFP-DBPR-04-19/20, have been ongoing for the past three (3) years, and have been brought to the immediate and recurring attention of the current Contract Manager on numerous occasions, to no avail.

As background, up until fiscal year 2016/2017 (and since contract inception in 2005), the FCCG submitted a new set of deliverables with correlating budget to DBPR at the start of each fiscal year, illustrating new problem gambling initiatives, programming, and services along with related costs. Because the programming we do is fluid, it is not economically prudent for us to be bound by long-term deliverables since needs are identified and met based upon data collected and our ability to implement such programming. These annual deliverables have historically included some static initiatives that we work on year after year and which do not change (e.g. HelpLine operation maintains as a constant activity), as well as new initiatives that may not have existed the year prior, based on current trends and developments in the field. In addition, some deliverables have been eliminated as new ones were added (i.e. In 2016/2017, we did not propose to continue to distribute postcards to a minimum of 100,000 residents in Florida as we did in fiscal year 2015/2016, since we found that the related costs were not justified by the responses received to the HelpLine from this particular initiative and further, that electronic communication appeared to be more effective for this type of messaging).

In summary, the FCCG outlined to DBPR at this time that we felt there is the potential for the FCCG to better assist both the gaming industry and the state in meeting the statutory requirements and providing the best services in Florida related to compulsive and addictive gambling prevention programming. This can be easily achieved through development of appropriate deliverable goals with reasonable and attainable measures. In addition, the identified challenges discussed at this time allow for greater insight into just some of the difficulties the FCCG has encountered during previous contract years in its effort to meet deliverables that designate minimum numbers as a quantification and measure of successful deliverable performance.

As of June 10, 2019, the FCCG formally notified DBPR that if these concerns may be considered and addressed, it is prepared to submit a program proposal to DBPR that would document the FCCG's intention to expand upon existing services and assure a high caliber Compulsive/Addictive Gambling Prevention Program, by outlining provisions of the strategic plan for the 24-Hour HelpLine, gaming industry training, prevention, community education and outreach programming, and advertising services designed to increase awareness within gaming facilities and elsewhere throughout the state. It would also demonstrate the evolution of changes over time necessitating modifications to existing program formats, to meet increased demands given the proliferation of gambling in the state, the expansion of online gambling, and advances in technology and modes of communication.

2019 (September) – No Responsive Bids Received for the 3rd Solicitation Issued for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program – Six (6) Month Contract Extension Provided by DBPR to FCCG

After not receiving any responsive bids (i.e. acceptable proposals) and entering into a six-month Contract extension with the FCCG for the period July 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019, the Department then issued its third and final solicitation of the year for the Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program. This time, an Intent to Negotiate (ITN) was issued on September 23, 2019.

2020 – DBPR 3rd Competitive Solicitation for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program Awarded to FCCG

The FCCG submitted a formal response to this solicitation, which it won, as illustrated in the October 23, 2019, ITN Tabulation Sheet, resulting in an Invitation to Negotiate from DBPR on October 30, 2019, and an ultimate award of the Contract for the provision of Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program Services for the period January 1, 2020, through June 30, 2024.

As has historically been the case, this contract provided for a renewal option on June 30, 2024, for four and a half years (i.e. for a period of time not to exceed the original term of this contract).

2022 (July) – Oversight of the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program Transferred from DBPR to the Florida Gaming Control Commission (FGCC)

During the course of the 2020-2024 Contract period, on July 1, 2022, via a Type Two Transfer (allowed pursuant to s. 20.06(2), F.S.), all powers and duties, personnel, administrative rules, and funding of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation relating to the regulation of pari-mutuel wagering, slot machines, cardrooms, and the state compliance agency's oversight responsibilities for authorized gaming compacts, including oversight of the Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program, were transferred to the newly created Florida Gaming Control Commission (FCCG).

2022 (September) – Hurricane Ian Impacts

Also occurring during the 2022/2023 fiscal year, and the third fiscal period of the 2020-2024 Contract, on September 28, 2022, FCCG operations and standard operating procedures were significantly impacted from Hurricane Ian, a Category 4 storm that made landfall on Florida's southwest coast, sweeping away all homes and communities in its path. Hurricane Ian has been cited as one of the most powerful storms ever to hit the United States, with winds in excess of 150mph and heavy rain taking out power for over 2.6 million Florida residents and causing more than \$12.6 billion in insured losses across the state.

Long after the winds and rains from Hurricane Ian were last felt, the community of Sanford, Florida, located in Seminole County and also where the FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Operations are housed, continued to feel the storm's wrath in the wake of flooding and evacuations that would leave residents and businesses inaccessible, isolated, without power, and in many parts, almost completely underwater. Seminole County experienced severe flooding after the storm dumped more than 14 inches of rain, in particular along the St. Johns River watershed area, with rising waters from Lake Monroe resulting in area-wide evacuations and setting record flood levels exceeding 8.5 feet. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis described the destruction as a "500-year flood even. We've never seen storm surge of this magnitude," he said.

The FCCG's office building, designated "The DeForest Block", a historic landmark built in 1887, is located right on 1st Street in the heart of downtown Sanford, just blocks from post-Hurricane Ian's overflowing Lake Monroe, where water washed up over the sea wall and flooded the streets, along with many nearby neighboring businesses.

The FCCG's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine remained intact and fully functional both during and after the storm. However, Hurricane Ian's impacts left the FCCG's overall operations and staff severely negatively impacted throughout the majority of the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year.

2022 – Florida Ranked in Top Three (3) States for Population & Consumer Spending on Gambling

At the same time, gambling continued to proliferate throughout Florida and beyond. For 2022, total statewide commercial casino gambling revenues was a record \$494 million, an increase of 6.9% from 2021. Gambling tax revenue to the state for 2022 was \$242.9 million. While under review by the court in 2021-2022, the eight slot-licensed DBPR Racinos were permitted to extend their operating hours, and Cardrooms were authorized to operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Online horse racing began in December 2021, and in May 2022, Caesars Racebook launched a new mobile app to accept horse racing bets on more than 250 tracks globally.

Florida has been on the precipice of becoming one of the largest gambling markets in the entire nation. In 2022, Florida ranked as one of the top three states in the country for consumer spending on gambling activities; it's already the third-largest state by population and has numerous gambling options with several tribal and commercial casinos and pari-mutuel facilities. Gamblers can play daily fantasy sports, bet on horse races, bet on jai-alai, play poker, and gamble on nearly every traditional casino game.

According to a study at the time from the American Gaming Association, the 1,005 casinos across the country have had a \$328.6 billion annual economic impact. That is in addition to 1.8 million jobs supported by casinos and an incredible \$52.7 billion of taxes collected as of December 31, 2022. Clearly, casinos have had a massive impact on the U.S. economy in multiple ways – and that impact can be seen in Florida. The economic impact from casinos in Florida was \$7.55 billion. That ranked the Sunshine State fourth in the US and led to \$1.56 billion of tax impact.

Equally significant, in 2022, Florida ranked 2nd in the nation for consumer spending on lottery tickets, with lottery sales by the Florida Lottery amounting to over \$9.3 billion.

2022-2023 FY – Florida’s Funding for Problem Gambling Services Does Not Increase

Despite the expansion of gambling in the state, the \$1,250,000 annual budget appropriation received by the FCCG for its current scope of work to be performed under the 2020-2024 ITN Response Contract, had been, and continued to be, far less funding than what was needed to perform just the minimum tasks required to meet the contract deliverables. According to the National Association of Administrators for Disordered Gambling Services (NAADGS) “2021 Survey of Publicly Funded Problem Gambling Services in the United States”, of the 28 states reporting 2021 Helpline data, Florida ranked #1 in the country for total number of help contacts received to the 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine. It is important to note that this NAADGS Survey is conducted once every five years.

2023 (June) – FCCG Continues to Request for Relief from the Gaming Commission Regarding Burdensome Monthly Reporting Requirements

In June of 2023, following the passage of one year since the FCCG first initiated discussions with the Florida Gaming Control Commission (FGCC) regarding the burdensome monthly reporting pursuant to its current contract, the request to address this issue was raised again. At this time, we advised that we were seeking relief from the approximate 100+ minimum hours of staff time needed each month just to comply with reporting requirements originally initiated by the predecessor contract administrator, DBPR. The FCCG explained that it had made every attempt humanly possible to comply with the unsustainable reporting requirements of the current FGCC contract, to the organization’s own demise. These reporting requirements are so burdensome that the FCCG has been unable to retain key staff necessary, not only to complete reports, but to conduct the work to fulfill the actual mission of the organization. The number of staff hours and actual staff needed to comply with the reporting requirements of the contract alone cannot continue, given the exponential increase in demand for FCCG programs and services currently experienced, as well as the increased number of serious calls/texts/chats to the HelpLine for help.

To date, even as gambling continues to proliferate in the state, the legislature has not addressed the critical need to keep pace with the ever-increasing availability of gambling and associated gambling problems, by adequately funding Florida’s Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program. The current level of funding, which has not increased in seven years, has never amounted to the full amount that is paid into this issue by gaming operators each year. It is no longer tenable, and the FCCG cannot financially sustain the current operating and reporting mandates required by the FGCC under the state contract. FCCG has never been found to be deficient through any of these monthly audits of our performance, or any audit, for that matter. We requested that this be considered moving forward into the upcoming 2023-2024 fiscal year.

The weight of the state contract is destroying the FCCG and its ability to operate in an efficient manner. The FCCG was founded with a mission and set objectives more than a decade before the state contract came into existence. The mission of the FCCG is the reason for its existence, and the organization is committed to returning to it.

2023 (November) – FCCG Requests Governor DeSantis to Fully Appropriate the \$2 Million Paid for this Issue

On November 20, 2023, the FCCG sent a letter to Governor DeSantis requesting full appropriation of the \$2 million in funds required and paid by slot-licensed pari-mutuel gambling operators for Florida's Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program pursuant to s. 551.118, for the next Fiscal Year 2023/2024. Expansion of gambling opportunities in Florida necessitates an associated increase in funding for problem gambling programming, services, and supports, to lessen, to the extent possible, the resulting negative impacts caused by compulsive and addictive gambling and experienced by a percentage of the population. Gambling opportunities in Florida have rapidly increased throughout the years, as has the population. However, the funding formula for problem gambling services in Florida has remained the same.

2024 (March) – FCCG Receives Approval on its Current 2023/2024 FY Budget from the Commission

On March 26, 2024, more than 9 months after the FCCG first provided its annual 2023/2024 FY Budget Amendment request to the Commission (on Sunday, June 25, 2023) for consideration with the Amendment 6 Scope of Work modification request (which was denied), the FCCG finally received budget approval. On April 15, 2024, all reports for the current year from July 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024, became "due" to the Commission, none of which could have been prepared prior to this time by the FCCG, given the fact that there was no approved budget for the year until this time.

2024 (May) – FGCC 4th Competitive Solicitation: "Request for Proposals" for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program

On May 1, 2024, despite the option to renew the current contract with the FCCG in July 2024 for another four-and-a-half-year period, the Florida Gaming Control Commission instead issued the first of two (2) "Requests for Proposals" for the Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program for the upcoming 2024/2025 fiscal beginning July 1, 2024, RFP-FGCC 23/24-03. The Commission's decision to issue an RFP for the contract came with no explanation, despite the FCCG's years of fulfillment of the contract for Florida's Compulsive or Addictive Gambling Prevention Program.

2024 (June) – No Responsive Bids Received (Once Again) for the now 4th Solicitation Issued for the Compulsive Gambling Prevention Program

On June 10, 2024, the FCCG once again notified the FGCC that it would be unable to respond to the RFP as issued. Under the terms of the 2024 RFP, required tasks with minimum standards must be performed as per the Scope of Work requirements for deliverables relating to HelpLine, Advertising, Community Outreach, and Slot Machine Gaming Facility Training Services. The current RFP further specifies that "modifications proposed by the Respondent may not be considered" and that "the Contract documents shall include terms and conditions of this Statement of Work and solicitation". The required services contained therein represented many contract deliverables originally developed by the FCCG under previous year contracts with DBPR, which had since been modified for the RFP to include unattainable performance measures, unrealistic reporting and response requirements, and/or were otherwise cost-prohibitive for a multitude of additional other reasons.

Florida's prevention program, provided by FCCG, is nationally recognized and has received awards as the leading problem gambling prevention program in the country. As the provider of the prevention program, FCCG has consistently received 100% ratings for its reporting and transparency as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit entity.

In addition to the FCCG having the capability and success rate to provide top quality programs for all problem gambling prevention services in Florida, the continuity of program supports within the state will expand existing confidence by citizens, gaming operators, diversified professionals, and others, who over the years have come to trust the organization's brand (which is imperative for this service population), and who are dependent upon an entity whose mission is dedicated solely to matters relating to problem and compulsive gambling. This is an essential point of departure because other than the FCCG, there is no statewide organization anywhere within Florida whose exclusive purpose for existence is to serve the gambling addicted, adversely affected, and related populations.

Understanding and appreciating FCCG's mission and history of serving an at-risk population is hopefully the context to help the Commission better understand why the current RFP and new contract is virtually impossible to justify an FCCG RFP submittal.



Florida's Compulsive and Addictive Gambling Prevention Program



****Report begins on next page.**

24-Hour 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine Annual Report: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

TOTAL Agency Contacts:

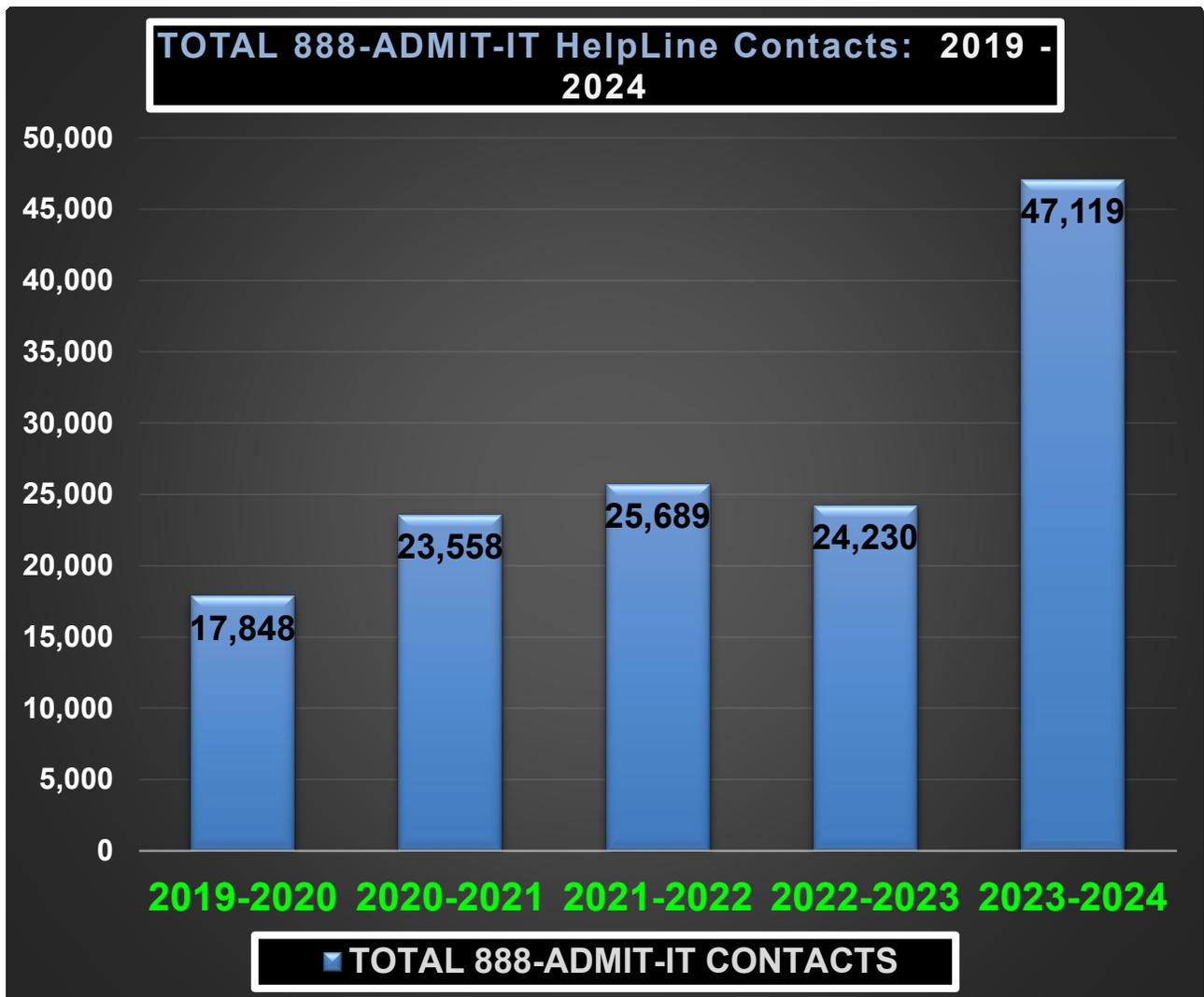
- During the **2023/2024 fiscal year**, the FCCG received **47,119 total contacts**, of which **6,588 were “Help Services Contacts”**, consisting of individuals in Florida only requesting problem gambling help and/or information (**Table 1**). This data represents a continued increase in total Agency contacts of all types each year over the past five fiscal years, with an overall increase in total contacts of 164% since the 2019/2020 fiscal year.

Contract Period: 2020-2024 - 888-ADMIT-IT TOTAL AGENCY CONTACTS by Fiscal Period

Table 1

TOTAL 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Contacts

Fiscal Period	Total Contacts	Percent Change from Previous Fiscal Year	Help Services Contacts	Percent Change from Previous Fiscal Year
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024	47,119	80%	6,588	20%
July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023	26,230	2%	5,471	7%
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	25,689	9%	5,099	-11%
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	23,558	32%	5,709	81%
July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020	17,848	N/A	3,153	N/A



FLORIDA “HELP ONLY” Agency Contacts:

- When comparing data over the past five fiscal years, during the 2023/2024 fiscal year, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has seen a significant and steady increase in “help only” contacts from Florida help seekers by 163% since 2019/2020, and a 50% increase in Florida help only contacts this year over last. See **Table 2** below for specifics:

Table 2													
HELP ONLY (FLORIDA) 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Contacts													
2023-2024 Fiscal Year													
TOTAL FLORIDA ONLY HELP CONTACTS:	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	TOTALS
2023-2024: Monthly Total Help Contacts - FL	221	192	198	241	225	312	407	333	282	268	266	204	3,149
2022-2023: Monthly Total Help Contacts - FL	132	169	155	168	143	141	197	156	192	218	232	199	2,102
2021-2022: Monthly Total Help Contacts - FL	130	112	124	121	113	121	126	146	159	149	150	138	1,589
2020-2021: Monthly Total Help Contacts - FL	60	67	78	110	71	120	118	122	127	141	137	115	1,266
2019-2020: Monthly Total Help Contacts - FL	107	115	122	132	113	98	145	126	82	33	60	66	1,199

TOTAL FLORIDA “HELP ONLY” Agency Contacts (Continued):

- When comparing YTD data **as of June 30, 2024**, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has seen **an average increase of 115%** in “Florida Help Only Contacts” over the past five (5) fiscal years. This includes a **149% increase** in “help only” contacts from Florida help seekers since 2020/2021, a **98% increase** in Florida help only contacts since the 2021/2022 fiscal, and a **50% increase** when comparing this year over last. Additionally, if comparing this year’s data to that from “Pre-COVID-19” times, there has been a **163% increase** in “help only” contacts from Florida help seekers since the 2019/2020 fiscal year.
- Growth in the form of Florida Help contacts is noted, with an increasing number of these help contacts now coming from help seekers who are in serious distress and under extreme pressure. These crisis contacts tend to be longer in nature and represent increasing demands on HelpLine Specialists.
- On average, it takes FCCG HelpLine Specialists a minimum of ninety (90) minutes per help contact (regardless of the platform used to initiate the contact) from start to finish. **When looking at the 3,149 Florida Help contacts received by the FCCG during the 2023-2024 fiscal year, this equates to 4,724 total annual hours, or 91 total weekly hours, of active staff time handling just these specific contacts.** When breaking this down further, a total of 13 active hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year, are required (at a minimum) to respond to just “Florida Only Help Contacts” received by the FCCG HelpLine.

- The total number of help only contacts and % increase, along with the distribution of help only contacts via the platform used is all illustrated in the following charts:

TOTAL - % Increase or Decrease in FLORIDA ONLY HELP CONTACTS - ALL TYPES (TEXT/CHAT/TELEPHONE/EMAIL):	Total FL Only Help Contacts - ALL TYPES July-June
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) - 2019/2020 to 2023/2024	163%
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) - 2020/2021 to 2023/2024	149%
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) - 2021/2022 to 2023/2024	98%
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) - 2022/2023 to 2023/2024	50%
Average Increase Over Past 4 Years:	115%

Distribution of Florida Help Contacts by Fiscal Year by Platform Type:

2023-2024: Monthly Total HELP Contacts	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	YTD TOTALS 2023-2024
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Telephone Calls	180	178	160	208	200	276	351	279	219	227	219	156	2,653
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Emails	0	1	10	6	4	2	7	5	8	0	3	2	48
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Live Chats	10	5	9	7	7	14	20	18	15	11	18	12	146
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Texts	31	8	19	20	14	20	29	31	40	30	26	34	302
TOTAL 2023-2024 FLORIDA HELP CONTACTS:	221	192	198	241	225	312	407	333	282	268	266	204	3,149

2022-2023: Monthly Total HELP Contacts	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	YTD TOTALS 2022-2023
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Telephone Calls	123	136	134	145	119	110	154	118	162	181	196	165	1,743
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Emails	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	5
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Live Chats	4	10	4	10	6	9	14	12	7	15	6	6	103
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Texts	5	23	17	12	18	22	29	26	23	22	29	25	251
TOTAL 2022-2023 FLORIDA HELP CONTACTS:	132	169	155	168	143	141	197	156	192	218	232	199	2,102

2021-2022: Monthly Total HELP Contacts	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	YTD TOTALS 2021-2022
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Telephone Calls	120	101	106	112	105	106	109	130	144	129	140	121	1,423
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Emails	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	2	0	0	9
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Live Chats	3	4	4	4	3	10	8	9	7	8	4	4	68
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Texts	7	6	14	4	5	4	8	6	6	10	6	13	89
TOTAL 2021-2022 FLORIDA HELP CONTACTS:	130	112	124	121	113	121	126	146	159	149	150	138	1,589

2020-2021: Monthly Total HELP Contacts	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	YTD TOTALS 2020-2021
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Telephone Calls	57	65	74	100	61	109	103	108	118	131	126	107	1,159
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Emails	2	0	0	0	3	3	3	4	0	2	0	1	18
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Live Chats	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	5	3	3	3	3	32
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Texts	0	0	2	7	5	6	9	5	6	5	8	4	57
TOTAL 2020-2021 FLORIDA HELP CONTACTS:	60	67	78	110	71	120	118	122	127	141	137	115	1,266

2019-2020: Monthly Total HELP Contacts	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	YTD TOTALS 2019-2020
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Telephone Calls	98	103	110	120	98	80	129	110	79	28	55	60	1,070
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Emails	2	2	5	1	5	7	6	7	0	0	0	1	36
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Live Chats	4	5	3	4	3	0	6	5	1	3	0	2	36
FLORIDA ONLY - Help Texts	3	5	4	7	7	11	4	4	2	2	5	3	57
TOTAL 2019-2020 FLORIDA HELP CONTACTS:	107	115	122	132	113	98	145	126	82	33	60	66	1,199

- The FCCG’s 888-ADMIT-IT Problem Gambling HelpLine has responded to a total of 9,305 “Help Only” Contacts of all types (i.e. telephone call, text message, live chat, and email) from Florida help seekers in need of problem gambling supports throughout the course of the current 2020-2024 Contract Period. See Chart Below:

TOTAL FLORIDA "HELP ONLY" CONTACTS - July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2024	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	TOTALS
2019-2020: YTD Total FLORIDA HELP Contacts by Month - All Contact Types (i.e. Call/Text/Chat/Email)	107	115	122	132	113	98	145	126	82	33	60	66	1,199
2020-2021: YTD Total FLORIDA HELP Contacts by Month - All Contact Types (i.e. Call/Text/Chat/Email)	60	67	78	110	71	120	118	122	127	141	137	115	1,266
2021-2022: YTD Total FLORIDA HELP Contacts by Month - All Contact Types (i.e. Call/Text/Chat/Email)	130	112	124	121	113	121	126	146	159	149	150	138	1,589
2022-2023: YTD Total FLORIDA HELP Contacts by Month - All Contact Types (i.e. Call/Text/Chat/Email)	132	169	155	168	143	141	197	156	192	218	232	199	2,102
2023-2024: YTD Total HELP FLORIDA Contacts by Month - All Contact Types (i.e. Call/Text/Chat/Email)	221	192	198	241	225	312	407	333	282	268	266	204	3,149
TOTAL YTD 2020-2024 CONTRACT: TOTAL # OF "HELP ONLY" FLORIDA CONTACTS RECEIVED BY FCCG AS OF JUNE 30, 2024:	650	655	677	772	665	792	993	883	842	809	845	722	9,305

OUT-OF-STATE “HELP ONLY” Agency Contacts:

- During the 2023/2024 fiscal year, the National Council on Problem Gambling continued widespread advertisement and promotion of its national problem gambling helpline numbers across the United States, including Florida, as part of its “National Problem Gambling Helpline Harmonization” effort, funded by a \$6 million grant from the National Football League (NFL) Foundation. NCPG presently advertises its “national helpline network” throughout the United States (800-522-4700), which now also includes the use of 800-GAMBLER for this purpose, via the NCPG’s recent agreement with the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey for telephonic use of this number.
- The result of associated increased national helpline advertising, as part of the NCPG’s National Football League (NFL) funded campaign, has yielded increased erroneous and out-of-state help seeker contacts received by the FCCG. Additionally, a presumably increased number of callers from Florida with out-of-state area codes seeking assistance through the national helpline network due to the increased advertising, will not receive FCCG problem gambling programs and services or personalized Florida-specific problem gambling help.
- Promotion of national problem gambling helpline numbers in states where state-specific problem gambling helplines exist results in help seekers with phone numbers from other states reaching the wrong call center. More specifically, the call to the national helpline number is routed depending upon the origin of the area code of the telephone used versus the state in which the contact is seeking assistance.
- Local impacts from increased national advertising campaigns that are a large part of the NCPG’s “helpline harmonization” effort vary drastically, depending upon the migratory patterns of each state. Because many people do not have cell phone numbers from the area codes in which they physically reside, Florida residents are not often identified as such by the NCPG helpline system. This is a significant point because for more than a decade now, Florida has continued its high growth rate and is now among the most populous states in the nation. The state not only reflects a new and diverse constituency, ranging from persons in their early 20s to retirees, it’s reflective of a new population of people who do not change their cell phone areas codes or numbers upon relocating, and do not secure landlines. This is a notable change from in the past.

- Compounding the problem further, Florida’s land-based gambling operators frequently advertise both state and national problem gambling helpline numbers throughout their facilities. Multiple helpline numbers create confusion for callers and also results in people being directed to problem gambling help based upon the area code of the phone number they are dialing from. Moreover, the main purpose and benefit of having a state-specific problem gambling helpline number, like 888-ADMIT-IT, is to eliminate these specific problems. In short, while a national helpline number for problem gambling could prove meaningful in states where a current affiliate and/or a helpline are not yet established, in states like Florida, it is counterproductive and can result in extreme consequences, up to and including suicide – depending upon the mental or emotional state of the help seeker – when their call/text/chat to the national helpline number is not answered at all, or alternatively, is answered by the wrong call center where assistance cannot be provided, because they have reached the wrong state.
 - **National helpline advertising impacts continued to be documented during the 2023/2024 fiscal year, with the Florida Council receiving a 23% increase in out-of-state help seeker calls since the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year. See Table 3a. below for specifics:**

Table 3a.

HELP ONLY CALLS (OUT-OF-STATE) 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Calls - ALL HELPLINE #'S DIALED

2023-2024 Fiscal Year

TOTAL OUT-OF-STATE HELP CALLS:	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	TOTALS
2024-2025: Monthly Total Help Calls - Out-of-State	100	55	42	55	57	52	38	37	35	35	24	14	544
2023-2024: Monthly Total Help Calls -Out-of-State	8	24	15	24	29	43	44	32	29	47	75	71	441
2022-2023: Monthly Total Help Calls - Out-of-State	24	25	19	31	32	31	23	25	28	31	17	13	299
2021-2022: Monthly Total Help Calls - Out-of-State	12	24	19	21	25	23	17	39	18	28	29	25	280

INAPPROPRIATE Agency Contacts:

- This year, the FCCG saw a continued increase in “Inappropriate” contacts to the HelpLine. As previously mentioned, the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) began heavy advertisement and promotion of national problem gambling helpline numbers across the United States, including in the State of Florida, as part of its recent “National Problem Gambling HelpLine Harmonization” effort, following receipt of a \$6 million grant from the National Football League (NFL). The result of associated increased national helpline advertising as part of the NCPG’s NFL-funded campaign, has yielded increased erroneous and out-of-state help seeker contacts received by the FCCG.
- When the NCPG and its licensees promote the "national" helpline numbers within the State of Florida and at Florida land-based gambling facilities, it results in confusion and indecisiveness on behalf of problem gamblers in Florida who have seen the 888-ADMIT-IT number for decades and either assume both numbers will lead them to the right place, the Florida Council’s HelpLine, or alternatively, assume these helpline numbers provide access to two different helpline services where alternative supports can be received. Yet, realistically, and factually speaking, such persons will only receive Florida-centric services through the FCCG’s 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine number.

- The impacts to the FCCG’s HelpLine system are evident when comparing HelpLine data from the previous five (5) fiscal years, with a 128% increase during the current 2023/2024 fiscal year in Inappropriate/Erroneous Agency Contacts compared to the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year. See **Table 4** below for specifics:

Table 4													
INAPPROPRIATE ONLY (ALL STATES) 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine Contacts													
2023/2024 Fiscal Year													
TOTAL INAPPROPRIATE CONTACTS:	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	TOTALS
2023-2024: Monthly Total Inappropriate Contacts	1,682	1,831	1,792	2,122	2,453	2,810	3,325	2,919	2,797	2,972	2,877	2,645	30,225
2022-2023: Monthly Total Inappropriate Contacts	1,287	1,293	1,105	1,225	1,293	1,197	1,122	975	961	1,024	1,193	609	13,284
2021-2022: Monthly Total Inappropriate Contacts	929	981	1,117	1,232	1,257	929	959	1,006	1,197	1,156	1,250	1,160	13,173
2020-2021: Monthly Total Inappropriate Contacts	288	371	500	1,024	820	1,342	1,388	1,090	1,130	1,110	1,016	792	10,871
2019-2020: Monthly Total Inappropriate Contacts	1,385	1,194	1,188	1,128	1,075	1,136	1,150	1,204	1,082	974	1,223	1,143	13,882

The Following Information Presented in this Section Relates to Florida “HELP & INFO” Contacts Only

FLORIDA “HELP SERVICES” (HELP & INFO) – Agency Contacts:

Fiscal Year 2023/2024: Monthly Help Services Contacts													
	June, 2024												
	July, 2023	August, 2023	September, 2023	October, 2023	November, 2023	December, 2023	January, 2024	February, 2024	March, 2024	April, 2024	May, 2024	June, 2024	Fiscal Period Total YTD:
FY 2023/2024: Monthly Total Help Services Contacts	475	479	469	503	476	526	707	662	635	620	566	470	6,588
FY 2023/2024: YTD Total Help Services Contacts	475	479	469	503	476	526	707	662	635	620	566	470	

Contact Origin by Region and County

Based upon 5,979 help and information contacts received during the 2023/2024 fiscal year where county information was available, the data revealed that while Southeast Florida accounted for half (50%) of the total help and/or information contacts received, an increase in contacts was seen this year from both Central Florida (19% compared to 17% last year), and West Coast Florida (9% compared to 7% last year). **Table 5** below provides the distribution of contacts received by region, with a map of Florida Counties provided on the following page.

Table 5								
County Origin of Contact by Region								
	FY: 2023-2024		FY: 2022-2023		FY: 2021-2022		FY: 2020-2021	
Florida Regions	N=5,979	Percent = 100%	N=5,443	Percent = 100%	N=5,099	Percent = 100%	N=5,679	Percent = 100%
Northwest Florida	374	6%	331	6%	372	7%	331	6%
Northeast Florida	241	4%	145	3%	131	3%	145	3%
Central Florida	1,140	19%	949	17%	996	20%	949	17%
West Coast Florida	547	9%	399	7%	410	8%	399	7%
East Coast Florida	430	7%	378	7%	335	7%	378	7%
Southwest Florida	244	4%	216	4%	158	3%	216	4%
Southeast Florida	3,003	50%	3,025	56%	2,697	53%	3,025	56%
Totals	5,979	100%	5,443	100%	5,099	100%	5,443	100%

REGIONS

Northwest: Bay, Calhoun, Dixie, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Gulf, Hamilton, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Suwannee, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton, Washington

Northeast: Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, St. John’s, Union

Central: Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, Sumter

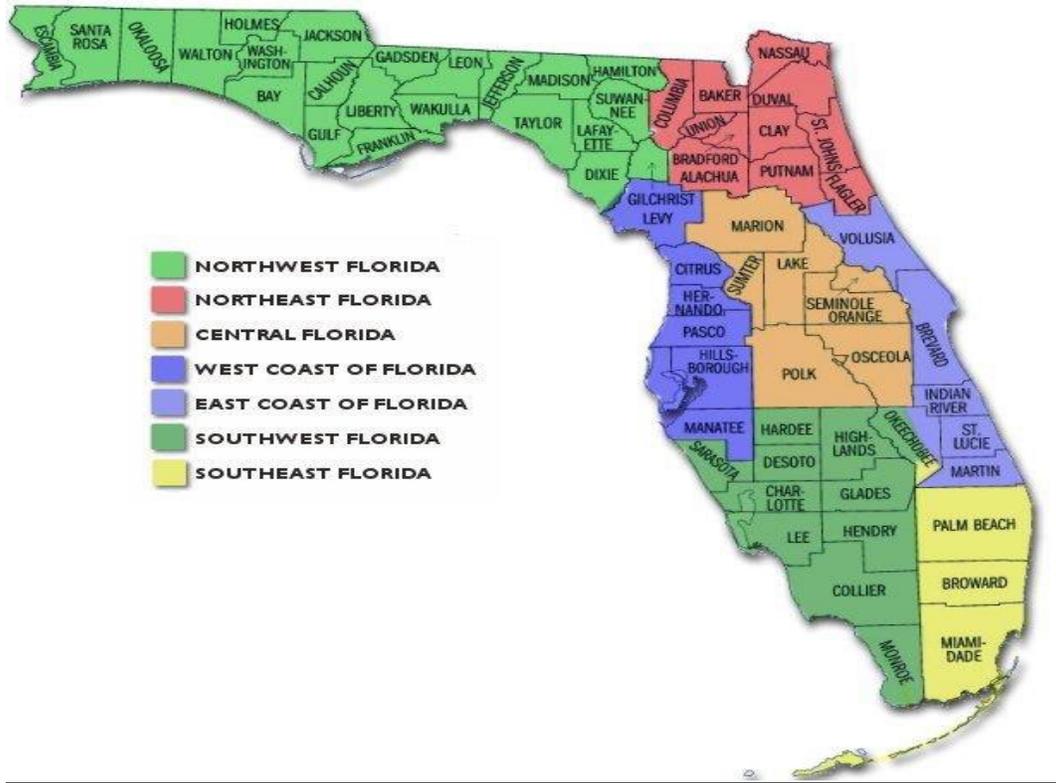
West Coast: Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Levy, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas

East Coast: Brevard, Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie, Volusia

Southwest: Charlotte, Collier, Desoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Monroe, Okeechobee, Sarasota

Southeast: Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach

Florida Map by County



- Overall, contact to the HelpLine was made by individuals from fifty-seven (57) unique counties across the state during the 2023/2024 fiscal period. Miami-Dade (25%) and Broward (17%) counties represented the areas generating the most contacts to the HelpLine this year. Other counties where a significant number of contacts originated included Orange (11%), Palm Beach (8%), Seminole (6%), Volusia (5%), Leon (5%), and Hillsborough (5%) (**Table 6**). It should be noted that 42% of all contacts were placed by residents in the two counties where the 8 racinos are located, which is where the vast majority of 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine advertisements are placed. It is likely that if funding allowed for 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine promotion to occur on a statewide basis, county of contact origin would be distributed across the state more evenly, and more importantly, additional people in need of information and supports for a gambling problem would be exposed to the HelpLine number and make contact.

The distribution of help and info contacts received by county is presented in **Table 6** on the following page.

Table 6					
Help & Info Contacts by County					
2023-2024					
County	# of Contacts (N=5,979)	% of Total	County	# of Contacts (N=5,979)	% of Total
Alachua	49	1%	Lee	106	2%
Baker	2	0%	Leon	291	5%
Bay	10	0%	Levy	1	0%
Bradford	1	0%	Liberty	0	0%
Brevard	53	1%	Madison	1	0%
Broward	999	17%	Manatee	43	1%
Calhoun	0	0%	Marion	30	1%
Charlotte	18	0%	Martin	11	0%
Citrus	8	0%	Miami-Dade	1,505	25%
Clay	21	0%	Monroe	8	0%
Collier	57	1%	Nassau	4	0%
Columbia	7	0%	Okaloosa	10	0%
Desoto	2	0%	Okeechobee	5	0%
Dixie	1	0%	Orange	657	11%
Duval	117	2%	Osceola	29	0%
Escambia	27	0%	Palm Beach	499	8%
Flagler	13	0%	Pasco	54	1%
Franklin	0	0%	Pinellas	140	2%
Gadsden	4	0%	Polk	57	1%
Gilchrist	1	0%	Putnam	1	0%
Glades	3	0%	Santa Rosa	4	0%
Gulf	0	0%	Sarasota	41	1%
Hamilton	0	0%	Seminole	329	6%
Hardee	0	0%	St Johns	26	0%
Hendry	2	0%	St Lucie	36	1%
Hernando	11	0%	Sumter	9	0%
Highlands	2	0%	Suwannee	1	0%
Hillsborough	290	5%	Taylor	0	0%
Holmes	1	0%	Union	0	0%
Indian River	19	0%	Volusia	311	5%
Jackson	2	0%	Wakulla	4	0%
Jefferson	1	0%	Walton	16	0%
Lafayette	0	0%	Washington	0	0%
Lake	29	0%	N =	5,979	100%

The Following Information Presented in the Remainder of this Report, Relates ONLY to “FLORIDA HELP” Contacts:

Florida HELP ONLY Contacts:

- During the current fiscal year, the FCCG received 3,149 contacts for Help with a gambling problem in Florida, representing approximately nine (9) Florida Help contacts received by the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine per day. This represents a 50% increase in Florida Help Contacts received by the FCCG from the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year, and a 163% increase in Florida Help Contacts to the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine received since the 2019-2020 fiscal year.
- The totals by month of Florida “HELP ONLY” Contacts received by the FCCG during the 2023/2024 fiscal year, from all platforms available for seeking help through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, are provided below in **Table 7**, and include telephone calls, emails, text messages, and live chats for help to the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine.

Table 7													
FLORIDA HELP ONLY - Contacts by Month (ALL CONTACT TYPES)													
2023/2024 Fiscal Year													
Period	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	TOTAL
23-24 FL Help Contacts	221	192	198	241	225	312	407	333	282	268	266	204	3,149
22-23 FL Help Contacts	132	169	155	168	143	141	197	156	192	218	232	199	2,102
21-22 FL Help Contacts	130	112	124	121	113	121	126	146	159	149	150	138	1,589
20-21 FL Help Contacts	60	67	78	110	71	120	118	122	127	141	137	115	1,266
19-20 FL Help Contacts	107	115	122	132	113	98	145	126	82	33	60	66	1,199

- The method of contact utilized by Florida help seekers reaching out for help through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, via all platforms available over the past five (5) fiscal years is provided below, by contact type in **Table 8**. This year, while there continue to be upward shifts in preference of use of alternative platforms for seeking help as reflected in text messages (up 20% from last year), live chats (up 42% from last year), and particularly emails (up 860% from last year), there was also a significant increase in telephone calls for help this year, up by 52% from the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year.

Table 8								
FLORIDA HELP ONLY - Contacts by Year (BY CONTACT TYPE)								
2023/2024 Fiscal Year								
FISCAL PERIOD	FL HELP ONLY - Telephone Calls	% Change from Prior Year	FL HELP ONLY - Text Messages	% Change from Prior Year	FL HELP ONLY - Live Chats	% Change from Prior Year	FL HELP ONLY - Emails	% Change from Prior Year
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024	2,653	52%	302	20%	146	42%	48	860%
July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023	1,743	22%	251	182%	103	51%	5	-44%
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	1,423	23%	89	56%	68	113%	9	-50%
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	1,159	8%	57	0%	32	-11%	18	-50%
July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020	1,070	N/A	57	N/A	36	N/A	36	N/A

CONTACT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION – The following information presented on pages 51 – 55, is based upon data collected on the individual contacting the HelpLine, versus the data presented beginning on page 56 – which is based upon data collected on the GAMBLER only. This information, which is based upon 3,149 HELP CONTACTS received throughout the year, reflects a considerable increase in the overall number of Florida HELP contacts received, and an equally significant increase in the severity of issues experienced by these contacts. As previously noted, it is important to recognize that not every contact supplies information to all questions asked (they may be unaware of the information requested or refuse to provide the information). As such, the sample size for each of the analyses frequently differ.

CONTACT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: HelpLine Contact’s Gender & Age

Contact’s GENDER

- Data from the 2023/2024 fiscal year revealed that of the 2,287 individuals contacting the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine this fiscal year whose gender was disclosed or identified, 63% were male and 37% were female. This data reflects an increase in male HelpLine contacts this year, when comparing 2023/2024 fiscal year data with that from the previous two (2) fiscal periods (**Table 9**).

Table 9						
Gender of HelpLine Contact						
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
Contact’s Gender	N=2,287	Percent = 100%	N=1,984	Percent = 100%	N=1,571	Percent = 100%
Male	1,436	63%	1,185	60%	956	61%
Female	851	37%	799	40%	615	39%
Totals	2,287	100%	1,984	100%	1,571	100%

Contact's AGE

- Age differences in contacts were quite noticeable this year, with seventeen percent (17%) of HelpLine contacts under the age of twenty-six (26), up five percent (5%) from the previous 2022-2023 fiscal year, when only 12% of contacts were 25 or younger. While the largest share of contacts to the HelpLine were from individuals 31-49 years of age (39%), there was a six percent (6%) decrease in help seekers 55 years old and older this year (25% in 2023-2024 and 31% in 2022-2023), and thirteen (13) individuals reaching out for help were under the age of 18 during the current 2023-2024 fiscal. This is a noticeable shift of younger people seeking help when comparing HelpLine data from the past four (4) fiscal periods (**Table 10**).

Table 10								
HelpLine Contacts by Age								
Age Range	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,614	Percent = 100%	N=1,477	Percent = 100%	N=1,282	Percent = 100%	N=1,059	Percent = 100%
Under 18	13	1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	4	<1%
18-20	57	4%	39	3%	47	4%	24	2%
21-25	197	12%	134	9%	120	9%	102	10%
26-30	178	11%	161	11%	135	11%	112	11%
31-40	379	23%	315	21%	265	21%	219	21%
41-49	252	16%	223	15%	229	18%	149	14%
50-54	130	8%	139	9%	123	10%	111	10%
55-60	134	8%	175	12%	159	12%	133	13%
61-64	88	5%	89	6%	59	5%	59	6%
65-70	97	6%	92	6%	81	6%	73	7%
71-74	42	3%	36	2%	29	2%	29	3%
75 and Up	47	3%	71	5%	34	3%	44	4%
Totals	1,614	100%	1,477	100%	1,282	100%	1,059	100%

CONTACT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: HelpLine Contact's Relationship to the Gambler

Contact's RELATIONSHIP TO THE GAMBLER

- The majority of HELP contacts received by the HelpLine are made directly by the gambler (82% in 2023/2024), which is typical for each year as reflected in **Table 11**. Spouses, cohabitants, and significant others comprised 6% of the total, representing the second-most frequently cited relationship to the gambler, followed by parents (4%), children (2%), friends (2%), and siblings of the gambler (2%) (**Table 11**). It is important to note; research has confirmed that each problem gambler can impact 8-10 others, as illustrated by the types of relationships outlined in **Table 11**.
- Contacts to the HelpLine, as in the past, have included those from other family members, including in-laws, nieces/nephews, aunts/uncles, cousins, and grandchildren; coworkers; employees; law enforcement/legal/judicial professionals; mental health treatment providers; and others, all of whom were seeking help related to another's gambling problem. No significant differences were noted in the distribution of contacts between the current fiscal year and past year information. However, as previously stated, the total number of Florida HELP contacts received this year increased significantly and resulted in correlating increases represented across a variety of relationship to the gambler category types (**Table 11**).

Relationship to the Gambler	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=3,149	Percent = 100%	N=2,102	Percent = 100%	N=1,589	Percent = 100%	N=1,266	Percent = 100%	N=1,184	Percent = 100%
Aunt/Uncle of the Gambler	3	<1%	5	<1%	3	<1%	3	<1%	0	0%
Child of the Gambler	60	2%	64	3%	44	3%	39	3%	50	4%
Church/Faith-Based Organization	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%	3	<1%	0	0%
Cousin of the Gambler	5	<1%	4	<1%	5	<1%	2	<1%	0	0%
Coworker/Employer of the Gambler	5	<1%	3	<1%	3	<1%	2	<1%	4	<1%
Friend of the Gambler	72	2%	54	3%	39	2%	50	4%	39	3%
GA/Gam-Anon Member	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	4	<1%
Gambler	2,592	82%	1,626	77%	1,194	75%	925	73%	837	71%
Grandchild of the Gambler	2	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%	2	<1%	2	<1%
Grandparent of the Gambler	1	<1%	3	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
In-laws of the Gambler	4	<1%	6	<1%	7	<1%	5	<1%	7	1%
Law Enforcement/Legal/Judicial Professional	2	<1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%
Mental Health Treatment Provider/Medical Professional	12	<1%	6	<1%	8	1%	9	1%	14	1%
Niece/Nephew of the Gambler	5	<1%	3	<1%	4	<1%	4	<1%	5	<1%
Other Family Member of the Gambler	10	<1%	13	1%	2	<1%	8	1%	21	2%
Parent of the Gambler	138	4%	106	5%	95	6%	58	5%	47	4%
Sibling of the Gambler	51	2%	32	2%	35	2%	26	2%	20	2%
Spouse/Cohabitant/Significant Other of the Gambler	187	6%	172	8%	149	9%	127	10%	133	11%
Totals	3,149	100%	2,102	100%	1,589	100%	1,266	100%	1,184	100%

*Other family member listed did not disclose their relationship other than stating family member

CONTACT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: HelpLine Contact's Precipitating Event for Seeking Help

Contacts' PRECIPITATING EVENT FOR HELPLINE CONTACT

- Not surprisingly, financial-related issues were the most frequently cited reasons for initially contacting the HelpLine this year, with 42% of help seekers reporting financial difficulties caused by gambling being their primary reason for seeking help. The largest share of these (17%) stated that they contacted the HelpLine due to a recent substantial gambling-related loss; 11% reported overspending; 9% cited difficulty paying household bills due to gambling; and 5% conveyed overextended debts caused by gambling as their primary reason for seeking help.
- When looking at historical data and HelpLine trends (**Table 12**), relationship problems have been amongst the most frequently cited reason for contacting the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine for decades. This also remains true during the current fiscal year, with 29% of help seekers citing this as their primary reason for reaching out for help.
- Gambling-related mental health problems, such as anxiety or depression, as well as a relapse from a gambling addiction, continue to be significant contributing factors cited by help seekers as their primary reason for reaching out to the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine for help, with 4% of individuals citing these as the reasons for seeking supports this year.
- Other reasons cited for contacting the HelpLine this year included help seeking treatment referrals (10%), self-help support group referrals for Gamblers Anonymous or Gam-Anon meetings (4%), legal difficulties (2%), and homelessness/eviction or foreclosure (1%) (**Table 12**). It is important to note that this information represents the **predominant** reasons prompting contacting the HelpLine contact, with most problem gamblers and their loved ones experiencing multiple difficulties.

Precipitating Event: What Happened or is Happening that Prompted the Individual to Seek Help?	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=2,270	Percent = 100%	N=2,102	Percent = 100%	N=1,589	Percent = 100%	N=1,261	Percent = 100%	N=1,185	Percent = 100%
Financial Problems - Difficulty Paying Bills	209	9%	150	7%	87	5%	144	11%	79	7%
Financial Problems - Overextended Debt	108	5%	139	7%	111	7%	53	4%	31	3%
Financial Problems - Overspending	260	11%	296	14%	220	14%	57	5%	0	0%
Financial Problems - Recent Substantial Loss	394	17%	309	15%	352	22%	315	25%	248	21%
GA/GamAnon Referral	98	4%	107	5%	68	4%	100	8%	85	7%
Homeless/Eviction/Foreclosure	21	1%	47	2%	25	2%	19	2%	14	1%
Legal Problems (Illegal Act Lawyer Advised Court Ordered etc.)	40	2%	35	2%	40	3%	31	2%	14	1%
Medical Problems (i.e. Poor Physical Health Due to Gambling Addiction)	1	<1%	1	<1%	4	<1%	11	1%	0	0%
Mental Health Problems (i.e. Anxiety Depression)	35	2%	47	2%	40	3%	32	3%	0	0%
Relapse	44	2%	41	2%	49	3%	56	4%	17	1%
Relationship Problems	663	29%	573	27%	495	31%	315	25%	342	29%
Self-Exclusion Inquiry	136	6%	100	5%	47	3%	55	4%	66	6%
Suicidal Thoughts/Attempts	20	1%	10	<1%	11	1%	11	1%	5	<1%
Threatened/Owes Money to Bookie/Casino/Loan Shark	2	<1%	1	<1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Treatment Referral	232	10%	236	11%	30	2%	48	4%	278	23%
School/Work Related Difficulties	7	<1%	10	<1%	6	<1%	10	1%	6	1%
Totals	2,270	100%	2102	100%	1,588	100%	1,261	100%	1,185	100%

Precipitating Event – GAMBLER vs. LOVED ONES Contacts

- When looking at 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data from contacts made by the gambler separately from loved ones, there are significant differences with respect to the precipitating reason cited for contacting the HelpLine. Data has shown that gamblers report financial problems as being the primary reason they sought help through the HelpLine on a much more frequent basis than loved ones do. This holds true during the 2023-2024 fiscal year, with more than half (54%) of gamblers citing financial difficulties due to gambling as their precipitating reason for seeking help (22% reported a recent substantial loss, 14% were overspending, 12% had difficulty paying household bills, and 6% cited overextended debts due to gambling), compared with only 8% of loved ones who felt that these gambling-related financial problems were the primary issue that led them to contact the HelpLine.
- The majority of loved ones seeking help (70%) reported relationship problems as the precipitating reason for contacting the HelpLine, whereas only 17% of gamblers felt relationship problems were the driving factor that led them to seek help (**Table 13**).

Precipitating Event: What Happened or is Happening that Prompted the Individual to Seek Help?	2023 - 2024 Fiscal Year				2022 - 2023 Fiscal Year			
	Gambler Contacts		Loved One Contacts		Gambler Contacts		Loved One Contacts	
	N=1,737	Percent = 100%	N=533	Percent = 100%	N=1,624	Percent = 100%	N=478	Percent = 100%
Financial Problems - Difficulty Paying Bills	204	12%	5	1%	139	9%	11	2%
Financial Problems - Overextended Debt	105	6%	3	1%	129	8%	10	2%
Financial Problems - Overspending	238	14%	22	4%	270	17%	26	5%
Financial Problems - Recent Substantial Loss	383	22%	11	2%	298	18%	11	2%
GA/GamAnon Referral	78	4%	20	4%	92	6%	15	3%
Homeless/Eviction/Foreclosure	16	1%	5	1%	33	2%	14	3%
Legal Problems (Illegal Act Lawyer Advised Court Ordered etc.)	36	2%	4	1%	27	2%	8	2%
Medical Problems (i.e. Poor Physical Health Due to Gambling Addiction)	1	<1%	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%
Mental Health Problems (i.e. Anxiety Depression)	35	2%	0	0%	45	3%	2	<1%
Relapse	41	2%	3	1%	40	2%	1	<1%
Relationship Problems	288	17%	375	70%	262	16%	311	65%
Self-Exclusion Inquiry	109	6%	27	5%	80	5%	20	4%
Suicidal Thoughts/Attempts	19	1%	1	<1%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Threatened/Owes Money to Bookie/Casino/Loan Shark	2	<1%	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%
Treatment Referral	175	10%	57	11%	191	12%	45	9%
School/Work Related Difficulties	7	<1%	0	0%	8	<1%	2	<1%
Totals	1,737	100%	533	100%	1,624	100%	478	100%

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION – The data presented on the following pages is based upon data collected on the **GAMBLER ONLY**. Given the sensitive nature of some of the questions, problem gamblers often declined to answer specific questions. Similarly, family members and other loved ones often fail to know the extent of the gambler’s behaviors, debts, or problems. As a result, the number of responses differ.

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: Gambler’s Gender and Age

Gambler’s GENDER

- A total of 2,175 contacts identified the gender of the gambler this year, revealing that 73% of problem gamblers were male, and 27% were female. Over the past five (5) fiscal years, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine has observed a consistent increase in male gamblers (**Table 14**).

Table 14										
Gambler's Gender										
Gambler's Gender	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=2,175	Percent = 100%	N=1,914	Percent = 100%	N=1,563	Percent = 100%	N=1,250	Percent = 100%	N=1,155	Percent = 100%
Male	1,583	73%	1,331	70%	1,116	71%	845	68%	742	64%
Female	592	27%	580	30%	447	29%	403	32%	413	36%
Totals	2,175	100%	1,911	100%	1,563	100%	1,248	100%	1,155	100%

Gambler’s AGE

- Among the 1,825 contacts who disclosed the gambler’s age this year, it was found that approximately 19% of the gamblers were 25 years old or younger; 12% were 26-30; 38% were 31-49; 8% were 50-54; and 24% of gamblers were 55 years of age or older (**Table 15**). Younger individuals accounted for a greater number of contacts, while older individuals decreased in number this year. This may be related to increased opportunities for online sports gambling among younger individuals.

Table 15		
Gambler's Age		
2023-2024		
Gambler's Age Range	N=1,825	Percent = 100%
Under 18	13	1%
18-20	70	4%
21-25	250	14%
26-30	212	12%
31-40	425	23%
41-49	267	15%
50-54	146	8%
55-60	155	8%
61-64	92	5%
65-70	88	5%
71-74	47	3%
75 and Up	60	3%
Totals	1,825	100%

- Over the past five (5) fiscal years, younger gamblers in need of problem gambling supports have continued to increase, with 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data from the most recent 2023/2024 fiscal year reflecting nineteen percent (19%) of gamblers being in the 25-years-old or younger age bracket, compared to only 8% during the 2019/2020 fiscal year. Conversely, older adult gamblers of ages 55 and up have decreased over the past 5 fiscal years but at a slightly lower rate, with 2023/2024 fiscal year data yielding a 10% decrease of gamblers in this age bracket since the 2019/2020 fiscal year (**Tables 16, 17, & 18**).

Table 16

Gambler's Age

Gambler's Age Range	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,825	Percent = 100%	N=1,708	Percent = 100%	N=1,446	Percent = 100%	N=1,147	Percent = 100%	N=964	Percent = 100%
Under 18	13	1%	6	<1%	7	<1%	6	1%	4	<1%
18-20	70	4%	53	3%	49	3%	28	2%	19	2%
21-25	250	14%	152	9%	146	10%	108	9%	60	6%
26-30	212	12%	199	12%	161	11%	126	11%	107	11%
31-40	425	23%	371	22%	304	21%	236	21%	202	21%
41-49	267	15%	248	15%	256	18%	159	14%	142	15%
50-54	146	8%	142	8%	135	9%	131	11%	100	10%
55-60	155	8%	189	11%	170	12%	131	11%	119	12%
61-64	92	5%	109	6%	59	4%	63	5%	58	6%
65-70	88	5%	110	6%	85	6%	80	7%	153	16%
71-74	47	3%	51	3%	32	2%	31	3%	0	0%
75 and Up	60	3%	78	5%	42	3%	48	4%	0	0%
Totals	1,825	100%	1,708	100%	1,446	100%	1,147	100%	964	100%

Table 17

Gambler's Age - 25 Years Old or Younger

Gambler's Age Range - 25 & Under	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,825	% of the Total	N=1,708	% of the Total	N=1,446	% of the Total	N=1,147	% of the Total	N=964	% of the Total
Under 18	13	1%	6	0%	7	0%	6	1%	4	0%
18-20	70	4%	53	3%	49	3%	28	2%	19	2%
21-25	250	14%	152	9%	146	10%	108	9%	60	6%

Table 18

Gambler's Age - 55 Years of Age or Older

Gambler's Age Range - 55 & Up	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,825	% of the Total	N=1,708	% of the Total	N=1,446	% of the Total	N=1,147	% of the Total	N=964	% of the Total
55-60	155	8%	189	11%	170	12%	131	11%	119	12%
61-64	92	5%	109	6%	59	4%	63	5%	58	6%
65-70	88	5%	110	6%	85	6%	80	7%	153	16%
71-74	47	3%	51	3%	32	2%	31	3%	0	0%
75 and Up	60	3%	78	5%	42	3%	48	4%	0	0%

Gambler’s AGE by GENDER

- Among the 1,818 gamblers represented in this year’s HelpLine data where both gender and age were disclosed, the majority of female problem gamblers (64%) were in the age range of 31 to 60 years old (**Tables 19 & 20**). Female problem gamblers were markedly older than males, with almost one-third (29%) in the older adult age category of ages 61 and up (**Table 19**). While this represents a somewhat smaller percentage of the total of female problem gamblers in this age range compared with data from last fiscal year (61%), the trend of women problem gamblers skewing older than males continues, reflecting how the varied stages of life impacts upon gambling behaviors differently between genders.
- Of male problem gamblers represented in this year’s HelpLine data, almost one-quarter (24%) were 25 years old or younger (a significant increase from past years). This data continues to reveal a stark contrast amongst the gambler’s age by gender, with only approximately 3% of female gamblers reported in this same age group of 25 years old or younger this year (**Table 19**).
- The issue of problem gambling continues to be impacting young males at an alarming rate, whereas it may be taking females longer to develop or accept that they have a gambling problem. There remains an urgent need for greater outreach and prevention efforts targeted at a younger demographic, especially for males. At the same time, older women seem to be more negatively impacted, or at least more likely to admit having a gambling problem (**Tables 19 & 20**).

Table 19						
Gambler's Age - by Gender						
2023-2024						
Gambler's Age by Gender	Female		Male		TOTAL	
	N=494	Percent = 100%	N=1,324	Percent = 100%	N=1,818	Percent = 100%
Under 18	3	1%	10	1%	13	1%
18-20	0	0%	70	5%	70	4%
21-25	12	2%	237	18%	249	14%
26-30	18	4%	192	15%	210	12%
31-40	75	15%	349	26%	424	23%
41-49	96	19%	169	13%	265	15%
50-54	74	15%	72	5%	146	8%
55-60	75	15%	79	6%	154	8%
61-64	44	9%	48	4%	92	5%
65-70	40	8%	48	4%	88	5%
71-74	24	5%	23	2%	47	3%
75 and Up	33	7%	27	2%	60	3%
Totals	494	100%	1,324	100%	1,818	100%

Table 20

Gambler's Age - by GENDER - 4 YEAR COMPARISON

Gambler's Age by Gender	FEMALE GAMBLERS								MALE GAMBLERS								TOTALS BY YEAR MALES & FEMALES COMBINED							
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=511	Percent = 100%	N=511	Percent = 100%	N=415	Percent = 100%	N=376	Percent = 100%	N=1,324	Percent = 100%	N=1,176	Percent = 100%	N=1,026	Percent = 100%	N=770	Percent = 100%	N=1,818	Percent = 100%	N=1,687	Percent = 100%	N=1,441	Percent = 100%	N=1,146	Percent = 100%
Under 18	3	1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	10	1%	5	<1%	5	<1%	5	1%	13	1%	6	1%	6	<1%	6	1%
18-20	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	70	5%	50	4%	49	5%	28	4%	70	4%	51	4%	49	3%	28	2%
21-25	12	2%	18	4%	14	3%	6	2%	237	18%	130	11%	129	13%	102	13%	249	14%	148	15%	143	10%	108	9%
26-30	18	4%	32	6%	19	5%	15	4%	192	15%	166	14%	142	14%	110	14%	210	12%	198	20%	161	11%	125	11%
31-40	75	15%	77	16%	70	17%	53	14%	349	26%	292	25%	233	23%	181	24%	424	23%	369	40%	303	21%	234	20%
41-49	96	19%	82	17%	74	18%	54	14%	169	13%	161	14%	182	18%	105	14%	265	15%	243	30%	256	18%	159	14%
50-54	74	15%	60	12%	63	15%	72	19%	72	5%	80	7%	72	7%	59	8%	146	8%	140	19%	135	9%	131	11%
55-60	75	15%	92	19%	82	20%	62	16%	79	6%	97	8%	88	9%	69	9%	154	8%	189	26%	170	12%	131	11%
61-64	44	9%	50	10%	28	7%	28	7%	48	4%	58	5%	31	3%	35	5%	92	5%	108	15%	59	4%	63	5%
65-70	40	8%	49	10%	34	8%	42	11%	48	4%	59	5%	51	5%	39	5%	88	5%	108	15%	85	6%	81	7%
71-74	24	5%	25	5%	17	4%	21	6%	23	2%	25	2%	15	1%	10	1%	47	3%	50	7%	32	2%	31	3%
75 and Up	33	7%	24	5%	13	3%	22	6%	27	2%	53	5%	29	3%	27	4%	60	3%	77	9%	42	3%	49	4%
Totals	494	100%	511	103%	415	100%	376	100%	1,324	101%	1,176	100%	1,026	100%	770	100%	1,818	100%	1,687	100%	1,441	100%	1,146	100%

- The age and gender of gamblers experiencing gambling-related problems may change with the availability and accessibility of more online gambling and sports wagering opportunities.
- Technological advances and software/apps for online, mobile, and video game applications geared toward youth, as well as adults, is leading the industry. Gambling operators continue to spend considerable time and money in developing mobile apps and platforms. Social casino games as well as loot boxes embedded in online games have been raising gambling-related issues for regulators. The similarities of some of these games mimicking gambling characteristics can often serve as pathways and migration from free-to-play (e.g., social casino gambling) to online sports wagering and more gambling.
- As new gambling opportunities emerge in non-traditional mediums and venues (e.g., e-sports wagering) new outreach, education, and prevention programs will be needed. There is a clear indication that young people, especially young males, may be particularly vulnerable to the lure of gambling. The FCCG will need to continue to closely monitor and adapt to the many changes in age-related patterns of gambling behaviors and the associated issues facing problem gamblers and their families, especially in light of legalized sports wagering. Additional supports and funding for enhanced prevention, treatment, and counseling will be necessary.

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: Gambler’s Age of Gambling Onset, and Age of Gambling Problem

Gamblers’ AGE OF GAMBLING ONSET

- The age reported when individuals with a gambling problem began gambling continues to trend younger this year, as it has over the past few fiscal years. Data with respect to the reported age of initiation of gambling revealed that more than half (55%) of problem gamblers were under age 26 (Table 21).

Table 21										
Age Began Gambling										
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
Age Began Gambling	N=1,720	Percent = 100%	N=1,609	Percent = 100%	N=1,370	Percent = 100%	N=1,029	Percent = 100%	N=858	Percent = 100%
Under 18	255	15%	251	16%	235	17%	135	13%	93	11%
18-20	314	18%	258	16%	224	16%	172	17%	127	15%
21-25	374	22%	285	18%	264	19%	184	18%	121	14%
26-30	187	11%	214	13%	128	9%	113	11%	81	9%
31-40	258	15%	226	14%	226	16%	152	15%	183	21%
41-49	173	10%	170	11%	150	11%	140	14%	120	14%
50-54	76	4%	86	5%	64	5%	46	4%	48	6%
55-60	44	3%	55	3%	40	3%	34	3%	40	5%
61-64	15	1%	29	2%	18	1%	29	3%	14	2%
65-70	13	1%	20	1%	8	1%	18	2%	31	4%
71-74	4	<1%	9	1%	8	1%	4	<1%	0	0%
75 and Up	7	<1%	6	<1%	5	<1%	2	<1%	0	0%
Totals	1,720	100%	1,609	100%	1,370	100%	1,029	100%	858	100%

Gamblers' AGE GAMBLING BECAME A PROBLEM

- When looking at the age of the gambler when gambling became a problem, 35% of problem gamblers reported that gambling-related problems began before the gambler was 26 years old. Of note, gambling became a problem for 5% prior to age 18, and 6% are reported to have become a problem gambler after the age of 65 (**Table 22**). The understanding of the early onset of gambling is important, as there is extensive research suggesting that early initiation of gambling is a predictor of later gambling problems. The fact that 35% of HelpLine contacts experienced gambling problems before age 26 is of concern. Moreover, the finding that 6% of older adults first developed a gambling problem at age 65+ is problematic, given they typically have more limited financial resources.

Table 22										
Age Gambling Became a Problem										
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
Age Gambling Became a Problem	N=1,800	Percent = 100%	N=1,710	Percent = 100%	N=1,429	Percent = 100%	N=1,034	Percent = 100%	N=871	Percent = 100%
Under 18	91	5%	92	5%	69	5%	46	4%	33	4%
18-20	178	10%	147	9%	148	10%	93	9%	55	6%
21-25	351	20%	247	14%	213	15%	161	16%	109	13%
26-30	190	11%	235	14%	170	12%	138	13%	101	12%
31-40	377	21%	317	19%	287	20%	182	18%	190	22%
41-49	248	14%	238	14%	201	14%	165	16%	160	18%
50-54	105	6%	123	7%	113	8%	90	9%	70	8%
55-60	114	6%	125	7%	109	8%	68	7%	68	8%
61-64	48	3%	66	4%	48	3%	46	4%	33	4%
65-70	51	3%	54	3%	36	3%	31	3%	52	6%
71-74	27	2%	33	2%	19	1%	7	1%	0	0%
75 and Up	20	1%	33	2%	16	1%	7	1%	0	0%
Totals	1,800	100%	1,710	100%	1,429	100%	1,034	100%	871	100%

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: Gambler's Race

Gambler's RACE

- The distribution of the problem gambler's race as reported by 1,074 HelpLine contacts this fiscal year, included the following information: Almost half (48%) of gamblers were White (approximately the same as last year (47%), 26% were Hispanic/Latino, 18% were Black/African Americans, and 4% were Asian (**Table 23**). This distribution is similar to the past several years.

Gambler's Race	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,074	Percent = 100%	N=1,051	Percent = 100%	N=1,059	Percent = 100%	N=959	Percent = 100%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	<1%	5	<1%	8	1%	3	<1%
Asian	42	4%	29	3%	29	3%	18	2%
Black or African American	198	18%	216	21%	236	22%	206	21%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	<1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	4	<1%
Hispanic/Latino	281	26%	281	27%	290	27%	232	24%
Mixed Race	35	3%	12	1%	18	2%	9	1%
White	512	48%	499	47%	477	45%	487	51%
Other	1	<1%	6	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Totals	1,074	100%	1,051	100%	1,059	100%	959	100%

PRECIPITATING EVENT for Contacting the HelpLine According to GAMBLER'S RACE

- Based upon ethnic/racial differences, 44% of Whites, 43% of Hispanics, 58% of Blacks, 48% of Asians, and 50% of Mixed Race individuals expressed serious financial issues (**Table 24**).

Contact's Precipitating Event - by GAMBLER'S RACE	White		Hispanic/Latino		Black or African American		Asian		Mixed Race		American Indian or Alaska Native		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
	N=612	Percent = 100%	N=281	Percent = 100%	N=198	Percent = 100%	N=42	Percent = 100%	N=35	Percent = 100%	N=2	Percent = 100%	N=3	Percent = 100%
Financial Problems - Difficulty Paying Bills	51	10%	25	9%	40	20%	0	0%	7	20%	0	0%	3	100%
Financial Problems - Overextended Debt	34	7%	17	6%	8	4%	5	12%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%
Financial Problems - Overspending	53	10%	23	8%	35	18%	5	12%	2	6%	1	50%	0	0%
Financial Problems - Recent Substantial Loss	86	17%	57	20%	31	16%	10	24%	7	20%	0	0%	0	0%
GA/GamAnon Referral	21	4%	5	2%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Homeless/Eviction/Foreclosure	6	1%	3	1%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Legal Problems (Illegal Act Lawyer Advised Court Ordered etc.)	17	3%	2	1%	4	2%	0	0%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%
Literature/Materials Request	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Medical Problems (i.e. Poor Physical Health Due to Gambling Addiction)	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Mental Health Problems (i.e. Anxiety Depression)	13	3%	3	1%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Relapse	14	3%	7	2%	5	3%	1	2%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Relationship Problems	178	35%	115	41%	55	28%	16	38%	14	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Exclusion Inquiry	7	1%	3	1%	3	2%	3	7%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%
Suicidal Thoughts/Attempts	4	1%	4	1%	7	4%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Threatened/Owes Money to Bookie/Casino/Loan Shark	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Treatment Referral	22	4%	16	6%	1	1%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
School/Work Related Difficulties	3	1%	1	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Totals	512	100%	281	100%	198	100%	42	100%	35	100%	2	100%	3	100%

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: Gamblers' Losses

MONEY LOST According to GAMBLER'S RACE

- Concerns prompting HelpLine contacts are typically impacted by the amount of gamblers' losses (**Table 25**). While 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts in general reported the highest losses amongst individuals of Mixed Race, the highly skewed distribution suggests cautious interpretation. However, it is important to note that a) this represents either self-reported or third-party information; b) some sample sizes are relatively small; and c) the standard deviations are significantly different among the racial groups of gamblers that were analyzed.

Money Lost by Gambler's Race	2023-2024				2022-2023				2021-2022			
	N = 969	Mean Reported Loss	Range	Standard Deviation	N = 917	Mean Reported Loss	Range	Standard Deviation	N = 924	Mean Reported Loss	Range	Standard Deviation
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	\$187,500	\$175,000-\$200,000	\$17,678	2	\$36,300	\$600-\$72,000	\$50,487	6	\$169,833	\$15,000-\$400,000	\$144,402
Asian	33	\$228,429	\$0 - \$2,200,000	\$467,167	23	\$208,635	\$600-\$1,008,000	\$208,117	20	\$432,350	\$1,000-\$3,000,000	\$908,589
Black or African American	182	\$112,423	\$0 - \$1,015,000	\$171,514	190	\$89,359	\$700-\$2,000,000	\$189,670	210	\$103,556	\$0-\$1,200,000	\$195,506
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	\$97,500	\$97,500	--	1	\$60,000	\$60,000	--	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	--
Hispanic/Latino	243	\$158,136	\$0 - \$3,500,000	\$339,917	235	\$258,309	\$0-\$15,000,000	\$1,200,723	243	\$154,393	\$0-\$2,000,000	\$292,721
Mixed Race	32	\$385,135	\$1,000 - \$8,000,000	\$1,405,719	10	\$404,200	\$2,000-\$3,000,000	\$925,428	16	\$83,938	\$3,000-\$500,000	\$123,002
White	473	\$265,731	\$0 - \$5,000,000	\$553,993	451	\$182,248	\$200-\$2,170,000	\$324,010	428	\$164,042	\$0-\$5,000,000	\$400,153
Other	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	--	5	\$137,200	\$8,000-\$500,000	\$206,705	0	\$0	0	\$0

MONEY LOST According to RELATIONSHIP TO GAMBLER & GAMBLER'S GENDER

- It should be noted that gamblers are notorious for minimizing their losses and overestimating their winnings, while significant others may not have a clear picture of the financial situation, particularly of the gambler's actual losses or debts. Differences were found in reported gambling losses by both gender of the gambler and relationship to the gambler (e.g., contacts made by loved ones of the gambler versus contacts made to the HelpLine directly by the gambler). Amongst all HelpLine contacts this year where both the gender of the gambler and the total gambling-related losses of the gambler were disclosed, the average gambling-related losses were higher for male gamblers (**Table 26**).

Money Lost by Contact Type & by Gambler's Gender	GAMBLER CONTACTS				LOVED ONE CONTACTS			
	N = 1,287	Mean Reported Loss	Range	Standard Deviation	N = 303	Mean Reported Loss	Range	Standard Deviation
Male Gamblers	921	\$194,509	\$0 - 8,000,000	\$516,951	243	\$200,964	\$0 - \$3,500,000	\$473,465
Female Gamblers	366	\$154,143	\$0 - \$5,000,000	\$365,161	60	\$168,358	\$0 - \$2,200,000	\$304,725

GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: Gambler's Military Experience, Relationship Status, & Children Under 18

Gambler's MILITARY EXPERIENCE

- Based upon 1,276 HelpLine contacts that provided military information relevant to the gambler, 9% indicated some type of military involvement, including 7 who were serving on active duty or were currently in the reserves, 4 with family members currently serving in the military, and 106 individuals who indicated the gambler had previous military service or was retired from the military. As research has shown that this is a potentially high-risk population more vulnerable to developing a gambling addiction, the FCCG has developed population-specific programs and resource referrals for military personnel, their families, and military treatment professionals and service providers.

Gambler's RELATIONSHIP STATUS

- The FCCG monitors the relationship status of gamblers as reported on the HelpLine, which continued to reveal notable effects of post-pandemic life on normal household/family routines and communication exchanges. This year, fairly similar results were found compared to the 2022/2023 year (**Table 27**). There was a slight decrease among gamblers who reported being married (36% this year compared to 39% last year), with a slight increase among single people (36% this year compared to 34% last year). Divorce rates seem to have marginally dropped while gamblers cohabitating with partners has increased over the years (up from 9% in 2019/2020 to 13% during the most recent 2023/2024 fiscal year). This data likely is reflective of the age of the population.

Table 27

Relationship Status of the Gambler

Gambler's Relationship Status	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,653	Percent = 100%	N=1,550	Percent = 100%	N=1,363	Percent = 100%	N=1,102	Percent = 100%	N=871	Percent = 100%
Cohabitating	221	13%	177	11%	129	9%	115	10%	75	9%
Divorced/Separated	185	11%	192	12%	215	16%	213	19%	111	13%
Married	597	36%	603	39%	484	36%	385	35%	342	39%
Single/Never Married	590	36%	531	34%	499	37%	361	33%	296	34%
Widowed	60	4%	47	3%	36	3%	28	3%	40	5%
Totals	1,653	100%	1,550	100%	1,363	100%	1,102	100%	864	100%

- Children under the age of 18 were found to be present in more than one quarter (27%) of the gamblers' households, with the majority (77%) residing in homes with married or cohabitating parents. HelpLine Specialists secure this information in order to provide additional required supports (e.g., social services, emergency supports, and other community resources) where necessary, particularly in instances where young children are present in the household.
- When assisting problem gamblers, it is important to provide resources that can simultaneously help family members and their children. The wide-reaching impact of a gambling addiction is not limited only to the gambler. As such, support is frequently necessary for the entire family. The FCCG takes great pride in working with loved ones of problem gamblers as well as those experiencing a gambling problem.

GAMBLING ACTIVITY INFORMATION: Gambler's Primary Gambling Problem

Gambler's PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEM

- Problem gamblers, as well as occasional/social/recreational gamblers, all have a preferred form or type of gambling. Research has shown that when an individual's primary form of gambling is not available or easily accessible, they will participate in alternative gambling activities (the exception to this is sports and stock market gamblers, who tend to be more reluctant to switch their form of gambling, although sports gamblers are prone to gamble on multiple different types of sports or sporting events).
- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year and for the first time ever, Online Gambling surpassed all other types of gambling activities (INCLUDING electronic gambling machines, both legal and illegal combined) as being the most frequently cited primary gambling problem of the gambler (**Table 28**).
- This was also the first year we have seen legal slot machine gambling (available only at a casino or racino) DECREASE in popularity as the gambler's primary gambling problem (27% this year, down from 33% last year) (**Table 28**).
- Illegal gambling machines (arcade/amusement games, internet sweepstakes machines, video lottery terminals, etc.) available at convenience stores, bars/clubs, or at other illegal gambling establishments, also decreased in popularity for the first time, down 3% as the gambler's primary gambling problem from last year (9% in 2022/2023 vs. 6% in 2023/2024). (**Table 28**)
- While traditional cards/table games (also available at brick and mortar gambling facilities) did not decrease in popularity this year compared with last (19% in both fiscal years), there has been a steady decrease in cards or table games as the gambler's primary gambling problem when comparing HelpLine data from the past 5 years (24% in 2019/2020 vs. 19% in 2023/2024) (**Table 28**).
- This data may indicate that gamblers who have traditionally gambled on activities available at brick and mortar gambling facilities are transitioning to gambling activities that are available online.
- Average increases in online gambling as the gambler's primary gambling problem over the past 5 fiscal years reveals a 56% increase.
- If comparing HelpLine data from 5 years ago (2019/2020 fiscal year) with this most recent fiscal year (2023/2024), online gambling has increased by 427% as the reported primary gambling problem.

(See next page)

Table 28
Gambler's Primary Gambling Problem

Primary Gambling Problem	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020		2018-2019	
	N=2,012	Percent = 100%	N=1,843	Percent = 100%	N=1,496	Percent = 100%	N=1,196	Percent = 100%	N=1,043	Percent = 100%	N=1,361	Percent = 100%
Bingo/Keno	7	0%	6	0%	2	0%	1	0%	5	0%	2	0%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	378	19%	341	19%	317	21%	249	21%	249	24%	344	25%
Dog Racing	3	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	2	0%	6	0%
Games of Skill (Pool, Bowling, etc.)	4	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Horse Racing	8	0%	13	1%	20	1%	16	1%	14	1%	20	1%
Jai-Alai	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Lottery	160	8%	183	10%	164	11%	175	15%	149	14%	138	10%
Online Casino Gambling	241	12%	209	11%	147	10%	83	7%	60	6%	39	3%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	428	21%	220	12%	147	10%	112	9%	69	7%	72	5%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	11	1%	23	1%	11	1%	10	1%	0	0%	1	0%
Online Gaming - Social Network Games	0	0%	0	0%	4	0%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLTs, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	119	6%	158	9%	121	8%	73	6%	66	6%	96	7%
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	551	27%	616	33%	491	33%	409	34%	366	35%	558	41%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	65	3%	45	2%	43	3%	33	3%	12	1%	21	2%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	8	0%	3	0%	2	0%	2	0%	3	0%	2	0%
Video Games/Computer Games- Console (PlayStation/Xbox/etc.) OR Computer (PC/Mac/etc.)	12	1%	5	0%	4	0%	8	1%	6	1%	10	1%
Didn't Know/Refused	17	1%	20	1%	22	1%	20	2%	42	4%	52	4%
Totals	2,012	100%	1,843	100%	1,496	100%	1,196	100%	1,043	100%	1,361	100%

TOP 5 - PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEMS	FY: 2023/2024		FY: 2022/2023		FY: 2021/2022		FY: 2020/2021		FY: 2019/2020	
	N = 2,012 (All FL Help Contacts)	TOTAL % OF ALL HELP CONTACTS	N = 1,805 (All FL Help Contacts)	TOTAL % OF ALL HELP CONTACTS	N = 1,496 (All FL Help Contacts)	TOTAL % OF ALL HELP CONTACTS	N = 1,196 (All FL Help Contacts)	TOTAL % OF ALL HELP CONTACTS	N = 1,043 (All FL Help Contacts)	TOTAL % OF ALL HELP CONTACTS
LEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Slot Machines/Electronic Cards or Table Games) at Casinos/Racino's Only	551	27%	604	33%	491	33%	409	34%	366	35%
Online Gambling - ALL TYPES	680	34%	401	25%	309	21%	207	17%	129	12%
Cards/Table Games	378	19%	345	19%	317	21%	249	21%	249	24%
Lottery	160	8%	182	10%	164	11%	175	15%	149	14%
ILLEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Arcade/Amusement Games/Internet Sweepstakes Machines/VLTs)	119	6%	156	9%	121	8%	73	6%	66	6%

- A graphic representation of the Primary Gambling Problems is presented below in **Figure 1**.

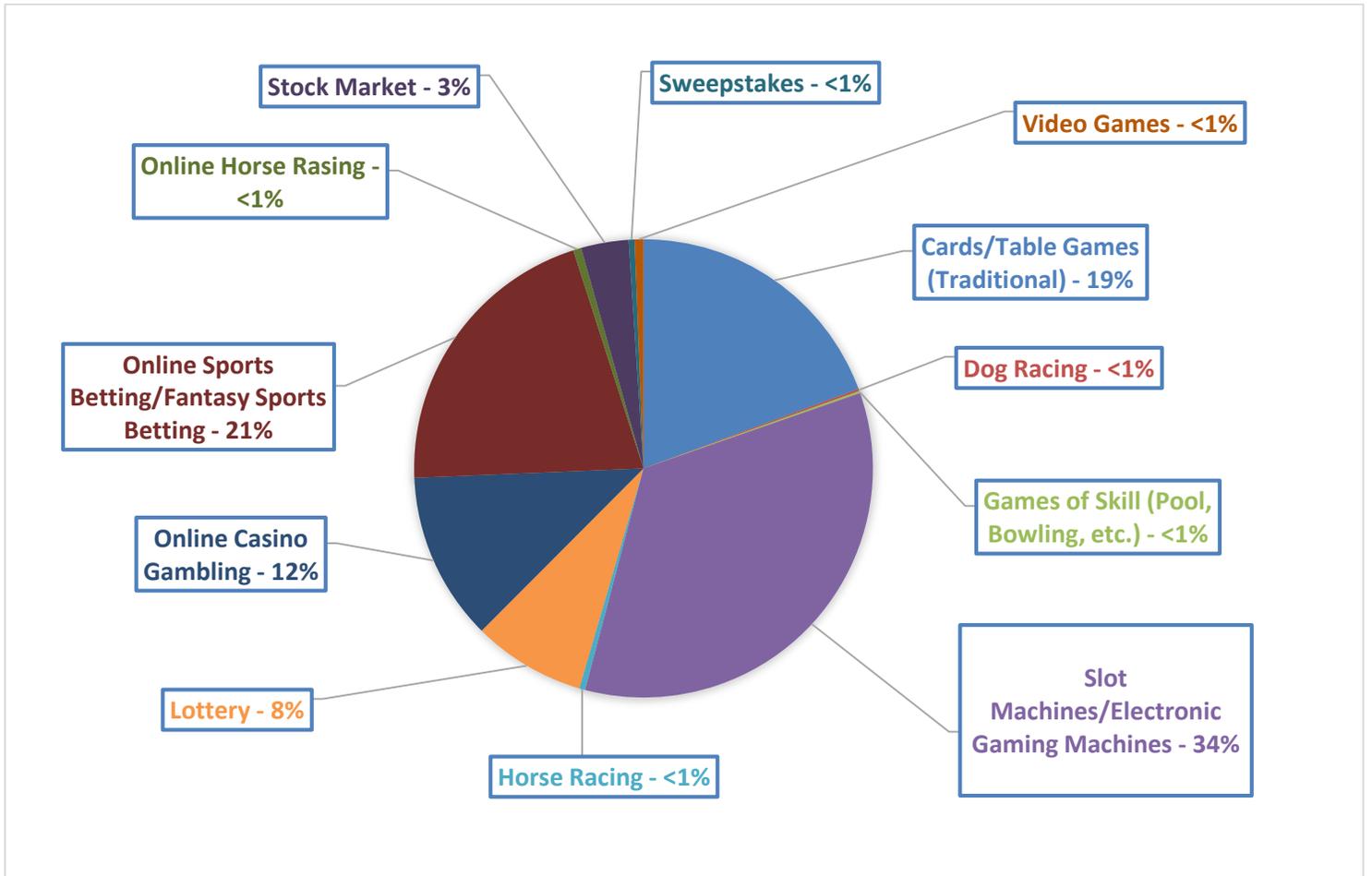


Figure 1: Primary Gambling Problem

Gambler’s PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEM BY GENDER

The gambling literature has repeatedly reported differences in preferred form of gambling differs between men and women. As such, the FCCG remain highly sensitive to gender differences among problem gamblers.

- The primary activity associated with gambling problems also revealed significant gender differences (**Table 29**). Male problem gamblers were more likely than females to primarily play cards/table games (24% vs 7%) and were exceedingly more likely to choose online gambling as their primary gambling type (41% vs 12%). Males comprise a significant majority of those primarily gambling online on horse racing, sports betting, the stock market, and taking business risks. Certain forms of gambling, referred to as continuous forms of gambling (e.g., slot machines and online gambling), present greater risks, as they involve rapid cycles of play, encourage ongoing play vs. taking necessary breaks, are often played in isolation, and allow for the reinvestment of winnings. With respect to sports wagering, the introduction of prop (propositional) bets has enabled sports wagering to become a continuous form of gambling (**Table 29**).

Table 29						
Primary Gambling Problem - by Gender						
2023 - 2024 Fiscal Year						
Primary Gambling Problem - by Gender	Females (N=530)	Percent = 100%	Males (N=1,414)	Percent = 100%	N=1,944	Percent = 100%
Bingo/Keno	6	1%	1	<1%	7	<1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	39	7%	336	24%	375	19%
Dog Racing	1	<1%	2	<1%	3	<1%
Games of Skill (Pool, Bowling, etc.)	1	<1%	2	<1%	3	<1%
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLT's, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	70	13%	49	3%	119	6%
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	287	54%	261	18%	548	28%
Horse Racing	0	0%	8	1%	8	<1%
Jai-Alai	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Lottery	51	10%	103	7%	154	8%
Online Casino Gambling	56	11%	174	12%	230	12%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	7	1%	394	28%	401	21%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	0	0%	11	1%	11	1%
Online Gaming - Social Network Games	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	4	1%	61	4%	65	3%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	2	<1%	6	<1%	8	<1%
Video Games (Console - PS4/Xbox/etc.)	6	1%	6	<1%	12	1%
Totals					1,944	100%

- Similar to HelpLine data last year, male problem gambler help seekers during the 2023/2024 fiscal year were reported to prefer online gambling (of all types) as their #1 primary gambling activity. Cards/Table Games was the second most frequently cited gambling activity amongst almost a quarter (24%) of male gamblers this year, followed by Electronic Gambling Machines in the #3 spot as the most frequently reported primary gambling activity among male gamblers (21%). This data reflects a continued decrease in reported preferred gambling activities available at traditional brick and mortar gambling facilities amongst male problem gamblers, with both cards/table games and slot machine gambling reported less frequently each year since the 2019/2020 fiscal year, as the primary gambling activity of male gamblers (**Table 30-A**).
- This year, while female problem gamblers were still reported to prefer Electronic Gambling Machines as their primary gambling activity (67% in total; with 54% playing legal machines and 13% playing illegal machines), they also reported gambling online as the next most frequently preferred gambling activity (12% this year compared to 8% in the previous 2022/2023 fiscal). Of female online gamblers, while the majority preferred online casino games, this year (for the first time ever) seven (7) women gambler HelpLine contacts were online sports bettors (**Table 30-B**).

Table 30 - A										
Top 6 - Primary Gambling Problems By Gender: MALE GAMBLERS										
TOP 6 - PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEMS: BY GENDER	FY: 2023/2024	FY: 2022/2023	FY: 2021/2022	FY: 2020/2021	FY: 2019/2020					
MALE GAMBLERS	N = 1,414 (Total Male Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF MALE GAMBLERS	N = 1,208 (Total Male Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF MALE GAMBLERS	N = 1,035 (Total Male Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF MALE GAMBLERS	N = 780 (Total Male Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF MALE GAMBLERS	N = 685 (Total Male Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF MALE GAMBLERS
Cards/Table Games	336	24%	296	25%	285	28%	215	28%	204	30%
ILLEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Arcade/Amusement Games/Internet Sweepstakes Machines/VLTs)	49	3%	70	6%	60	6%	28	4%	19	3%
LEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Slot Machines/Electronic Cards or Table Games) at Casinos/Racino's Only	261	18%	284	24%	248	24%	185	24%	171	25%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	61	4%	40	3%	39	4%	31	4%	11	2%
Lottery	103	7%	133	11%	116	11%	109	14%	95	14%
Online Gambling - ALL TYPES	579	41%	364	30%	262	25%	185	24%	101	15%

Table 30 - B										
Top 6 - Primary Gambling Problems By Gender: FEMALE GAMBLERS										
TOP 6 - PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEMS: BY GENDER	FY: 2023/2024	FY: 2022/2023	FY: 2021/2022	FY: 2020/2021	FY: 2019/2020					
FEMALE GAMBLERS	N = 530 (Total Female Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF FEMALE GAMBLERS	N = 541 (Total Female Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF FEMALE GAMBLERS	N = 425 (Total Female Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF FEMALE GAMBLERS	N = 387 (Total Female Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF FEMALE GAMBLERS	N = 375 (Total Female Gamblers)	TOTAL % OF FEMALE GAMBLERS
Cards/Table Games	39	7%	38	7%	25	6%	31	8%	41	11%
ILLEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Arcade/Amusement Games/Internet Sweepstakes Machines/VLTs)	70	13%	87	16%	60	14%	43	11%	47	12%
LEGAL ELECTRONIC GAMBLING MACHINES: (Slot Machines/Electronic Cards or Table Games) at Casinos/Racino's Only	287	54%	318	59%	243	57%	220	57%	192	51%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	4	1%	4	<1%	4	1%	2	1%	1	<1%
Lottery	51	10%	45	8%	48	11%	66	17%	52	14%
Online Gambling - ALL TYPES	63	12%	42	8%	42	10%	22	6%	11	3%

Gambler’s PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEM BY AGE

- When looking at HelpLine contacts where the primary gambling problem and age of the gambler were both reported, 18% of the total sample were gamblers 25-year-old or younger. This is a significant increase from last year (12%). Among those gamblers in this age bracket, 69% reported their primary gambling problem as being online gambling, with online sports betting being the most popular betting activity of gamblers 25 years old or younger (46%). This attests to both the appeal of mobile betting to a younger demographic, and also illustrates the rapid rate at which gambling problems can develop with this type of gambling.
- For gamblers in the age range of 31 – 54 years old, traditional casino games at land-based gambling venues, were the most popular, with slot machines/electronic cards or table games the most frequently reported type of primary gambling problem (51%).
- This year’s data also reveals an interesting and continued trend among gamblers 55 years old and older. While electronic gambling machines are still the primary gambling problem reported for older adult gamblers in this age bracket (58%), lottery gambling remains the preferred activity over traditional cards/table games by gamblers, once the age of 55 is reached (15% and 13% respectively) (**Table 31**).

Primary Gambling Problem - by Age	<18	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-49	50-54	55-60	61-64	65-70	71-74	75+	N=1,780	Percent = 100%
Bingo/Keno	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	5	<1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	1	7	47	60	87	61	19	17	17	12	5	4	337	19%
Dog Racing	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	<1%
Games of Skill (Pool, Bowling, etc.)	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	<1%
Horse Racing	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	6	<1%
Jai-Alai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Lottery	0	3	4	9	21	19	23	22	15	18	4	5	143	8%
Online Casino Gambling	5	23	47	22	61	32	8	7	2	2	3	5	217	12%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	4	32	111	72	99	27	8	3	3	1	0	1	361	20%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	5	0	1	0	11	1%
Online Gaming - Social Network Games	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLT's, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	0	0	7	12	21	18	17	17	3	5	1	11	112	6%
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	0	1	12	27	102	95	59	78	42	43	20	27	506	28%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	0	1	12	7	18	4	6	2	1	3	4	0	58	3%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	0	8	<1%
Video Games (Console - PS4/Xbox/etc.)	1	0	2	2	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	11	1%
Totals													1,780	100%

PRIMARY GAMBLING PROBLEMS: SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

A closer examination of several identified primary gambling problems is warranted.

Cards/Table Games as a Primary Gambling Problem

- For gamblers whose reported primary gambling problem is cards or table games, poker still remained the game of choice for more than half (51%) the contacts. This is reflective of the greater accessibility of poker throughout Florida.
- Card/table games at tribal casinos, in particular blackjack, still remain popular among problem gamblers (35% in the current fiscal year versus 30% last year) (**Table 32**).

Table 32								
Primary Gambling Problem - Cards/Table Games (Traditional)								
Primary Gambling Problem - Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=329	Percent = 100%	N=331	Percent = 100%	N=312	Percent = 100%	N=249	Percent = 100%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Poker	168	51%	184	56%	160	51%	134	54%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Blackjack	114	35%	99	30%	106	34%	71	29%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Texas Hold 'em	16	5%	5	2%	9	3%	17	7%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Baccarat	20	6%	27	8%	18	6%	15	6%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Craps/Dice/Dominoes/Pai Gow	11	3%	7	2%	9	3%	3	1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional) - Other/Non-Specified	0	0%	9	3%	10	3%	9	4%
Totals	329	100%	331	100%	312	100%	249	100%

Lottery Games as a Primary Gambling Problem

- Overall, 8% of all gamblers reported their primary gambling problem as being the lottery, while another 12% indicated it was a secondary problem. Of lottery games played, scratch-off tickets were reported most frequently (74%) as the primary form of Lottery gambling causing problems (**Table 33**), with 21% indicating all types of lottery playing as their primary problem. It is important to note that many people do not view lottery games as a form of gambling. As such, these numbers are likely highly underestimated.

Table 33								
Primary Gambling Problem - Lottery								
Primary Gambling Problem - Lottery	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=156	Percent = 100%	N=180	Percent = 100%	N=164	Percent = 100%	N=175	Percent = 100%
Lottery Games - Scratch-Off Tickets	115	74%	120	67%	120	73%	139	79%
Lottery Games - All	32	21%	47	26%	36	22%	25	14%
Lottery Games - Drawings - Daily/Weekly/Bi-Weekly/Powerball	9	6%	13	7%	8	5%	11	6%
Totals	156	100%	180	100%	164	100%	175	100%

- Demographic data on lottery gamblers this past year revealed that more male gamblers (67%) than female gamblers (33%) view the lottery as their primary gambling problem. While the largest percentage of lottery gamblers were White (60%), more Blacks/African Americans (23%) preferred lottery games than gamblers of Latino/Hispanic background (14%). Sixty-one percent (61%) of individuals identifying lottery gambling as their primary form of gambling problem were age 50 or older, which reflects a significant increase of older adult lottery gamblers from last year (46%).
- Of the lottery gamblers who reported their employment status this fiscal year, 55% were employed either full-time or part-time, and twenty-eight percent (28%) were unemployed or disabled/collecting workers compensation (11% and 17%, respectively). This data reflects 13% more Lottery gamblers who are reported to be disabled/collecting workers compensation than gamblers of all other types (17% of Lottery gamblers compared to 4% of all other types of gamblers) (**Table 34**).

Table 34
Primary Gambling Problem - LOTTERY - Employment Status

Primary Gambling Problem - LOTTERY Employment Status	2023-2024				2022-2023				2021-2022				2020-2021			
	Lottery Gamblers (N=141)	Percent = 100%	All Other Gamblers (N=1,545)	Percent = 100%	Lottery Gamblers (N=164)	Percent = 100%	All Other Gamblers (N=1,562)	Percent = 100%	Lottery Gamblers (N=148)	Percent = 100%	All Other Gamblers (N=1,381)	Percent = 100%	Lottery Gamblers (N=157)	Percent = 100%	All Other Gamblers (N=1,070)	Percent = 100%
Full-Time	72	51%	1,018	66%	84	51%	961	62%	66	45%	864	63%	63	40%	634	59%
Retired	20	14%	123	8%	29	18%	179	11%	23	16%	130	9%	32	20%	125	12%
Unemployed	15	11%	172	11%	16	10%	190	12%	14	9%	155	11%	18	11%	119	11%
Disabled/Workers-Comp	24	17%	56	4%	16	10%	90	6%	25	17%	84	6%	26	17%	85	8%
Part-Time	6	4%	72	5%	5	3%	51	3%	9	6%	66	5%	13	8%	54	5%
Student	0	0%	44	3%	2	1%	24	2%	2	1%	23	2%	0	0%	26	2%
Retired Plus Job	4	3%	28	2%	12	7%	47	3%	5	3%	25	2%	4	3%	10	1%
Homemaker	0	0%	2	<1%	0	0%	1	0%	1	1%	12	1%	0	0%	9	1%
Student Plus Job	0	0%	30	2%	0	0%	19	1%	3	2%	22	2%	1	1%	8	1%
Totals	141	100%	1,545	100%	164	100%	1,562	100%	148	100%	1,381	100%	157	100%	1,070	100%

Online Gambling as a Primary Gambling Problem

- Online gambling continues to be a focus of international attention and responsible/safer gambling initiatives given the potential continuous opportunities and nature of this format—high speed, ease of immediate reinvestment of winnings, simultaneous play, privacy—and its association with gambling-related harms and problem gambling. It should be noted that online/mobile gambling itself is not a type of gambling activity but rather a medium in which to gamble. Online operators offer a multitude of opportunities to gamble on traditional casino games (e.g., slots, roulette, blackjack, poker, etc.), horse racing and sports wagering (professional, collegiate or amateur sports, Olympic events, etc., as well as prop bets), with some sites offering wagering on current or future popular events (e.g., who will win the next Presidential race, who will be the next Pope, etc.). Within the U.S., geo-tracking systems frequently only permit individuals in jurisdictions where online gambling is permitted (e.g., Nevada, New Jersey). However, many gamblers are highly resourceful and use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) which encrypts one’s internet connection and routes it through a server based in a location where online wagers are permitted, thereby circumventing intended restrictions. Everyone’s smart phone has now become an online casino.
- Of significant note is the steadily increasing number of HelpLine contacts who reported some form of online gambling as the primary gambling activity by the problem gambler (680 online gamblers this year compared to 452 in the 2022-2023 fiscal year) (**Table 35**).

Table 35

Primary Gambling Problem - Online Gambling										
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
Primary Gambling Problem - Online Gambling	N=680	Percent of Total	N=452	Percent of Total	N=309	Percent of Total	N=207	Percent of Total	N=129	Percent of Total
Online Casino Gambling	241	35%	209	46%	147	48%	83	40%	60	47%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	428	63%	220	49%	147	48%	112	54%	69	53%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	11	2%	23	5%	11	4%	10	5%	0	0%
Online Gaming - Social Network Games	0	0%	0	0%	4	1%	2	1%	0	0%
Totals	680	100%	452	100%	309	100%	207	100%	129	100%

- Amongst those engaged primarily in online gambling, the large majority were male (90%), White (57%), and 30 years of age or younger (52%). Gender differences continue to be noted among online gamblers, with females reporting primarily gambling on casino-type games online (89%) and males reporting gambling online most frequently on sports (68%). This year however, we did see an increasing number of female online sports bettors (11% compared to 2% in the previous fiscal period) (**Table 36**). Problem gamblers whose primary problem was online sports betting were most often reported gambling across all sports as opposed to a single sport, like football, baseball, or basketball. A small percentage of male online gamblers are primarily betting on online horse wagering (2%) (**Table 36**).
- The average reported income of online sports betting gamblers this year was \$78,253, higher than last year’s average of \$68,332 in 2022/2023, and considerably higher than in 2021/2022 (\$55,288). During the current 2023/2024 year, 20% of online sports bettors reported incomes of \$100,000 or more (compared to 15% during the 2021/2022 fiscal year). No differences were found between annual incomes amongst online sports gamblers and those who preferred other forms of gambling.

Table 36

Primary Gambling Problem - Online Gambling by Gender																
	2023-2024				2022-2023				2021-2022				2020-2021			
Primary Gambling Problem - Online Gambling	Females (N=64)	Percent = 100%	Males (N=610)	Percent = 100%	Females (N=42)	Percent = 100%	Males (N=365)	Percent = 100%	Females (N=42)	Percent = 100%	Males (N=262)	Percent = 100%	Females (N=22)	Percent = 100%	Males (N=185)	Percent = 100%
Online Casino Gambling	57	89%	182	30%	41	98%	144	39%	38	90%	106	40%	20	91%	63	34%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	7	11%	417	68%	1	2%	204	56%	1	2%	144	55%	2	9%	110	60%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	0	0%	11	2%	0	0%	17	5%	1	2%	10	4%	0	0%	10	5%
Online Gaming - Social Network Games	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
Totals	64	100%	610	100%	42	100%	365	100%	42	100%	262	100%	22	100%	185	100%

GAMBLING ACTIVITY INFORMATION: Gambler’s Secondary Gambling Problem

Gambler’s SECONDARY GAMBLING PROBLEM

- As noted previously, if the problem gambler’s preferred method and location for gambling is unavailable, they typically seek other ways to obtain the same level of excitement, escape and pleasure through other forms of gambling. This year, traditional cards or table games (30%) and electronic gambling machines (30%) were reported as the most popular types of alternate forms of gambling for problem gamblers, with online gambling next at 20%, followed by the Lottery (12%) (Table 37).

Secondary Gambling Problem	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,215	Percent = 100%	N=832	Percent = 100%	N=582	Percent = 100%	N=328	Percent = 100%
All Electronic Gambling Machines (Arcades/Electronic Cards/Table Games/Slots/Internet Sweepstakes/Illegal Slots/VLTs, etc.)	363	30%	380	46%	242	42%	72	22%
Animal Fights	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bingo/Keno	9	1%	7	1%	10	2%	9	<1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	363	30%	251	30%	192	33%	116	35%
Dog Racing	5	<1%	1	0%	3	1%	8	2%
Horse Racing	13	1%	18	2%	112	19%	10	3%
Jai-Alai	1	<1%	0	0%	1	<1%	2	1%
Lottery	146	12%	163	20%	124	21%	111	34%
Online Gambling (Casino/eSports/Sports/Horse Racing/Jai Alai/Lottery/Other)	247	20%	157	19%	114	20%	59	18%
Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports (Traditional-Not Online)	4	<1%	6	1%	14	2%	0	0%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	39	3%	22	3%	22	4%	13	4%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Video Games/Computer Games-Console (PlayStation/Xbox/etc.) OR Online Computer (PC/Mac/etc.) Games	22	2%	9	1%	44	7%	6	2%
Games of Skill (Pool/Bowling/etc.)	1	<1%	2	0%	1	<1%	1	<1%

* Note: Multiple answers permitted

GAMBLING ACTIVITY INFORMATION: Gambler’s Primary Gambling Location

Gambler’s PRIMARY GAMBLING LOCATION

- The most significant increase noted in the gambler’s primary gambling location of choice when comparing 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data during recent years, is the ongoing upward shift in preference of “convenience” gambling locations, such as gambling at home, at a friend’s home, or at work or school, as the primary gambling location. This year, “Home/Friends Home/School/Work” represented the #1 location reported as the primary gambling location of choice, with more than one-third (36%) of help seekers reporting this as the gambler’s primary gambling location and surpassing traditional brick-and-mortar casino gambling locations in popularity for the first time ever (**Table 38**).
- All other types of legal and traditional brick-and-mortar gambling facilities, such as Tribal Casinos, Racinos, Cardrooms, and Jai-Alai/Racetracks, decreased in popularity this year compared to last, as reported gambling locations of preference of the gambler (**Table 38**). The FCCG continues to closely monitor shifting and evolving gambling patterns and venues.

Primary Gambling Location	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020		2018-2019	
	N=2,028	Percent = 100%	N=1,824	Percent = 100%	N=1,500	Percent = 100%	N=1,171	Percent = 100%	N=1,001	Percent = 100%	N=1,339	Percent = 100%
Amusement Parks/Arcades/Bars/Clubs/Internet Sweepstakes Center	110	5%	132	7%	100	7%	55	5%	63	6%	90	7%
Bingo Hall	5	<1%	6	<1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	3	<1%	3	<1%
Cardroom/Jai-Alai/Racetrack (Non-Racino/No Slots)	88	4%	87	5%	62	4%	62	5%	45	4%	70	5%
Convenience/Grocery Store, Gas Station, Retailer (Walmart, Publix, etc.)	172	8%	210	12%	178	12%	194	17%	151	15%	141	11%
Day/Floating Casino	3	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	6	1%	4	<1%
Home/Friends Home/School/Work	729	36%	479	26%	371	25%	251	21%	122	12%	138	10%
Out-of-State Casino	50	2%	27	1%	39	3%	18	2%	23	2%	33	2%
Racino (Pari-Mutuel with Slots in Broward or Miami-Dade County)	150	7%	143	8%	140	9%	94	8%	124	12%	181	14%
Sportsbook (Cardroom/Racetrack/Racino/Tribal Casino)	5	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Tribal Casino (Florida Only)	716	35%	738	40%	606	40%	495	42%	464	46%	679	51%
Totals	2,028	100%	1,824	100%	1,500	100%	1,171	100%	1,001	100%	1,339	100%

Primary Gambling Location Specifics – TRIBAL CASINOS, RACINOS, & CARDROOMS/RACETRACKS

- Of those identifying in-state legal land-based gambling facility locations as the primary gambling location preference of the gambler (which includes tribal casinos, racinos, and cardrooms/racetracks only), the majority (75% of the total in 2023/2024, 76% of the total in 2022/2023, 72% of the total in 2021/2022, and 73% of the total in 2020/2021) identified tribal casino gambling locations as the preferred gambling location of the gambler. Racinos in Broward or Miami-Dade Counties were the second-most frequently cited land-based primary gambling location of the gambler each year, and cardrooms/racetracks ranked third each of the past three fiscal years.
- Fluctuations in reported primary gambling problems and locations are also influenced in brick-and-mortar gambling facilities' availability and changes to onsite signage, employee knowledge about problem gambling and available supports through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, and management's knowledge and views about the issue.
- See specifics as provided in the charts below:

PRIMARY GAMBLING LOCATION - TRIBAL CASINOS												
Tribal Casino's	POST-COVID		POST-COVID		POST-COVID		COVID		PRE-COVID		PRE-COVID	
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024		FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023		FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022		FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021		FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020		FISCAL YEAR: 2018-2019	
	N=704	Percent = 100%	N=738	Percent = 100%	N=606	Percent = 100%	N=491	Percent = 100%	N=449	Percent = 100%	N=641	Percent = 100%
Seminole Casino - Brighton	12	2%	16	2%	5	1%	2	<1%	5	1%	7	1%
Seminole Casino - Coconut Creek	82	12%	97	13%	74	12%	79	16%	58	13%	103	16%
Seminole Classic Casino	23	3%	24	3%	15	2%	30	6%	11	2%	35	5%
Seminole Hard Rock Casino - Hollywood	245	35%	211	29%	205	34%	162	33%	120	27%	183	29%
Seminole Hard Rock Casino - Tampa	288	41%	324	44%	243	40%	172	35%	191	43%	241	38%
Seminole Casino - Immokalee	21	3%	29	4%	30	5%	18	4%	26	6%	21	3%
Miccosukee Resort and Gaming	33	5%	37	5%	34	6%	28	6%	38	8%	51	8%
Totals	704	100%	738	100%	606	100%	491	100%	449	100%	641	100%

PRIMARY GAMBLING LOCATION - RACINOS												
Racino's	POST-COVID		POST-COVID		POST-COVID		COVID		PRE-COVID		PRE-COVID	
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024		FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023		FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022		FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021		FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020		FISCAL YEAR: 2018-2019	
	N=145	Percent = 100%	N=143	Percent = 100%	N=200	Percent = 100%	N=133	Percent = 100%	N=119	Percent = 100%	N=167	Percent = 100%
Calder Casino and Race Course	24	17%	21	15%	28	14%	18	14%	15	13%	36	22%
Casino Miami	18	12%	16	11%	15	8%	11	8%	13	11%	8	5%
Gulfstream Park Racing and Casino	11	8%	16	11%	21	11%	17	13%	12	10%	23	14%
Hialeah Park Racing and Casino	24	17%	21	15%	29	15%	14	11%	30	25%	33	20%
Isle Casino/Harrah's Pompano Beach	24	17%	18	13%	32	16%	17	13%	15	13%	25	15%
Magic City Casino	22	15%	27	19%	49	25%	31	23%	25	21%	32	19%
The Big Easy Casino	10	7%	11	8%	13	7%	7	5%	5	4%	5	3%
The Casino @ Dania Beach	12	8%	13	9%	13	7%	18	14%	4	3%	5	3%
Totals	145	100%	143	100%	200	100%	133	100%	119	100%	167	100%

PRIMARY GAMBLING LOCATION - *CARDROOMS/RACETRACKS												
Cardroom/Race Tracks	POST-COVID		POST-COVID		POST-COVID		COVID		PRE-COVID		PRE-COVID	
	FISCAL YEAR:		FISCAL YEAR:		FISCAL YEAR:		FISCAL YEAR:		FISCAL YEAR:		FISCAL YEAR:	
	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020		2018-2019	
	N=88	Percent = 100%	N=86	Percent = 100%	N=62	Percent = 100%	N=80	Percent = 100%	N=44	Percent = 100%	N=62	Percent = 100%
bestbet Jacksonville Poker & Racing (Jacksonville FL)	12	14%	20	23%	14	23%	26	33%	5	11%	20	32%
bestbet Orange Park Poker & Racing (Orange Park FL)	7	8%	4	5%	4	6%	3	4%	2	5%	5	8%
bestbet St. Augustine Poker & Racing (St. Augustine FL)	4	5%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Card House Port St. Lucie (formerly "Casino Fort Pierce") (Port St. Lucie FL)	2	2%	1	1%	1	2%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Creek Entertainment Gretna - Racing & Poker (Gretna FL)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Daytona Beach Racing and Card Club (Daytona Beach FL)	8	9%	7	8%	7	11%	4	5%	4	9%	7	11%
Win! Derby (formerly Derby Lane) (St. Petersburg, FL)	7	8%	10	12%	6	10%	5	6%	3	7%	2	3%
Ebro Greyhound Park & Poker Room (Ebro FL)	0	0%	4	5%	0	0%	1	1%	1	2%	2	3%
Flagler Dog Track (Miami FL)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Club 52/Melbourne Greyhound Park (Melbourne FL)	7	8%	5	6%	1	2%	4	5%	4	9%	2	3%
Bonita Springs Poker Room (Bonita Springs FL)	7	8%	7	8%	2	3%	6	8%	3	7%	3	5%
OcalaBetS (Ocala FL)	0	0%	1	1%	3	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Orange City Racing and Card Club (Orange City FL)	9	10%	11	13%	9	15%	13	16%	12	27%	9	15%
Palm Beach Kennel Club & Poker Room (West Palm Beach FL)	5	6%	2	2%	2	3%	10	13%	2	5%	4	6%
Pensacola Greyhound Track & Poker Room (Pensacola FL)	0	0%	1	1%	1	2%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Sanford Orlando Racebook & Sportsbar (No Cards) (Longwood FL)	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	2	3%	0	0%	3	5%
One-Eyed Jacks Poker Room @ Sarasota Kennel Club (Sarasota FL)	1	1%	4	5%	3	5%	3	4%	1	2%	4	6%
Tampa Bay Downs Racing & Poker (Tampa FL)	5	6%	3	3%	5	8%	1	1%	1	2%	1	2%
The Cardroom at Oxford Downs (Summerfield FL)	10	11%	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TGT Poker & Racebook (aka -Tampa Greyhound Track) (Tampa FL)	4	5%	2	2%	3	5%	0	0%	4	9%	0	0%
Totals	88	100%	86	100%	62	100%	80	100%	44	100%	62	100%

*These facilities are currently not required by law to post a helpline number.

EMPLOYMENT, FINANCIAL & HOUSING RELATED IMPACTS: Gamblers' Employment, Financial & Housing Related Impacts Caused by Gambling

Gambler's EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- Data regarding the employment of problem gamblers illustrates similar trends over the past three fiscal years, with the 2023/2024 HelpLine data revealing that 65% of gamblers were employed full time, 11% were unemployed, 9% were retired (an additional 2% were retired but held a part-time job), 5% reported being disabled or collecting workers' compensation benefits, and 5% held part-time employment (**Table 39**).

Employment Status of the Gambler	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,713	Percent = 100%	N=1,581	Percent = 100%	N=1,381	Percent = 100%	N=1,073	Percent = 100%	N=815	Percent = 100%
Full-Time	1,105	65%	972	61%	864	63%	637	59%	476	58%
Retired	146	9%	183	12%	130	9%	125	12%	105	13%
Unemployed	189	11%	194	12%	155	11%	119	11%	93	11%
Disabled/Workers-Comp	82	5%	90	6%	84	6%	85	8%	47	6%
Part-Time	80	5%	51	3%	66	5%	54	5%	53	7%
Student	47	3%	24	2%	23	2%	26	2%	25	3%
Retired Plus Job	32	2%	47	3%	25	2%	10	1%	12	1%
Homemaker	2	<1%	1	<1%	12	1%	9	1%	1	<1%
Student Plus Job	30	2%	19	1%	22	2%	8	1%	3	<1%
Totals	1,713	100%	1,581	100%	1,381	100%	1,073	100%	815	100%

Gambler's OCCUPATION

- Employed gamblers are reported to be engaged in a variety of less-skilled occupations and frequently change jobs. The most frequently cited occupations for employed gamblers this year were retail/sales/service industry occupations (26%), self-employed business owners (13%), delivery drivers or those working in transportation (7%), skilled laborers (5%), healthcare providers (6%), educators (4%), management positions (4%), and real estate (2%). It should be noted that problem gambling doesn't discriminate based upon education or professional background. Educators, computer engineers, healthcare providers, and mental health care providers were among those also reporting gambling problems. The table below provides a complete listing of all occupations of the problem gambler (**Table 40**). The changing distribution of employment is also reflective of an increased number of gamblers under age 26.

Occupation of the Gambler	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,148	Percent = 100%	N=1,050	Percent = 100%	N=1,098	Percent = 100%	N=786	Percent = 100%
Accounting/Banking/Financial Occupations	41	4%	35	3%	37	3%	51	6%
Administrative/Secretarial/Clerical Occupations	18	2%	25	2%	37	3%	30	4%
Airline Occupations	11	1%	8	1%	7	1%	5	1%
Architecture & Engineering Occupations (Non-Computer)	5	<1%	9	1%	14	1%	0	0%
Building/Janitorial/Grounds Maintenance Occupations	14	1%	13	1%	14	1%	10	1%
Business Owner/Self-Employed	145	13%	177	17%	166	15%	127	16%
Caregiver/Caretaker	10	1%	14	1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Computer Engineering & Science Occupations	26	2%	24	2%	30	3%	15	2%
Construction	46	4%	36	3%	50	5%	39	5%
Counselor/Psychologist/Mental Health/Social Service Occupations	16	1%	7	1%	17	2%	20	3%
Delivery Driver/Transportation	82	7%	112	11%	78	7%	54	7%
Educator/Teacher	41	4%	37	4%	25	2%	20	3%
Electrician/Plumber	9	1%	3	<1%	11	1%	0	0%
First Responders – Police/Fire Fighter/Paramedic	22	2%	8	1%	4	<1%	4	1%
Gambling Industry Occupations	17	1%	10	1%	11	1%	7	1%
Government/State Agency Occupations	30	3%	34	3%	31	3%	23	3%
Healthcare Provider (Doctor/Nurse/Dentist/etc.)	74	6%	46	4%	54	5%	44	6%
Installation & Repair Occupations	25	2%	4	<1%	17	2%	10	1%
Insurance Occupations	19	2%	16	2%	18	2%	15	2%
Legal Professional – Attorney/Judge	17	1%	7	1%	6	1%	13	2%
Management – Business/Professional Industry	18	2%	17	2%	24	2%	21	3%
Management – Retail/Sales/Service Industry	55	5%	45	4%	51	5%	31	4%
Real Estate Occupations	19	2%	37	4%	27	2%	17	2%
Researcher	1	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%
Retail/Sales/Service Industry Occupations	298	26%	261	25%	231	21%	155	20%
Security/Loss Prevention	12	1%	20	2%	9	1%	8	1%
Skilled/Laborer	57	5%	42	4%	75	7%	67	9%
Other	20	2%	2	<1%	53	5%	0	0%
Totals	1,148	100%	1,050	100%	1,098	100%	786	100%

Gambler's INCOME

- The average reported income of problem gamblers was \$69,780 this fiscal year compared with the previous 2022/2023 fiscal year (\$56,786), reflecting a considerable increase in income, year over year (**Table 41**). When comparing the average income of the gambler over the past five (5) fiscal years, there has been a 49% increase in the reported average income of the gambler since what is considered to be "Pre-COVID times" (\$46,930 in 2019/2020 compared to \$69,780 in 2023/2024).
- Almost half (48%) of gamblers this year earned \$50,000 or more. This represents a 13% increase of gamblers in this income bracket since the 2019-2020 fiscal year.
- This year, less than one-third (28%) of gamblers earned less than \$25,000 per year. This represents a 12% decrease of gamblers with incomes in the lowest income bracket when compared to data from the 2019/2020 fiscal year (40%). These trends of higher incomes and younger age ranges have become more common with the introduction of online/mobile sports betting in the U.S.
- During the 2023/2024 fiscal year, incomes ranged between \$0 and \$200,000 or more annually, with the median reported income being between \$35,000 and \$49,999. Despite a large percentage of gamblers (28%) having a reported income of less than \$25,000 per year, they still report gambling excessively (**Table 41**).

Table 41

Income of the Gambler

Income of the Gambler	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,302	Percent = 100%	N=1,160	Percent = 100%	N=1,129	Percent = 100%	N=792	Percent = 100%	N=556	Percent = 100%
\$0	194	15%	148	13%	154	14%	104	13%	75	13%
\$1 to \$10,000	26	2%	39	3%	36	3%	31	4%	28	5%
\$10,001 - \$14,999	42	3%	62	5%	47	4%	44	6%	26	5%
\$15,000- \$24,999	99	8%	102	9%	116	10%	108	14%	91	16%
\$25,000- \$34,999	109	8%	111	10%	129	11%	79	10%	61	11%
\$35,000- \$49,999	199	15%	199	17%	201	18%	122	15%	83	15%
\$50,000- \$74,999	277	21%	224	19%	197	17%	146	18%	93	17%
\$75,000- \$99,999	117	9%	92	8%	76	7%	56	7%	42	8%
\$100,000- \$149,999	123	9%	96	8%	110	10%	56	7%	40	7%
\$150,000- \$199,999	44	3%	42	4%	22	2%	20	3%	7	1%
\$200,000 or more	72	6%	45	4%	41	4%	26	3%	10	2%
Totals	1,302	100%	1,160	100%	1,129	100%	792	100%	556	100%

GAMBLERS INCOME - As Reported by both Gamblers & Loved Ones	POST-COVID	POST-COVID	POST-COVID	COVID	PRE-COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020
Average Income of the Gambler:	\$69,780	\$56,786	\$54,751	\$52,558	\$46,930

Gamblers' INCOMES BY PRIMARY GAMBLING TYPE

While the average wager can vary widely depending upon the type of gambling, it is interesting to examine gambling type by self-reported level of income.

- Average incomes reported by primary gambling type are reported in **Table 42**. Excluding game types where less than 20 individuals reported their income, this year, the highest average incomes were found amongst card/table game players (\$90,273), followed by stock market gamblers (\$88,365), online sports bettors (\$77,946), and those playing (legal) electronic gambling machines at casinos or racinos (\$75,606) (**Tables 42 & 43**).
- In general, the average incomes by game type were higher across the board for 2023/2024 compared to previous years (**Table 44**).

Table 42					
Income of the Gambler - by Primary Gambling Type					
2023-2024					
Income of the Gambler - by Primary Gambling Type	Average Income by Gambling Type	Income Range	Standard Deviation	N=1,300	Percent = 100%
Bingo/Keno	\$35,155	\$8,820 - \$55,000	\$19,222	4	<1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	\$90,273	\$0 - \$2,500,000	\$177,015	244	19%
Dog Racing	\$60,000	\$60,000	--	1	<1%
Horse Racing	\$52,250	\$24,000 - \$80,000	\$21,264	4	<1%
Lottery	\$47,571	\$0 - \$500,000	\$61,056	109	8%
Online Casino Gambling	\$55,783	\$0 - \$350,000	\$61,986	160	12%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	\$77,946	\$0 - \$3,000,000	\$222,250	255	20%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	\$50,700	\$0 - \$100,000	\$23,243	10	1%
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLT's, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	\$44,558	\$0 - \$240,000	\$37,492	86	7%
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	\$75,606	\$0 - \$1,000,000	\$127,156	375	29%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	\$88,365	\$0 - \$500,000	\$110,283	40	3%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	\$101,071	\$30,000 - \$123,000	\$38,607	7	1%
Video Games/Computer Games-Console (PlayStation/Xbox/etc.) OR Computer (PC/Mac/etc.)	\$11,472	\$0 - \$24,960	\$11,139	5	<1%
Totals				1,300	100%

Table 43

Income of the Gambler - by Primary Gambling Type

2023-2024

Income of the Gambler - by Primary Gambling Type	\$0	\$1 to \$10,000	\$10,001 - \$14,999	\$15,000 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - \$34,999	\$35,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$74,999	\$75,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 - \$199,999	\$200,000 or more	N=1,300	Percent = 100%
Bingo/Keno	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	<1%
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	29	7	3	12	9	35	51	31	34	14	19	244	19%
Dog Racing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	<1%
Horse Racing	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4	<1%
Lottery	11	5	8	19	14	12	24	7	6	0	3	109	8%
Online Casino Gambling	36	3	6	16	16	12	31	14	10	6	10	160	12%
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	60	1	1	9	19	45	51	30	19	7	13	255	20%
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	0	0	1	0	1	1	6	0	1	0	0	10	1%
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLT's, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	7	0	10	7	12	18	23	2	4	2	1	86	7%
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	42	9	10	32	35	68	78	28	37	14	22	375	29%
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	6	0	0	2	1	7	8	4	7	2	3	40	3%
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	0	7	1%
Video Games/Computer Games-Console (PlayStation/Xbox/etc.) OR Computer (PC/Mac/etc.)	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	<1%
Totals												1,300	100%

Table 44

Average Income of the Gambler by Primary Gambling Type - Comparison by Fiscal Year

Average Income of the Gambler by Primary Gambling Type - Comparison by Fiscal Year	2023-2024 FY	2022-2023 FY	2021-2022 FY
	Average Income by Gambling Type	Average Income by Gambling Type	Average Income by Gambling Type
Bingo/Keno	\$35,155	\$27,067	\$29,000
Cards/Table Games (Traditional)	\$90,273	\$71,989	\$60,459
Dog Racing	\$60,000	\$0	\$0
Horse Racing	\$52,250	\$16,060	\$50,173
Lottery	\$47,571	\$38,667	\$34,850
Online Casino Gambling	\$55,783	\$56,597	\$45,038
Online Gambling - Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports Betting	\$77,946	\$65,074	\$55,288
Online Gambling - Horse Racing	\$50,700	\$78,699	\$213,300
Gambling Machines - Illegal - (Arcade/Amusement Games (i.e. Fish Tables, Pre-Reveal/Nudge Games, etc.), Illegal Slots/VLT's, Internet Sweepstakes Machines)	\$44,558	\$37,994	\$49,186
Gambling Machines - Legal - Slot Machines/Electronic Cards/Table Games (at Casinos/Racinos Only)	\$75,606	\$59,061	\$57,314
Stock Market/Business Risks/Commodities/Real Estate/Bitcoin	\$88,365	\$37,858	\$93,974
Sweepstakes (Traditional - i.e. Publisher's Clearing House McDonalds Monopoly Games etc.)	\$101,071	\$27,600	\$5,200
Video Games/Computer Games-Console (PlayStation/Xbox/etc.) OR Computer (PC/Mac/etc.) Gaming	\$11,472	\$130,400	\$11,500

Gambler’s MONEY LOST DUE TO GAMBLING – Reported by both Gambler & Loved One HelpLine Contacts

- Average lifetime gambling losses of the gambler are reported at \$184,463 during the current 2023/2024 fiscal year, reflective of a slight increase from 2022/2023. Overall, 22% of contacts reported lifetime gambling losses of \$200,000 or more with 75 contacts (5%) reporting total losses exceeding \$1 million, and a combined 38% reported losses of \$100,000 or more, demonstrating the financial devastation possible when gambling becomes a problem. Interestingly, the share of contacts reporting losses in the lowest range (from \$1 to \$10,000) increased this year (22% from 20%), possibly indicative of a growing share of young adults and/or new gamblers experiencing problems who haven’t had as much time to accumulate losses. Reported average lifetime gambling-related losses of the gambler peaked during the 2020/2021 fiscal year at \$206,246, when comparing 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine data from the past five fiscal years. **(Table 45)**. Caution should be exercised when interpreting this data, given third-party reports by love ones are often estimated.

Table 45

All Contacts - Money Lost Due to Gambling

Money Lost Due to Gambling - All Help Contacts	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,594	Percent = 100%	N=1,356	Percent = 100%	N=1,228	Percent = 100%	N=881	Percent = 100%	N=612	Percent = 100%
\$0	7	<1%	2	<1%	5	<1%	13	1%	5	1%
\$1 to \$10,000	350	22%	267	20%	240	20%	234	27%	146	24%
\$10,001 - \$14,999	35	2%	38	3%	25	2%	39	4%	9	1%
\$15,000- \$24,999	150	9%	164	12%	178	14%	90	10%	68	11%
\$25,000- \$34,999	107	7%	137	10%	111	9%	61	7%	55	9%
\$35,000- \$49,999	76	5%	69	5%	61	5%	44	5%	25	4%
\$50,000- \$74,999	195	12%	149	11%	157	13%	106	12%	65	11%
\$75,000- \$99,999	67	4%	47	3%	50	4%	26	3%	14	2%
\$100,000- \$149,999	184	12%	152	11%	134	11%	82	9%	71	12%
\$150,000- \$199,999	67	4%	60	4%	44	4%	21	2%	21	3%
\$200,000 or more	356	22%	271	20%	223	18%	165	19%	133	22%
Totals	1,594	100%	1,356	100%	1,228	100%	881	100%	612	100%

GAMBLERS' LOSSES - As Reported by both Gambler & Loved Ones	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020
Average Lifetime Losses:	\$184,463	\$159,655	\$163,141	\$206,246	\$184,153

Gambler’s MONEY LOST DUE TO GAMBLING – Reported by GAMBLER ONLY Contacts

- When only reviewing contacts placed to the HelpLine this past year by the gambler (**Table 46**), the average lifetime gambling losses were reported at \$182,112 (an increase of approximately \$30,000 from the previous fiscal year). It is important to note that no verification of gamblers’ money lost reports is available, that this is all self-reported data, and that gamblers in general typically underestimate losses while overstating winnings. As such, this data must be interpreted with caution.
- Larger cumulative lifetime gambling losses were reported this fiscal year compared to the past two fiscal years (**Table 46**), despite the growing number of young people contacting the HelpLine.

Money Lost Due to Gambling - Gambler Only Contacts	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,291	Percent = 100%	N=1,138	Percent = 100%	N=992	Percent = 100%	N=716	Percent = 100%
\$0	4	<1%	2	<1%	5	1%	10	1%
\$1 to \$10,000	292	23%	221	19%	190	19%	209	29%
\$10,001 - \$14,999	32	2%	33	3%	20	2%	22	3%
\$15,000- \$24,999	126	10%	144	13%	142	14%	69	10%
\$25,000- \$34,999	88	7%	119	10%	95	10%	44	6%
\$35,000- \$49,999	61	5%	62	5%	43	4%	43	6%
\$50,000- \$74,999	158	12%	117	10%	123	12%	89	12%
\$75,000- \$99,999	53	4%	37	3%	40	4%	21	3%
\$100,000- \$149,999	128	10%	123	11%	107	11%	68	9%
\$150,000- \$199,999	55	4%	53	5%	35	4%	17	2%
\$200,000 or more	294	23%	227	20%	192	19%	124	17%
Totals	1,291	100%	1,138	100%	992	100%	716	100%

GAMBLERS LOSSES - As Reported by Gamblers ONLY	POST-COVID	POST-COVID	POST-COVID	COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021
Average Lifetime Losses:	\$182,111	\$153,827	\$166,898	\$204,059

Gamblers' MONEY OWED DUE TO GAMBLING

- This year, one-third (33%) of all HelpLine contacts reported some type of household debts due to gambling. This year, money owed ranged between \$1 - \$3.5 million, with average debts reported at \$41,616 (standard deviation = \$145,189). Money owed as reported for younger gamblers was less than the overall average among gamblers of all ages, with average gambling-related debts reported at \$6,196 for gamblers aged 18-20, \$16,166 for 21 to 25-year-old gamblers, and \$25,292 for gamblers in the 26 to 30-year-old age group. The age group with the highest reported debts due to gambling were those in the 41 to 49-year-old age bracket, with average debts among these gamblers reported at \$74,470 (Table 47 and Table 47-A).

Gambling-Related Debts of the Gambler - Money Owed	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,027	Percent = 100%	N=886	Percent = 100%	N=798	Percent = 100%	N=500	Percent = 100%	N=378	Percent = 100%
\$1 to \$10,000	474	46%	463	52%	431	54%	283	57%	205	54%
\$10,001 - \$14,999	36	4%	41	5%	41	5%	28	6%	15	4%
\$15,000- \$24,999	166	16%	86	10%	97	12%	50	10%	41	11%
\$25,000- \$34,999	80	8%	79	9%	54	7%	27	5%	36	10%
\$35,000- \$49,999	65	6%	60	7%	43	5%	28	6%	15	4%
\$50,000- \$74,999	75	7%	70	8%	64	8%	40	8%	25	7%
\$75,000- \$99,999	20	2%	17	2%	13	2%	13	3%	8	2%
\$100,000- \$149,999	61	6%	29	3%	24	3%	10	2%	16	4%
\$150,000- \$199,999	15	1%	11	1%	11	1%	7	1%	8	2%
\$200,000 or more	35	3%	30	3%	20	3%	14	3%	9	2%
Totals	1,027	100%	886	100%	798	100%	500	100%	378	100%

MONEY OWED DUE TO GAMBLING - As Reported by both Gamblers & Loved One Contacts	POST-LEGALIZATION	PRE-LEGALIZATION	POST-COVID	COVID	PRE-COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020
Average Gambling Debts:	\$41,616	\$39,920	\$35,709	\$46,613	\$30,679

Money Owed Due to Gambling - by Age	2023-2024												N=999	Percent = 100%
	<18	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	41-49	50-54	55-60	61-64	65-70	71-74	75+		
\$1 to \$10,000	1	15	75	59	102	69	40	34	18	27	10	11	461	46%
\$10,001 - \$14,999	0	0	0	3	13	3	7	2	3	2	1	0	34	3%
\$15,000- \$24,999	0	4	15	24	40	25	14	16	4	11	4	6	163	16%
\$25,000- \$34,999	0	0	4	14	20	12	7	10	4	0	0	6	77	8%
\$35,000- \$49,999	0	0	5	7	17	11	5	11	4	1	0	2	63	6%
\$50,000- \$74,999	0	0	11	7	11	18	9	8	4	3	0	1	72	7%
\$75,000- \$99,999	0	0	1	2	7	3	2	2	1	0	1	0	19	2%
\$100,000- \$149,999	0	0	0	2	21	19	6	7	2	1	2	1	61	6%
\$150,000- \$199,999	0	0	1	0	7	1	3	1	0	0	0	2	15	2%
\$200,000 or more	0	0	1	4	9	11	2	3	2	1	0	1	34	3%
Totals													999	100%

Gambler’s MONEY OWED DUE TO GAMBLING - To Whom the Debts are Owed

- Given accumulated debts by gamblers, it is often difficult to identify all creditors to whom gamblers owe money. Most often, they borrow money from family members and friends, extend credit card debt, acquire loans from bank/credit unions and loan companies, and are overdue on rent and utilities, with others reporting owing the IRS back taxes. This year, 59% of problem gamblers are reported to have significant gambling-related credit card debts (similar to the past two years), and 40% owed money to family members and friends due to gambling. Additionally, 28% reported gambling debts owed to non-traditional loan companies (steadily increasing from 26% last year and 20% the year prior). Others owed money to banks or credit unions (10%), while some were indebted to bookmakers, casinos, loan sharks, and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Many reported being delinquent on bills covering basic necessities, such as their rent or mortgage (13%), car payments (8%), and utilities (6%). Notably, this year FCCG began separately tracking money taken from 401k Retirement Accounts to fund gambling, which was reported by 2% of contacts (**Table 48**).

To Whom the Gambling Debts are Owed	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=1,013	Percent of Total	N=923	Percent of Total	N=824	Percent of Total	N=535	Percent of Total
401(k)/Retirement Account	17	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bank/Credit Union	106	10%	94	10%	114	14%	85	16%
Bookie	18	2%	22	2%	26	3%	16	3%
Car Payment	81	8%	68	7%	78	9%	42	8%
Casino	12	1%	20	2%	8	1%	17	3%
Credit Cards	598	59%	535	58%	486	59%	309	58%
Employer	14	1%	22	2%	19	2%	3	1%
Family/Friends	401	40%	373	40%	363	44%	178	33%
IRS	31	3%	51	6%	24	3%	23	4%
Loan Shark	9	1%	3	<1%	7	1%	0	0%
Non-traditional Loan Company (AmScott/Payday Advance etc.)	280	28%	244	26%	168	20%	88	16%
Rent/Mortgage	136	13%	115	12%	89	11%	85	16%
Utilities	58	6%	51	6%	33	4%	31	6%
Other	50	5%	31	3%	0	0%	0	0%

*Multiple responses/sources of debt are included.

- Due to the high volume and dollar amounts of gambling-related debts common amongst those struggling with a gambling disorder, it is not surprising to also find that 9% of this year’s HelpLine contacts reported that the gambler filed bankruptcy at least once or has a bankruptcy case currently pending as a result of the gambling problem. Further indicative of the seriousness of the financial consequences associated with problematic gambling are the direct impacts on basic needs, such as living expenses like rent, mortgage, and utility payments. This year’s data is consistent with last year’s data, indicating 2% of individuals are homeless. A larger percentage of individuals reported staying with friends or family (25%) in 2023/2024 – versus 21% in 2022/2023.

LEGAL IMPACTS DUE TO GAMBLING PROBLEMS: Gambler’s Legal Consequences, Illegal Acts, & Other Issues Caused by Gambling

Gambler’s ILLEGAL ACTS DUE TO GAMBLING

- When gamblers have exhausted all personal and family finances, credit, and bailout options, they often turn to criminal activities as a continued means of gambling to recoup losses. In most cases, these problem gamblers have never committed illegal acts prior to their gambling debts. This reflects the magnitude, devastation, and desperation many problem gamblers and their families commonly experience.
- This year, it was reported that 20% of gamblers had committed illegal activities due to their gambling, which is a 4% increase from last year. As previously noted, this information and other data in this report is self-reported or reported by a third-party. As such, it is important to recognize that disclosure of criminal behaviors is often underreported, as gamblers do not always choose to share such private and potentially incriminating information with a stranger. Alternatively, in the case of loved ones, they often fail to know the extent of the gambler’s legal problems.
- It is also important to note that disordered gamblers commonly experience cognitive distortions, so they may not frequently view certain behaviors as “illegal”, thereby further under-reporting incidents. For example, “borrowing” money from a family member, housemate, or employer without the person’s or organization’s permission may not be viewed as “stealing,” as problem gamblers typically justify their actions by rationalizing that they intend to repay loans or thefts. However, this thought process does not negate that in actuality, taking money or any item of value from a person or organization without their knowledge and consent is by definition “stealing,” and is an illegal act.
- Of those contacts (gamblers and loved ones) reporting that the gambler committed illegal activities due to their gambling problem, the majority were online sports bettors (35%), male (68%) (an increase from 60% in 2022/2023), white (63%), and between the ages of 31 and 49 (51%). It is important to note that 8% of seniors (ages 65+) were also reported to have committed illegal acts.
- The most common illegal acts reported included larceny/theft/burglary (46%), fraud/writing bad checks/forgery (37%), embezzlement (11%), and illegal drug use/possession/sales (9%). In general, similar patterns of criminal behaviors were found during the past year (**Table 49**). Additionally, a significant percentage of contacts (13%) reported multiple illegal acts committed by the gambler to fund their gambling problem.

Table 49
Illegal Acts Committed by the Gambler

**Illegal Acts Committed by the Gambler	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=259	Percent of Total	N=211	Percent of Total	N=258	Percent of Total	N=159	Percent of Total
Assault/Battery/Domestic Violence	1	<1%	1	<1%	2	1%	2	1%
Embezzlement	29	11%	33	16%	22	9%	20	13%
Fraud (Forgery/Bad Checks/etc.)	96	37%	73	35%	78	30%	37	23%
Gambling Related Offenses (Counterfeit Ticketing, Cheating, Bookmaking)	5	2%	11	5%	11	4%	6	4%
Illegal Drugs (Drug Use, Possession, Intent to Sell, or Selling)	23	9%	19	9%	35	14%	9	6%
Illegal Lottery Ticket Purchase - Under 18	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Larceny/Theft/Burglary (Convenience Store, Private Home, Purse Snatching, etc.)	118	46%	97	46%	134	52%	76	48%
Prostitution	2	1%	2	1%	3	1%	1	1%
Violation of Probation/Parole	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	1	1%
Other*	17	7%	9	4%	12	5%	24	15%

*Other responses include: driving under the influence, tax evasion, vandalism at the casino, trespassing, and child neglect.

**Multiple responses were permitted, which accounts for the diverse number of illegal acts committed by gamblers.

Gamblers’ LEGAL CONSEQUENCES DUE TO GAMBLING (Civil & Criminal)

- Problem gamblers (and their loved ones) are often faced with multiple legal consequences and challenges resulting from a gambling addiction. This year, 27% of HelpLine contacts reported legal consequences (civil or criminal) due to gambling, a slight increase from 23% in the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Overall, 27% of individuals reporting legal consequences cited a divorce due to gambling, up significantly from 17% last year. During the current period, there was also an increase in reported vehicle repossessions (28%) (up from 24% in 2022/2023). A significant decrease was reported this year in bankruptcies due to gambling (31%) (compared to 44% in 2022/2023). Criminal behaviors and consequences continued to increase this past fiscal year (14% had been arrested as a result of a gambling problem; 9% served jail time) (**Table 50**). These types of actions continue to burden society and represent a significant social impact and cost.

Table 50

Legal Consequences due to Gambling

**Legal Consequences due to Gambling	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	N=348	Percent of Total	N=310	Percent of Total	N=332	Percent of Total	N=212	Percent of Total
Civil - Bankruptcy	107	31%	135	44%	114	34%	106	50%
Civil - Divorce	93	27%	52	17%	107	32%	38	18%
Civil - Foreclosure/Eviction	63	18%	66	21%	63	19%	41	19%
Civil – Other Civil Lawsuits	14	4%	15	5%	16	5%	10	5%
Civil - Vehicle Repossession	97	28%	75	24%	78	23%	22	10%
Criminal - Arrest	48	14%	39	13%	23	7%	18	8%
Criminal - Jail	32	9%	16	5%	21	6%	9	4%
Criminal - Parole	0	0%	1	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Criminal - Probation	12	3%	22	7%	16	5%	5	2%
*Other Civil or Criminal Consequences	18	5%	9	3%	7	2%	4	2%

*The category “Other Civil Lawsuits or Criminal Consequences” includes tax levies, being trespassed, owing back taxes, driver’s license suspension, and child support wage garnishment.

** Multiple responses permitted.

MENTAL HEALTH, EMOTIONAL, DOMESTIC AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES RESULTING FROM GAMBLING PROBLEMS

Gamblers' MENTAL HEALTH & FAMILIAL IMPACTS DUE TO GAMBLING

- Problem gamblers and their loved ones frequently face a host of mental health issues and emotional and domestic problems. Increases were found across all types of mental health, emotional, and domestic areas during the current fiscal year, reflecting both the magnitude and severity of difficulties experienced by problem gamblers. This year's data reveals higher levels of anxiety (67%) and neurological disorders (24%) compared to the 2022/2023 period, while depression (65%) and suicidal thoughts/attempts (23%) also remain high (**Table 51**).
- While money is essential to maintain one's gambling, other problems arise due to debts incurred. Overall, this year's data suggests that 67% of all help contacts reported the gambler had difficulty paying important bills (up from 63% in 2022/2023), 88% had gambled away savings, equities, or retirement monies (an increase from 84% last year), and almost half (47%) were reported to have sold or pawned possessions to get money to gamble. This year, data on the housing status of the gambler revealed that 44% were renting, only 30% were homeowners, a full quarter (25%) were staying with someone (such as a family member or friend), and 29 individuals (2%) were experiencing homelessness at the time of their HelpLine contact (**Table 51**).
- For many problem gamblers, the most important relationship they have is the one that they have with their gambling. As a result, other significant relationships are often jeopardized. These relationships include not only those with immediate family members, such as spouses, partners, parents, children, and other family members, but also relationships with their employer or school. Frequently, work or school performance declines due to the many side-effects of gambling problems, with issues such as a preoccupation about gambling losses, absences or tardiness due to gambling, and other distractions causing overall poor performance and associated school or work-related difficulties. Almost half of problem gamblers this year were reported to have, or have had, work (46%) or school-related (47%) difficulties resulting from their gambling.
- Problem gambling has been extensively reported to negatively impact family relationships and is consistently among the most frequently cited precipitating events individuals report as their primary reason for reaching out to the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. Seventy-two percent (72%) of all HelpLine contacts reported family conflict this year, while 50% indicated family neglect (an increase from 40% in the prior fiscal period), and 6% reported family violence due to a gambling problem in the home. The percentage of individuals reporting familial conflict of all types is rising (**Table 51**) and remains an ongoing concern. The long-term consequences of mental health and familial concerns is highly problematic at the individual and societal level.
- See following page.

Table 51

Mental Health, Emotional & Domestic Difficulties due to Gambling

Mental Health, Emotional & Domestic Difficulties due to Gambling	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	Respondents	% of Total	Respondents	% of Total	Respondents	% of Total	Respondents	% of Total	Respondents	% of Total
Anxiety	968 of 1,449	67%	943 of 1,439	66%	805 of 1,303	62%	549 of 990	55%	483 of 707	68%
Depression	954 of 1,464	65%	969 of 1,455	67%	826 of 1,301	63%	585 of 983	60%	467 of 702	67%
Neurological Disorders	288 of 1,218	24%	243 of 1,247	19%	235 of 1,194	20%	129 of 876	15%	75 of 580	13%
Suicidal Ideations/Attempts	302 of 1,302	23%	309 of 1,358	23%	302 of 1,253	24%	152 of 942	16%	140 of 649	22%
Family Conflict	1,128 of 1,558	72%	1,018 of 1,497	68%	804 of 1,336	60%	569 of 1,024	56%	607 of 803	76%
Family Neglect	655 of 1,307	50%	524 of 1,326	40%	502 of 1,226	41%	362 of 969	37%	349 of 674	52%
Family Violence	68 of 1,096	6%	72 of 1,252	6%	55 of 1,171	5%	31 of 915	3%	22 of 595	4%
Problems at School	21 of 45	47%	19 of 36	53%	14 of 37	38%	9 of 31	29%	17 of 46	37%
Problems at Work	438 of 960	46%	392 of 1,045	38%	351 of 939	37%	169 of 740	23%	216 of 451	48%
Difficulty Paying Household Bills	1,063 of 1,576	67%	945 of 1,499	63%	748 of 1,326	56%	589 of 1,053	56%	509 of 762	67%
Gambled Away Savings, Equity, Retirement	1,233 of 1,405	88%	1,187 of 1,415	84%	1,049 of 1,297	81%	777 of 1,000	78%	435 of 666	65%
Sold or Pawned Assets	531 of 1,131	47%	524 of 1,198	44%	501 of 1,167	43%	335 of 870	39%	313 of 620	50%
Homeless/Staying with Friend/Family	395 of 1,464	27%	312 of 1,344	23%	328 of 1,229	27%	221 of 920	24%	132 of 503	26%

- Individuals suffering from neurological disorders may be susceptible to compulsive gambling behaviors resulting from certain medications, including Mirapex, Requip, and Abilify. These drugs have been linked to causing/escalating compulsive behaviors. Disorders such as Parkinson’s Disease, Restless Leg Syndrome, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and Schizophrenia are treated using dopamine agonists which include these types of medications. FCCG HelpLine Specialists inquire about such illnesses and/or medications and encourage callers responding affirmatively to inform their prescribing doctor of their gambling problem. Overall, 24% of individuals reported that the problem gambler had some form of neurological disorder (an increase from 19% last year).

Gamblers’ MENTAL HEALTH & FAMILIAL IMPACTS DUE TO GAMBLING – BY GENDER

- When examining mental health, emotional, and domestic problems across genders, HelpLine contacts this year reported considerable mental health and emotional difficulties due to gambling experienced by female gamblers when compared to male gamblers, such as anxiety and depression (**Table 52**). HelpLine contacts reported more domestic and school or work-related difficulties experienced by male gamblers when compared to female gamblers, with females reporting higher levels of family conflict, family neglect, and family violence. Additionally, a larger percentage of male gamblers were reported as homeless or to be staying with friends and/or family members due to their gambling (**Table 52**).

Mental Health, Emotional & Domestic Difficulties due to Gambling - by Gender	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
Anxiety	72%	65%	70%	62%	69%	59%
Depression	76%	61%	70%	64%	71%	60%
Neurological Disorders	22%	24%	18%	20%	19%	20%
Suicidal Ideations/Attempts	22%	23%	24%	22%	24%	24%
Family Conflict	75%	70%	76%	63%	56%	62%
Family Neglect	53%	48%	44%	36%	37%	43%
Family Violence	6%	6%	7%	4%	4%	5%
Problems at Work or School	44%	45%	36%	39%	30%	40%
Difficulty Paying Household Bills	72%	64%	70%	58%	60%	55%
Gambled Away Savings, Equity, Retirement	90%	86%	88%	81%	83%	80%
Sold or Pawned Assets	47%	47%	49%	41%	41%	44%
Homeless/Staying with Friend/Family	22%	39%	21%	25%	6%	21%

Gamblers’ MENTAL HEALTH & FAMILIAL IMPACTS DUE TO GAMBLING – Gambler ONLY Contacts

- However, when comparing these same gambling-related domestic problems of family conflict, family neglect, and family violence as reported during HelpLine contacts made by the gambler, with contacts received from loved ones (e.g., spouses, loved ones, friends, etc.), self-reports of relationship problems experienced due to gambling as told by the gambler were (not surprisingly) significantly lower (**Table 53**). While the data is not from a matched sample (e.g., the spouse and the gambler) but rather representative of HelpLine contact made by many different family members, the discrepancies are noteworthy and clinically significant. Comparing results in **Table 52 & Table 53** further illustrate that problem gamblers are often unaware of, or in denial about, the harms caused to loved ones by their excessive gambling behaviors.

Mental Health, Emotional & Domestic Difficulties due to Gambling - GAMBLER ONLY CONTACTS	2023-2024			2022-2023			2021-2022					
	GAMBLER ONLY Respondents	% of Total	ALL Respondents	% of Total	GAMBLER ONLY Respondents	% of Total	ALL Respondents	% of Total	GAMBLER ONLY Respondents	% of Total	ALL Respondents	% of Total
Family Conflict	744 of 1,151	65%	1,128 of 1,558	72%	697 of 1,149	61%	1,018 of 1,497	68%	504 of 1,001	50%	804 of 1,336	60%
Family Neglect	441 of 975	45%	655 of 1,307	50%	346 of 1,026	34%	524 of 1,326	40%	326 of 931	35%	502 of 1,226	41%
Family Violence	36 of 825	4%	68 of 1,096	6%	38 of 979	4%	72 of 1,252	6%	28 of 897	3%	55 of 1,171	5%

Loved Ones' MENTAL HEALTH & FAMILIAL IMPACTS DUE TO GAMBLING – Loved One ONLY Contacts

- There is considerable research suggesting individuals closest to the problem gambler (spouses/partners, immediate family members) have been shown to be equally impacted by the gambler's addiction, which also accounts for the large percentage of contacts received from loved ones seeking help and support.
- Mental health problems were frequently experienced by loved ones this year, with seventy-one percent (71%) reporting feelings of anxiety and more than half (56%) acknowledging periods of depression due to the presence of a gambling problem in their lives (**Table 53**).
- When asked, the overwhelming majority (94%) of loved ones said there was family conflict present (compared to only 65% of gamblers), 64% advised they felt neglected (compared to only 45% of gamblers who acknowledged neglect), and 12% reported some level of family violence in the home due to gambling (compared to just 4% of gamblers) (**Tables 53 & 54**). The stark differences in perceived family impacts between gambler and loved one HelpLine contacts spotlight the cognitive distortions prevalent with gambling disorder.
- There is little doubt that loved ones require their own individual support and assistance when a gambling problem exists, and Specialists' emphasis on providing loved ones supports independent of the gambler's willingness or desire to stop gambling or get help themselves, is warranted and necessary.

Table 54

Loved Ones Mental Health, Emotional, & Domestic Problems - LOVED ONES Contacts Only

Type of Difficulty Experienced by Loved One's	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	Respondents	% of Total								
Loved One's Anxiety	207 of 291	71%	204 of 283	72%	176 of 264	67%	116 of 197	59%	133 of 157	85%
Loved One's Depression	151 of 272	56%	159 of 283	56%	127 of 259	49%	63 of 183	34%	76 of 123	62%
Family Conflict - Loved One's	384 of 407	94%	321 of 348	92%	300 of 335	90%	164 of 224	73%	209 of 217	96%
Family Neglect - Loved One's	214 of 332	64%	178 of 300	59%	176 of 295	60%	61 of 187	33%	38 of 90	42%
Family Violence - Loved One's	32 of 271	12%	34 of 273	12%	27 of 274	10%	11 of 175	6%	6 of 80	8%

GAMBLERS' OTHER ADDICTIONS & FAMILY HISTORY INFORMATION: **Gamblers with Other Addictions and Family History of Gambling Problems**

Gamblers' SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS, OTHER ADDICTIONS & FAMILY HISTORY

- Due to the high rate of co-occurring disorders among problem gamblers, HelpLine Specialists attempt to ascertain whether there has been past or current substance abuse or other addictive behaviors of the problem gambler. Overall, 652 gamblers were reported by HelpLine contacts to be suffering from other addictions (**Table 55**). Among those reporting other addictions, the most common comorbid conditions recorded were substance abuse-related and included Alcohol (43%), Nicotine (42%), and Drugs (40%), with small portions reporting problems with Overeating (5%), Shopping/Spending (4%), Sex Addiction (3%), and Others (2%). Alarmingly, only 35% of problem gamblers this year were reported to have sought help for their other addiction(s) (non-gambling-related) (**Table 55**).
- Of significance this year was that data collected on family history further revealed that 33% of the gamblers were reported to have a family history of gambling problems. These findings support the positive correlation between family history and addiction, along with the ongoing need for widespread education and awareness about disordered gambling (**Table 55**).

Table 55		
Substance Abuse Problems or Other Addictions - Has the Gambler Had (or do they Curently Have) Other Addictions & is there a Family History?		
2023-2024		
Substance Abuse Problems or Other Addictions of the Gambler & is there a Family History of Addiction	Respondents Answering "Yes"	% of Total
Has the Gambler Had a Substance Abuse Problem or Other Addictions?	652	21%
Has the Gambler Sought Help for Other Addictions?	201 of 574	35%
Is there a Family History of Gambling Addiction?	393 of 1,202	33%

*Other addiction categories include nicotine, overeating, sex addiction, compulsive shopping/spending, cell phone addiction, television addiction, and pornography addiction.

GAMBLER’S RELAPSE HISTORY AND/OR SOUGHT HELP FOR GAMBLING PREVIOUSLY: Gambler’s History of Gambling Problems

Gambler’s RELAPSE AND/OR SOUGHT HELP FOR A GAMBLING PROBLEM BEFORE – All Contacts

- The rate of relapse with a gambling addiction is high, particularly within the first 12 months of recovery, so it is not uncommon for a problem gambler to attempt recovery multiple times before becoming successful in stopping their gambling, or at the very least, reducing their gambling to a moderate level. Whether for themselves or a loved one, many of the individuals contacting the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine had previously sought help for problem gambling. Overall, 29% of contacts revealed previously seeking help for a gambling problem prior to their contact with the HelpLine this year. Problem gamblers were more likely to report previously seeking help (81%) than loved ones (19%) (**Table 56**).

Relapse & Sought Help for a Gambling Problem Previously	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Respondents Answering "Yes"	% of Total	Respondents Answering "Yes"	% of Total	Respondents Answering "Yes"	% of Total
Has the Gambler Sought Help for Gambling Addiction Before?	480 of 1,671	29%	443 of 1,564	28%	439 of 1,389	32%
Of Those Answering "Yes" to Previously Seeking Help for a Gambling Problem - How Many Were Gambler Contacts?	388 of 480	81%	372 of 1,230	30%	351 of 439	80%
Of Those Answering "Yes" to Previously Seeking Help for a Gambling Problem - How Many Were Loved One Contacts?	92 of 480	19%	71 of 334	21%	88 of 439	20%

- Of those reporting that they had sought help for a gambling problem previously, 48% reported they had attended self-help support groups, 28% used outpatient counseling supports from gambling addiction certified mental health treatment professionals, and 44% acknowledged utilization of a self-exclusion program (at a land-based gambling facility, online through web blocking or ad blocking software, or through access to cash restrictions) (**Table 57**).

Type of Help Sought for a Gambling Problem Previously	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
	N=479	% of Total	N=437	% of Total	N=436	% of Total
Inpatient/Residential Treatment - Gambling-Specific	22	5%	17	4%	15	3%
Outpatient Counseling - Gambling Specific	133	28%	135	31%	160	37%
Self-Help Support Groups	230	48%	227	52%	235	54%
Self-Exclusion Programs	213	44%	167	38%	162	37%
FCCG's Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)	2	<1%	1	<1%	2	<1%
FCCG's Peer Connect Program	32	7%	24	5%	33	8%
FCCG HelpLine Literature Packets	47	10%	26	6%	52	12%
**Other	10	2%	18	4%	10	2%

*Multiple Responses Permitted

**Other help for a gambling addiction sought category includes Out-of-State Programs; Self-Help Podcasts; Church/Pastor; and a Hypnotist.

Gambler’s RELAPSE AND/OR SOUGHT HELP FOR A GAMBLING PROBLEM BEFORE – Gambler Only Contacts – BY GENDER

- Gender differences revealed that females were more likely to seek help from self-help support groups (54% vs. 49%) and accessed Peer Connect Programs more frequently (12% vs. 6%). Males were more likely to enroll in self-exclusion programs (48% vs. 44%). This year, a greater percentage of females (31% vs. 24%) reported seeking outpatient counseling services (**Table 58**).

Table 58												
GAMBLER ONLY CONTACTS - If "Yes" to Sought Help for Gambling Previously - Type of Help Previously Sought for Gambling Addiction - By Gender												
Sought Help for Gambling Before by Gender - GAMBLER ONLY	2023-2024				2022-2023				2021-2022			
	Females N=129	% of Total	Males N=262	% of Total	Females N=133	% of Total	Males N=231	% of Total	Females N=131	% of Total	Males N=305	% of Total
Inpatient/Residential Treatment - Gambling-Specific	1	1%	14	6%	4	3%	4	2%	4	3%	11	4%
Outpatient Counseling - Gambling Specific	40	31%	60	24%	40	30%	65	28%	52	40%	108	35%
Self-Help Support Groups	70	54%	123	49%	68	51%	126	55%	76	58%	159	52%
Self-Exclusion Programs	57	44%	121	48%	57	43%	87	38%	45	34%	117	38%
FCCG's Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%	2	1%
FCCG's Peer Connect Program	15	12%	15	6%	7	5%	17	7%	8	6%	25	8%
FCCG HelpLine Literature Packets	22	17%	22	9%	8	6%	17	7%	19	15%	33	11%
Other - (FCCG Blog Site; Church; Financial Services)	3	2%	3	1%	7	5%	10	4%	3	2%	7	2%

CONTACTS’ “HOW HEARD” INFORMATION: How Contacts Became Aware of the FCCG’s HelpLine

HOW CONTACTS HEARD ABOUT THE HELPLINE

- The top five most frequently cited methods of hearing about the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine number this year included (#1) through online Internet searches (58%); (#2) within land-based gambling venues (13%) (a slight decrease from 16% during the past year); (#3) from a family member or friend (9%); (#4) via Radio and Television Advertising (3%), and (#5) on the back of a Lottery ticket or at a Lottery Point of Sale (3%). A notable difference from past years is the increasing number of help seekers who heard about the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine from an Online Gambling Website/App, nearly tripling last year’s number. This trend should be monitored as Florida’s online sports betting market matures (**Table 59**).
- Collecting information on how individuals become aware of the HelpLine is important in assessing trends and shifts in consumer behaviors, while also directly informing FCCG’s future marketing strategies. Multiple outreach approaches by the FCCG have led to an increased number of contacts reaching out to the HelpLine, year after year. While contacts may most easily recall searching the Internet to confirm the HelpLine number before making contact, they may have first been exposed to 888-ADMIT-IT platform through a billboard advertisement, radio PSA, social media post, or through a combination of any of the methods illustrated below (**Table 59**).

How was the HelpLine Number Found?	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020		2018-2019	
	N=1,345	Percent = 100%	N=1,308	Percent = 100%	N=1,257	Percent = 100%	N=991	Percent = 100%	N=850	Percent = 100%	N=1,056	Percent = 100%
Billboard	26	2%	26	2%	32	3%	39	4%	29	3%	73	7%
Conference/Training/Community Event	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%	2	<1%	3	<1%
Convenience Store Sign/Ad	2	<1%	2	<1%	2	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Family Member/Friend	121	9%	138	11%	97	8%	69	7%	72	8%	121	11%
FCCG E-Blast	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
FCCG Mobile App	7	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
GA/GamAnon	22	2%	14	1%	25	2%	29	3%	35	4%	43	4%
Gambling Facility	180	13%	205	16%	248	20%	224	23%	194	23%	247	23%
Internet Ad	7	1%	8	1%	10	1%	13	1%	12	1%	20	2%
Internet Search	784	58%	769	59%	648	52%	467	47%	348	41%	416	39%
Law Enforcement/Legal Professional	11	1%	4	<1%	9	1%	3	<1%	0	0%	0	0%
Lottery Point of Sale	9	1%	2	<1%	3	<1%	12	1%	57	7%	25	2%
Lottery Ticket	34	3%	47	4%	55	4%	54	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Medical Professional	1	<1%	6	<1%	6	<1%	1	<1%	6	1%	12	1%
Mental Health Treatment Provider/Counselor/EAP Provider	16	1%	20	2%	20	2%	15	2%	32	4%	30	3%
NCPG Affiliate	15	1%	8	1%	10	1%	3	<1%	4	<1%	14	1%
Online Gambling Website/App	26	2%	9	1%	6	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Hotline (211 or Crisis Line, etc.)	14	1%	9	1%	8	1%	10	1%	23	3%	8	1%
Other Non-Traditional Ad	4	<1%	1	<1%	5	<1%	0	0%	1	<1%	1	<1%
Radio/Television	47	3%	26	2%	54	4%	33	3%	27	3%	29	3%
Social Media	7	1%	4	<1%	3	<1%	1	<1%	4	<1%	1	<1%
Taxi/Bus	5	<1%	3	<1%	6	<1%	2	<1%	3	<1%	13	1%
Telephone Kiosk	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	7	1%	7	1%	8	1%	15	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Totals	1,345	100%	1,308	100%	1,257	100%	991	100%	850	100%	1,056	100%

TOP HOW HEARD METHODS & IDENTIFIED TRENDS- %s						
2018/2019 - 2019/2020 - 2020/2021 - 2021/2022 - 2022-2023 - 2023-2024 FY COMPARISON						
TOP HOW HEARD METHODS & IDENTIFIED TRENDS	POST-LEGALIZATION	PRE-LEGALIZATION	POST-COVID	COVID	PRE-COVID	PRE-COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020	FISCAL YEAR: 2018-2019
Internet Search	59%	60%	53%	48%	42%	41%
Gambling Facility	13%	16%	20%	23%	23%	23%
Family Member/Friend	9%	11%	8%	7%	8%	11%
Lottery Point of Sale/Lottery Ticket	4%	4%	4%	6%	7%	2%
Radio/Television	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Billboard	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	7%
GA/GamAnon	2%	1%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Mental Health Treatment Provider/Counselor/EAP Provider	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%
Other Hotline (211 or Crisis Line, etc.)	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%

Top "HOW HEARD" METHOD & IDENTIFIED TRENDS						
2018/2019 - 2019/2020 - 2020/2021 - 2021/2022 - 2022/2023 - 2023/2024: FY COMPARISON						
TOP HOW HEARD METHODS & IDENTIFIED TRENDS	POST-LEGALIZATION	PRE-LEGALIZATION	POST-COVID	COVID	PRE-COVID	PRE-COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020	FISCAL YEAR: 2018-2019
Internet Search	784	769	648	467	348	416
Gambling Facility	180	205	248	224	194	247
Family Member/Friend	121	138	97	69	72	121
Lottery Point of Sale/Lottery Ticket	43	49	58	66	57	25
Radio/Television	47	26	54	33	27	29
Billboard	26	26	32	39	29	73
GA/GamAnon	22	14	25	29	35	43
Mental Health Treatment Provider/Counselor/EAP Provider	16	20	20	15	32	30
Other Hotline (211 or Crisis Line, etc.)	14	9	8	10	23	8

Top "HOW HEARD" METHOD & IDENTIFIED TRENDS						
2018/2019 - 2019/2020 - 2020/2021 - 2021/2022 - 2022/2023 - 2023/2024: FY COMPARISON						
PERCENTAGE CHANGE: YTD COMPARISON Increase or (Decrease)	Average Increase (Decrease) Over the Past 5 Fiscal Years	2023/2024 since 2022/2023	2022/2023 since 2021/2022	2021/2022 since 2020/2021	2020/2021 since 2019/2020	2019/2020 since 2018/2019
Internet Search	15%	2%	19%	39%	34%	-16%
Gambling Facility	-5%	-12%	-17%	11%	15%	-21%
Family Member/Friend	5%	-12%	42%	41%	-4%	-40%
Lottery Point of Sale/Lottery Ticket	21%	-12%	-16%	-12%	16%	128%
Radio/Television	22%	81%	-52%	64%	22%	-7%
Billboard	-12%	0%	-19%	-18%	34%	-60%
GA/GamAnon	-7%	57%	-44%	-14%	-17%	-19%
Mental Health Treatment Provider/Counselor/EAP Provider	-7%	-20%	0%	33%	-53%	7%
Other Hotline (211 or Crisis Line, etc.)	36%	56%	13%	-20%	-57%	188%

CONTACTS’ “RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED” INFORMATION: What Problem Gambling Resources Were Provided During FCCG HelpLine Contacts?

Contacts’ “RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED” by the FCCG HelpLine

- Upon contacting the HelpLine, individuals are given the opportunity to share their concerns and ask pertinent questions. The HelpLine’s priority is to engage and assure the contact that the FCCG and HelpLine Specialist have their best interests at heart and are available to assist by offering a wide array of services. FCCG HelpLine Specialists have adopted an open communication approach to first build rapport and bond with the contact, furnishing individuals with the freedom to share information in a confidential manner as part of an ongoing dialogue – at a pace in which they are comfortable. Ultimately, this approach results in gaining a person’s trust and in the end best serves their needs, while also assessing if the individual is in crisis at the time contact is made. This professional yet relaxed structured approach enables the HelpLine Specialist to acquire pertinent information necessary to tailor referrals provided on an individual basis. In responding to crisis situations, HelpLine Specialists make the necessary arrangements for emergency back-up support, pending identified needs.
- The FCCG updates and maintains a vast database of available resources specifically developed and chosen to assist those in need of help with a gambling problem (both for gamblers and their loved ones), along with addressing the collateral impacts of this addiction. From over 35 years of experience providing help and hope to individuals suffering from a gambling addiction, and in listening to the concerns and issues of its HelpLine contacts, the FCCG continues to grow its resource database to serve the diverse situations brought about by problem gambling.
- While a primary resource recommended to most HelpLine contacts includes individual therapy offered by the FCCG’s network of licensed, certified mental health treatment providers for gamblers and their families throughout Florida, it is important to recognize that “one size does not fit all” when it comes to recovery, and this may not be a help seeker’s preferred choice of intervention. Additionally, there is a cost associated with professional counseling services that many problem gamblers and loved ones seeking HelpLine supports cannot afford. Unfortunately, no state funding is, or ever has been available, for treatment of a gambling disorder.
- Other recommended supports provided through the FCCG HelpLine include the Agency’s Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG), Peer Connect, Self-Exclusion Program information, Social Services, Web Blocking & Ad Blocking Tools & Software, Self-Help Support Group referrals (e.g., Gamblers Anonymous, Gam-Anon, Celebrate Recovery, etc.), Legal and Financial Resources, Literature and the FCCG’s *A Chance for Change* Self-Help Recovery Workbooks, Online Supports, Mobile Apps, and Websites, or other Mental Health Services, all of which are considered forms of therapeutic intervention. Those with gambling problems frequently opt for multiple resources and support, sometimes consecutively and at other times simultaneously. The FCCG believes that a “one-size-fits-all” model has significant limitations. As such, empirically validated approaches to resource provision are utilized and necessary to help all individuals negatively impacted by gambling.

- As illustrated below in **Table 60**, this year, the top three resources provided to 888-ADMIT-IT help seekers varied slightly from traditional trends we have seen over recent years. During the 2023/2024 year, the #1 top most frequently provided resource to HelpLine contacts was FCCG HelpLine Literature Packets (75%), which include the FCCG’s *A Chance for Change* Recovery Workbooks series (available for Gamblers, Loved Ones, and Senior Gamblers), as well as the FCCG’s *Financial Debt and Budget Toolkit*, provided in multiple languages and a variety of formats, pending the contact’s preference. This is the first time over the past five (5) years that referrals to the Self-Help Support Group Gamblers Anonymous was not the most frequently provided resource. It ranked second during the current 2023-2024 fiscal year, followed closely by "Financial Resources" at number three (3). Financial Resources only first entered the "top three recommendations provided" list during the previous 2022-2023 fiscal, as "Counseling Services" was a more frequently provided resource during the three (3) years prior to that. There has been a 317% increase in "Financial Resources" provided to 888-ADMIT-IT Help Seekers since the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. Counseling Services, while still amongst the top five (5) resources offered to help seekers, showed a slight decrease this year compared to last and could be reflective of help seekers opting for alternative supports outside of traditional mental health counseling services. Other notable differences this year in the top recommendations provided to help seekers include a continued increase (since COVID-19 pandemic times) of online/virtual resources requested by help seekers. Examples include the following referral categories: referrals to "Online Supports, Podcasts, Videos, and Mobile Apps" reflected a 70% increase this year compared to last year; referrals to "Self-Exclusion Programs - Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software" reflected a 260% increase this year compared to the 2019-2020 "Pre-COVID" fiscal; and finally, referrals to "Self-Exclusion Programs for Online Gambling Operators" increased 683% since the 2021-2022 fiscal year, which was the first year this resource was provided to HelpLine contacts.

What Recommendations Were Provided During the HelpLine Contact?	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
	N=1,656	*Percent = 100%	N=1,550	*Percent = 100%	N=1,353	*Percent = 100%	N=1,156	*Percent = 100%	N=1,079	*Percent = 100%
Consumer Protection Services	6	<1%	2	<1%	3	<1%	4	<1%	0	0%
Counseling Services	883	53%	893	58%	817	60%	1,036	90%	757	70%
Employment Assistance Resources	25	2%	22	1%	6	<1%	10	1%	0	0%
FCCG Website/Mobile App & Social Media Sites	247	15%	419	27%	395	29%	80	7%	108	10%
FCCGs Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)**	381	23%	339	22%	458	34%	0	0%	0	0%
Financial Resources	1,134	68%	919	59%	583	43%	705	61%	272	25%
Hotlines/Crisis Lines & Social Services/Emergency Assistance	204	12%	210	14%	159	12%	106	9%	141	13%
Impaired Professionals Resources	9	1%	0	0%	2	<1%	4	<1%	0	0%
Legal Resources	77	5%	35	2%	26	2%	57	5%	19	2%
Literature/Materials Requests	1,234	75%	986	64%	986	73%	968	84%	692	64%
Mental Health & Addiction Services	13	1%	6	<1%	2	<1%	20	2%	24	2%
NCPG Affiliates	43	3%	36	2%	23	2%	102	9%	16	1%
Online Self-Help Treatment Supports	0	0%	0	0%	8	1%	301	26%	8	1%
Online Supports, Podcasts, Videos, & Mobile Apps	619	37%	364	23%	19	1%	133	12%	0	0%
Peer Connect	301	18%	306	20%	367	27%	430	37%	568	53%
Population Specific – College Resources	22	1%	13	1%	22	2%	19	2%	0	0%
Population Specific – Military/Veteran's Resources	31	2%	34	2%	47	3%	34	3%	8	1%
Population Specific – Professionals Resources	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Population Specific – Senior Resources	76	5%	70	5%	40	3%	3	<1%	0	0%
Population Specific – Youth Resources	4	<1%	1	<1%	4	<1%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Access to Cash	213	13%	153	10%	195	14%	105	9%	10	1%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Ad Blocking	240	14%	92	6%	24	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software	392	24%	265	17%	145	11%	152	13%	109	10%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Land-Based Gambling Operators	529	32%	516	33%	494	37%	481	42%	492	46%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Online Gambling Operators	180	11%	28	2%	23	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Stock Market/Cryptocurrency Trading	23	1%	17	1%	17	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Help Support Groups – Celebrate Recovery	76	5%	77	5%	62	5%	83	7%	126	12%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gam-Anon	262	16%	222	14%	221	16%	209	18%	207	19%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gamblers Anonymous (GA)	1,140	69%	1,137	73%	989	73%	1,089	94%	918	85%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gamblers in Recovery	847	51%	271	17%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gaming Addicts Anonymous (GAA)	5	<1%	0	0%	3	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Self-Help Support Groups – Internet & Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITAA) & IT-ANON	3	<1%	3	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Help Support Groups – Online Gamers Anonymous (OLGA) & OLG-ANON	4	<1%	8	1%	4	<1%	0	0%	0	0%
Self-Help Support Groups – Other Alternative Support Groups	35	2%	20	1%	14	1%	86	7%	6	1%
Self-Help Support Groups – Recovery Road	15	1%	2	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

* Multiple recommendations are often provided.

TOP RESOURCES OFFERED/RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED & IDENTIFIED TRENDS- %'s					
2019/2020 - 2020/2021 - 2021/2022 - 2022/2023 - 2023/2024 - FY COMPARISON					
TOP RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED during HelpLine Contact	POST-SPORTS BETTING LEGALIZATION	PRE-SPORTS BETTING LEGALIZATION	POST-COVID	COVID	PRE-COVID
	FISCAL YEAR: 2023-2024	FISCAL YEAR: 2022-2023	FISCAL YEAR: 2021-2022	FISCAL YEAR: 2020-2021	FISCAL YEAR: 2019-2020
	Literature/Materials Requests	75%	64%	73%	84%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gamblers Anonymous	69%	73%	73%	94%	85%
Financial Resources	68%	59%	43%	61%	25%
Counseling Services	53%	58%	60%	90%	70%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gamblers in Recovery	51%	17%	0%	0%	0%
Online Supports, Podcasts, Videos, & Mobile Apps	37%	23%	1%	12%	0%
Self-Exclusion - Land-Based Gambling Facilities	32%	33%	37%	42%	46%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software	24%	17%	11%	13%	10%
Online Self-Help Treatment Supports & FCCGs Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)	23%	22%	34%	25%	1%
Peer Connect Program	18%	20%	27%	37%	53%
Self-Help Support Groups – Gam-Anon	16%	14%	16%	18%	19%
FCCG Website/Mobile App & Social Media Sites	15%	27%	29%	7%	10%
Self-Exclusion Programs – Ad Blocking	14%	6%	2%	0%	0%
Self-Exclusion - Access to Cash	13%	10%	14%	9%	1%
Hotlines/Crisis Lines & Social Services/Emergency Assistance	12%	13%	12%	9%	13%
Self-Exclusion - Online Gambling Operators	11%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Self-Help Support Groups - Celebrate Recovery	5%	5%	5%	7%	12%
Population Specific – Senior Resources	5%	5%	3%	0%	0%
Population Specific - Military/Veteran's Resources	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%
Population Specific - College Resources	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%

- The 2023/2024 independent HelpLine Evaluation Survey confirms the ongoing need for differential recommendations and referrals to be provided during HelpLine contacts, consistent with FCCG’s approach. Those individuals who adhered to the recommendations provided were shown to have more positive gains, fewer gambling-related problems, and were more likely to stop their gambling altogether or at the very least significantly curtail their gambling behavior. Mental health gains were also shown to occur as a result of speaking with the FCCG HelpLine Specialist and receiving the recommendations and resources.

The following pages highlight the various services and resources provided by the Florida HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT) during the past fiscal year:

➤ Counseling Services (Professional Treatment)

An important role of the FCCG is the continued training of treatment providers, mental health workers, clinical social workers, and marriage and family therapists throughout the state. This has been accomplished through multiple webinars, online training modules, and outreach activities conducted to promote the FCCG’s programs and services to diverse audiences throughout the State of Florida.

As background, to better aid Floridians in need of assistance for a gambling problem, the FCCG began collaborating with the Florida Certification Board in 2007 to establish a credential package for compulsive/disordered gambling counselors in Florida. The Advisory Committee convened for the first time that year, and subsequently completed a Role Delineation Study, as well as a validation survey, as means of determining the core competencies and requirements for field professionals. The Florida Certification Board’s process for state credentials for gambling addiction certification was completed in 2008. Over a decade and half later, the Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor (CGAC) credential remains an available certification for mental health providers seeking to provide problem gambling counseling services in Florida. However, not many mental health providers have sought such certification, because unlike alcohol and substance abuse counseling services, there is no state funding available for disordered gambling treatment, and many insurance companies fail to provide coverage for gambling disorders, thereby providing little incentive for mental health workers to seek formal certification.

It is also important to note that HelpLine contacts, as well as survey respondents to the FCCG's HelpLine Evaluation Outcome Study, have consistently reported the need for increased treatment services and low-cost options for treatment for problem gamblers and those adversely impacted.

The FCCG currently provides the required 60-hour certification training for state licensed, mental health professionals, and furnishes 14 additional continuing education online modules for mental health and addiction professionals (credentialed by the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling and The Florida Certification Board, respectively), psychologists (credentialed by the Florida Board of Psychology). In addition, the FCCG assists treatment professionals in securing professional oversight to meet the supervisory requirements with a Board-Approved Clinical Consultant (BACC) for obtaining the Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor (CGAC) credential from The Florida Certification Board.

The FCCG only refers help seekers (problem gamblers and other affected individuals) to licensed mental health treatment providers who are Certified in Gambling Addiction. Acceptable certifications include either Florida's Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor (CGAC) credential or the International Problem Gambling and Gaming Certification Organization's (IPGGC's) International Certified Gambling Counselor (ICGC) credential.

Problem gambling specific programs and services offered through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine include counseling service referrals provided through a variety of professional treatment options. Modalities of available treatment services provided by FCCG referrals include problem-gambling-specific outpatient mental health counseling services (furnished by a specific network of licensed, certified gambling addiction treatment professionals located throughout the State of Florida), as well as referrals to residential/inpatient treatment program facilities meeting FCCG standards of care in delivering gambling-specific services to the problem gambling population.

Treatment from trained professionals can assist in finding ways to cope with stress and begin recovery from a gambling addiction. Receiving professional treatment supports through outpatient counseling or via inpatient/residential services, differs from self-help support groups (like Gamblers Anonymous or Gam-Anon) by providing the opportunity to share personal information in an individualized setting through one-on-one dialogue with licensed, gambling-addiction-certified treatment providers. Mental health counseling services can be provided in a variety of ways, including individual, couples, or group counseling sessions. Counseling Services referrals offered through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine provide supports from treatment providers who have received specialized training to understand and treat the unique circumstances and experiences of problem gamblers and others who are adversely affected.

○ **Outpatient Counseling Service Referrals**

There are times when professional guidance and support can be particularly helpful to aid problem gamblers in delineating options or strategies for learning how to cope with situations and difficulties that arise in their life. **Outpatient Counseling Services Referrals** offer problem-gambling-specific outpatient mental health counseling services which are provided by a specific network of licensed, certified gambling addiction treatment providers located throughout the State of Florida. Counselors provide services on an individual basis, or in couple or group counseling sessions. In addition to providing an environment to help gamblers and their families examine essential issues, counseling services can furnish comprehensive treatment supports for varying difficulties, based upon individual needs.

The FCCG utilizes a network of Gambling Addiction Certified Provider Referrals spread across multiple Florida counties. These providers all maintain international (ICGC-II) or state (CGAC) certification in the treatment of gambling disorders, in addition to being licensed clinicians through the Florida Boards of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling.

○ **In-patient/Residential Treatment Service Referrals**

For a small percentage of problem gamblers in need of more intensive supports, the FCCG provides in-patient residential treatment program referrals through the HelpLine. As is consistent with FCCG outpatient treatment referrals, the FCCG is committed to only providing referrals for residential/inpatient treatment to facilities that meet the standard of delivering gambling-specific services to the problem gambling population. Currently, the only facilities meeting this standard of care are all located outside Florida. While in-patient/residential treatment programs are a long-term goal in Florida, to date the challenge of having a certified provider in gambling addiction on staff alongside a gambling-addiction-only treatment track continues to be a barrier. As such, at this time, all residential/inpatient treatment facility HelpLine referrals are for programs located outside Florida.

- **During the 2032-2024 fiscal year, 883 HelpLine contacts (53%)** were provided referral resource information for **Counseling/Professional Treatment Services**.

➤ **FCCG's Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)**

FCCG's OPPG - For those seeking on-demand options, or who lack insurance or the ability to pay for in-person counseling services, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine provides problem gamblers with immediate access to interactive problem gambling supports through the FCCG's OPPG. The FCCG's OPPG includes elements of both traditional telehealth treatment supports as well as self-guided change lessons and activities. The FCCG's OPPG offers many advantages as a resource for Floridians suffering from gambling-related problems. This program can reach problem gamblers in underserved areas, address scheduling challenges that can occur with traditional face-to-face services, and reduce stigmatization common among problem gamblers seeking help.

Online interventions may offer several advantages over traditional approaches to treatment, including:

1. Accommodating varying schedules of help-seeking individuals
2. Eliminating the need to travel to an office
3. Reducing "no shows" that can be frustrating for health care providers
4. Accessibly for problem gamblers in remote areas without services
5. Reducing the burden of having to find babysitters for children to attend therapy
6. Reducing costs of services, allowing a greater number of individuals to receive help
7. Enrollees can repeat modules/sessions (e.g. booster sessions) as often as needed
8. Ease of tracking and monitoring progress, including identifying characteristics of those at risk for prematurely dropping out or those requiring a higher level of care
9. Enables outcome research that can improve effectiveness of interventions and help us better understand the needs of problem gambling populations
10. Allows for easier multi-modal experiences for learning (e.g. audio/visual, intermittent surveys)
11. Provides greater confidentiality for those reluctant to seek treatment in traditional ways
12. Allows for a greater breadth of content that may not be feasible with traditional programs due to time constraints (e.g. 12 sessions) or limited resources

Another advantage of the FCCG's OPPG is that problem gamblers can repeat content as needed, have opportunities for visual learning, and have access to necessary information (e.g., coping with triggers or urges to gamble) at times when other supports may not be available. The OPPG is an 8-week self-help program that covers many important issues that are relevant for problem gamblers. It includes videos, readings, and exercises that cover topics such as understanding perspectives on problem gambling, including the neurosciences; strategies to address shame, boredom, and stress; as well as other helpful approaches for reducing problem gambling behavior.

The FCCG's OPPG also includes a no-cost assessment with feedback on results provided to participants by a licensed certified mental health treatment professional, as well as a downloadable certificate that is available for program participants upon course completion. This OPPG Certificate can be used for legal professionals, such as court system employees or probation officers, as verification to document program completion and compliance with any court-ordered or court-referred problem gambling treatment supports a legal offender may be required to obtain.

- **During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, 381 gamblers** (23% of help contacts), were provided referrals to the FCCG's **Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG)**.

➤ **FCCG's Peer Connect Program**

The FCCG's Peer Connect program was established in 2008, and today continues to be a successful support service for 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts in choosing their individual path of recovery from a gambling addiction. The Peer Connect Program offers valuable insight into the world of gambling addiction and information on proven recovery strategies, such as professional treatment, self-help programs, financial counseling, and legal aid.

The FCCG's Peer Connect Program continues to provide gamblers and loved ones with the opportunity to speak to someone in gambling addiction recovery, or a loved one of someone in recovery from disordered gambling, in an effort to facilitate an easier transition into recovery and/or treatment. This program's goal is to motivate individuals to take necessary steps towards stopping gambling and rebuilding their lives, personally, professionally, and financially, through peer-to-peer support. It also demonstrates to individuals with gambling problems that there is hope, and that people with a gambling problem can recover and go on to lead a normal and productive life. During Peer Connect appointments, peers share their story of when they first began recovery and can speak from experience on how the recovery process works. This program is not meant to replace counseling, 12-step meetings, faith-based treatment, or other recovery methods, but rather serves as a complement to treatment by helping guide the person into a comfortable path of their choosing. Peer Connect also provides a much-needed support service for those living in remote areas of the state where clinical services and self-help programs are generally limited and/or unavailable.

Peer Connect offers assistance with the FCCG's *A Chance for Change* Recovery Workbooks and the FCCG's *Financial Debt & Budgeting Toolkit* as well. The FCCG's "A Chance for Change" Workbooks program outlines a comprehensive self-help program for gamblers, loved ones, and elder gamblers. This seven-part series of self-help recovery workbooks is designed to help individuals experiencing gambling-related difficulties to eliminate self-defeating negative behaviors, to think clearly, and make better decisions to lead a healthier lifestyle. Workbooks are utilized independently or in conjunction with support groups, professional counseling, or part of a law enforcement restitution program. A workbook is also available for college-aged students. The *Financial Debt & Budgeting Toolkit* is a financial budgeting assistance program that provides financial guidance and accountability for problem gamblers and loved ones through peer supports. The budgeting plan is developed based upon the available income (or amount of money coming in), regular bills that need to be paid (i.e. rent/mortgage, utilities, food, etc.), and the amount of gambling-related debts that may be owed. Through the Peer Connect Program, utilization of the *Budgeting Toolkit* can help problem gamblers and family members develop goals and measures to sustain a budget and help ensure long-term positive financial sustainability.

- **In 2023-2024, the FCCG's Peer Connect Program** was recommended to **301** HelpLine contacts (**18%**).

➤ Self-Help Support Groups

Self-help is considered a critical part of the recovery process for gambling disorders. Self-help groups can assist help seekers (both gamblers and loved ones) and provide the tools and strategies for recovery by providing support, direction, motivation, resources, and a sense that they are not dealing with the gambling problem alone. An essential aspect of many self-help programs is the utilization of a sponsor. Sponsors frequently provide additional information, encouragement, fellowship, and guidance to newcomers on a voluntary basis. They may also furnish assistance and offer suggestions to newcomers on a case-by-case basis.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) provides resource referrals, to both in-person and virtual meetings, for the following Self-Help Support Groups:

- Gamblers Anonymous (GA)**
- Gam-Anon**
- Gamblers in Recovery – (Gamblers)**
- Gamblers in Recovery – (Loved Ones)**
- Recovery Road – (Gamblers)**
- Recovery Road – (Loved Ones)**
- Celebrate Recovery**
- Gaming Addicts Anonymous**
- Online Gamers Anonymous (OLGA & OLG-Anon)**
- Internet & Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITAA & IT-Anon)**
- Other Alternative Support Groups**

○ Gamblers Anonymous/Gam-Anon

Although there are many self-help programs that provide support for people suffering from diverse difficulties or challenges in their lives, there are two primary fellowships within the United States that furnish supports to individuals experiencing gambling or gambling-related problems: **Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon**.

Gamblers Anonymous and **Gam-Anon** meetings are 12-step self-help resources where gamblers and loved ones can speak to others experiencing the same or similar difficulties due to gambling problems. This program has been addressing gambling addiction and helping those affected since the 1950s. Men and women of all backgrounds gather together in a group setting to help each other by sharing their experiences, strength, and hope. This 12-step meeting has tens of thousands of members around the United States, is free to attend, and offers sponsorship and pressure relief as significant components of the program. Many people choose to use this resource as their only recovery program, as they feel more comfortable being around people who have/are living with a gambling addiction than they do in a one-on-one counseling environment. The FCCG encourages self-help resources in conjunction with individual treatment options.

- ✓ **Gamblers Anonymous (GA)** is an anonymous and confidential fellowship of men and women of all ages, from diverse social and economic backgrounds, races and religions, who meet for the purpose of sharing their experience, strength, and hope as it relates to maintaining abstinence from gambling while living a happy and useful life. There are no dues or fees, and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop gambling.

- ✓ **Gam-Anon** is for persons adversely affected by the gambler, such as family members and friends. Members are provided opportunities for learning how to cope with the gambler and accompanying difficulties. It is similar in structure and function to GA. It is not necessary for the gambler to attend Gamblers Anonymous in order for a family member, friend or other loved one to participate in the Gam-Anon program. Members are provided opportunities for learning how to cope with the gambler and accompanying difficulties. It is similar in structure and function to GA.

It is also important to note, unlike many other 12-step programs, often Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon meetings will be held in the same location, at the same time, but in different rooms, so loved ones can accompany the gambler to a meeting. This has shown to be helpful, in that it encourages participation in recovery by persons other than the gambler by attending meetings together.

- **This past year, 1,402 gamblers and loved ones** contacting the FCCG's HelpLine were referred to **Gamblers Anonymous (GA) (69%)** and/or **Gam-Anon (16%) meetings**. Multiple meetings are held in different parts of Florida, predominantly based upon population and individual needs, while many continue to meet virtually.

○ **Gamblers in Recovery**

Gamblers in Recovery (<https://gamblersinrecovery.com>) is an online tool which catalogs over 400 gambling-specific weekly virtual self-help group meetings hosted around the world via ZOOM, including Gamblers Anonymous meetings, Gam-Anon meetings, and Recovery Road meetings. The sole purpose of all meetings listed on this site is to help compulsive gamblers and family and friends to recover. The Gamblers in Recovery website uses a simple interface to assist help seekers in locating meetings to join around the clock, throughout the week. The worldwide nature of the meetings list and resulting overlap of global time zones also helps bridge the gap for help seekers with scheduling conflicts that can make joining local meetings challenging. Best of all, this resource is completely free.

- ✓ **For Gamblers**, the website (<https://gamblersinrecovery.com/?s=>) lists current and future Gamblers Anonymous and Recovery Road meetings and features a search tool to aid in locating individual meetings or specific types of meetings. Meetings which are currently in progress appear at the top of the list with red text indicating the amount of time left, while future meetings are listed below in chronological order. Upcoming meetings which start within the hour are indicated with green text showing the time left before the meeting begins. Each listing contains the locale where the meeting is based, along with the ZOOM Meeting ID and password, group details, and meeting type; day and time (converted to Eastern Daylight Time where applicable); a Meeting Reference code (Mtg Ref) for ease in locating the meeting again using the search tool; and a button which users can click to join the meeting via ZOOM.
- ✓ **For Loved Ones**, the website (<https://gamblersinrecovery.com/familyfriends/>) lists recurring weekly and monthly Gam-Anon and Recovery Road meetings along with the locale where the meeting is based, the ZOOM Meeting ID and password, group details and audience specifics, the meeting's weekly/monthly schedule, and a link to join the meeting.

- This past year, **847 gamblers or loved ones** contacting the FCCG’s HelpLine (**51%**) were referred to **Gamblers in Recovery**. This represents a tripling from the prior year, when just 17% of contacts were referred to Gamblers in Recovery. Gamblers in Recovery helps address scheduling, commuting, and geographical challenges with attending traditional meetings, making it a more accessible and convenient option for many Floridians, especially in areas where in-person meetings aren’t available. Another consideration is the increase in online gamblers contacting the HelpLine this year. Resources which are easily accessible online, like Gamblers in Recovery, also match the lifestyle of these gamblers and are available on the same devices used for online gambling, helping the individual associate the resource with the problem and possibly easing the transition to recovery.

- **Recovery Road**

Recovery Road (<https://recoveryroadonline.com/>) is an online recovery program with no dues or fees that was founded from the growing urgency of problem gamblers wanting to quit gambling and live in recovery. Support is available for gamblers and loved ones through private Facebook Groups and daily online 12-Step meetings offered from morning to midnight and more, facilitating connection to a support network of others going through similar situations.

- This past year, **fifteen (15)** HelpLine contacts (**1%**) were referred to **Recovery Road**.

- **Celebrate Recovery**

Celebrate Recovery is a faith-based support group that provides help for individuals with a wide range of addictions and problems. This group calls them “hang-ups, habits, and hurts”. They incorporate the GA 12-step model and the 8 Recovery Principles of the Beatitudes to instill a feeling of hope in overcoming adversities. During meetings, individuals will share about their situation with other group members, receive guidance from church members, and work through the program together over the course of 8-10 weeks. Much like counseling or GA/Gam-Anon, Celebrate Recovery can be a stand-alone recovery system that the person embraces and works throughout the rest of their life, and it can also be used in conjunction with other available modalities of problem gambling treatment.

- **Seventy-six (76)** HelpLine contacts (**5%**) were provided **Celebrate Recovery** as a resource during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

- **Gaming Addicts Anonymous (GAA)**

Gaming Addicts Anonymous (GAA) – formerly Computer Gaming Addicts Anonymous (CGAA) – is a fellowship and recovery program for compulsive video gamers. **The only requirement for GAA membership is a desire to stop computer/video gaming.**

New attendees don’t have to worry about calling themselves a member or a gaming addict just yet. Anyone struggling with compulsive computer or video gaming is welcome to attend the meetings and take all the time necessary to determine the best next steps for individual recovery.

Most members of GAA have admitted to an obsession and compulsion to game, which grows worse over time, and an inability to limit our gaming, despite the negative consequences. The word in the English language that most closely describes this condition is “addiction,” which most of us use, for lack of a better word. The focus remains on being honest about the situation and choosing to deal with it through recovery efforts such as GAA.

- A total of **five (5)** HelpLine contacts (<1%) were referred to **Gaming Addicts Anonymous (GAA)** as a resource during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

○ Online Gamers Anonymous (OLGA & OLGA-Anon)

Online Gamers Anonymous®, founded in 2002, is a 12-step self-help group. Members share their experience, strengths and hope to help and support each other recover and heal from problems resulting from excessive video game playing (gaming disorder).

Anyone affected by excessive gaming is welcome. The OLGA/OLG-Anon fellowship offers a spiritual solution for recovery. The 12 steps are offered as one of the tools for recovery from gaming addiction and are highly recommended for a successful recovery. As is true with other 12-step programs, members of the OLGA/OLG-Anon fellowships have a free choice of tools to use in their recovery.

- **Four (4)** HelpLine contacts (<1%) were provided **Online Gamers Anonymous (OLGA & OLGA-Anon)** as a resource during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

○ Internet & Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITTA & IT-Anon)

Internet and Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITAA) is a 12-step fellowship of individuals who support each other in recovering from compulsive internet and technology use. Its single purpose is to abstain from compulsive internet and technology use and to help others find freedom from this addiction.

Individuals can join one of many daily meetings over the phone or online, or can attend face-to-face meetings in a local city. Meetings are free to attend, and there are no membership requirements beyond the desire to stop compulsive internet and technology use. Meetings are safe, secure, and anonymous. Most meetings are in English, and there are also meetings available in French, Dutch, Spanish, Russian, German, Hebrew, and Arabic. The following types of Internet & Technology addictions discussed include:

- ✓ **Social Media Addictions**
- ✓ **Smartphone Addictions**
- ✓ **Streaming Addictions**

- This past year, **three (3)** help seekers contacting the FCCG’s HelpLine (<1%) were referred to **Internet & Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITTA & IT-Anon)** as a resource.

○ Other Alternative Support Groups

These groups are for gamblers or loved ones contacting the FCCG's HelpLine that are afflicted with other issues in addition to the gambling addiction, such as Parkinson's disease, Depression, Bi-Polar Disorder, compulsive shopping/spending, overeating, or are stricken with grief. Although they are not traditional 12-step programs, they offer comfort, support, and a chance to share with others who are also affected by the same or similar serious mental/physical health issues. For some, this type of resource can be beneficial when used in conjunction with other problem-gambling-specific resources.

Examples of Other Alternative Support Groups include:

- ✓ **Bettors Anonymous**
 - ✓ **Debtors Anonymous**
 - ✓ **LifeRing Secular Recovery**
 - ✓ **Sex Addicts Anonymous**
 - ✓ **Overeaters Anonymous**
 - ✓ **Alcoholics Anonymous or Al-Anon**
 - ✓ **Narcotics Anonymous or Nar-Anon**
 - ✓ **Eating Disorders Anonymous**
 - ✓ **Parkinson's Disease Support Group**
 - ✓ **Bi-Polar Support Group**
 - ✓ **Compulsive Shopping Support Group**
 - ✓ **Overspending Support Group**
 - ✓ **Grief Support Group**
- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, **thirty-five (35)** HelpLine contacts (**2%**) were provided **Other Alternative Support Group** resources for additional supports.

➤ Self-Exclusion Programs

Self-Exclusion is a protective measure that allows people to voluntarily ban themselves from accessing gambling opportunities or financial means, such as cash, to gamble. The main purpose of **Self-Exclusion** is to help at-risk players, or players with problems, regain control of their gambling behavior by supporting their efforts to abstain from at least one specific form of gambling for a particular amount of time. Overall, the structure of Self-Exclusion Programs has evolved from an 'enforcement model' into an 'individual assistance model,' whereby the emphasis is now on helping those who self-exclude to address their problems and achieve their goals (Responsible Gambling Council, 2008).

Self-Exclusion Programs are offered by **Land-based Gambling Operators**, such as casinos, cardrooms, racetracks, jai-alias, pari-mutuels, and other traditional brick-and-mortar gambling operators, as well as by **Online Gambling Operators**. Additionally, for individuals gambling online, there are other self-exclusion tools available through **Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software Programs**, which allow users to restrict access to various gambling sites, track and control Internet usage, and/or restrict Internet access at specific times. **Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software Programs** include self-exclusion tools and options offered by various web-blocking software providers, such as BetBlocker, Gamban, and Gamblock (to name a few).

Self-Exclusion Programs that allow gamblers to restrict “**Access to Cash**” are also offered by **Financial Service Providers**, such as **Everi Cares** and **Automated Systems America (ASAI)**, which both provide guest access to cash for gambling operators through networks of ATMs, cash access kiosks, booths, credit, and other financial access services. Additionally, **True Link Financial** provides **Access to Cash** restrictions through a customizable and reloadable VISA debit card that can be obtained and customized to work where you need it and blocked where you don’t, helping to provide restricted access to funds and limit gambling related losses. Additionally, **PayPal** now offers all users the option to block online gambling transactions upon request.

In recent years, **Online Trading**, including **Cryptocurrency and Stock Trading**, has grown significantly in popularity (Nefedova et al., 2020). Previous research has identified that excessive trading can be a gambling disorder. Problem gamblers have a greater risk when exposed to different forms of online trading, and problem gamblers often engage in many different forms of trading. Restriction of access to these forms of trading (Cryptocurrency and Stock trading) is provided by **Gamban** through its **Stock Market Gambling Exclusion Programs**.

Finally, with gambling advertising appearing across all platforms (radio, television, online, social media, billboards, etc.) and targeted towards all demographics, it is more difficult than ever to avoid potential triggers these ads can cause. Constant exposure to these advertisements is known to have an adverse effect on those who are at-risk or in recovery. For those negatively impacted by gambling, trying to avoid all possible triggers, depending on the household's Internet, television, social media, and other habits, can be an almost impossible task. However, there are some protective measures available to help limit online exposure to gambling advertisements through the FCCG’s **Ad Blocking Settings and Controls Self-Exclusion Programs**.

Self-Exclusion Programs are provided as a resource through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine as a tool to help people control their gambling behavior and restrict access to money, gambling venues, and gambling platforms, if gambling has become problematic. Used in conjunction with other treatment and support options, **Self-Exclusion Programs** can be a powerful resource that helps those who can no longer control the urge to gamble on their own, and a vital resource for problem gamblers seeking assistance in abstaining from gambling.

○ **Self-Exclusion - Land Based Gambling Facilities & Online Gambling Operators**

● **Self-Exclusion Programs – Land Based Gambling Facility Operators**

Self-Exclusion Programs offered by Land Based Gambling Facilities allow an individual to self-ban from gambling at a physical location or on an online website for a pre-determined and agreed upon period of time. The Self-Exclusion Program can be very beneficial to problem gamblers in preventing relapse, as enticements such as free play, mailers, emails, texts and other forms of communication between the gambling operator and gambler, which often serve as precipitating events for problem gamblers continuing to return to gamble, cease. Length of exclusion periods as well as processes and procedures vary by operator and location, so it is important to first determine what options are available, based upon where and how a person is gambling.

✓ **Land-Based Gambling Operators Self-Exclusion Programs**

In instances when a gambler has lost control of their gambling and can no longer self-regulate their gambling behaviors, self-exclusion provides an opportunity to exclude oneself from returning to a land-based gambling establishment for a minimum period of time, ranging from a mandatory six months, up to a lifetime. Many operators of land-based gambling facilities have developed programs to allow customers to voluntarily self-exclude themselves, as a means of restricting their access to gambling. It should be noted that in seven of the eight Florida Gaming Control Commission (FGCC) slot-licensed “Racino” establishments, excluded persons can reinstate – even those who excluded for life, though requirements vary as to the steps they must take to reinstate, with some being more onerous than others.

Practically, the process begins with those wishing to self-exclude requesting to do so by informing designated venue staff. The individual is usually escorted off the gaming floor to meet with staff who explain the program, provide the agreement to be reviewed and signed, and complete any additional necessary steps.

In order to self-exclude, a gambler is required to complete and deliver the facility’s application in person, as well as provide proper identification at the time of exclusion. This requirement is for a person’s own protection. With few exceptions, only the gambler can place him or herself on the self-exclusion list. If deciding to self-exclude at a future time, it is helpful and suggested to bring a trusted person to the facility when submitting the self-exclusion application.

If a person tries to gamble after being placed on the self-exclusion list, facility personnel can refuse to accept their wagers and ask him or her to leave the gaming area, or have the person arrested for trespassing. Often times, self-excluded persons will actually be able to enter the gambling facility and continue to gamble, despite the exclusion, if not noticed by the gambling facility’s personnel. If this should occur, an excluded individual will not be able to collect any winnings or jackpots or to recover losses. Once entered into the self-exclusion program, they will also not be able to receive complimentary goods or services, credit or check cashing privileges if available, or offered any other amenities by the facility.

- In all, **five-hundred and twenty-nine (529)** HelpLine contacts (**32%**) were referred to a **Land-Based Gambling Facility Self-Exclusion Program** during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

• **Self-Exclusion Programs - Online Gambling Operators**

Self-Exclusion Programs offered by Online Gambling Operators are responsible gambling programs that allow users to access tools to set boundaries and controls on their gambling. Sometimes it can be difficult to find all of the resources necessary to manage play in a productive, responsible manner. Therefore, there are proactive tools and supports available which are meant to help. **Many Online Gambling Operators** also offer online self-exclusion and restriction programs that are specific to their individual gambling platforms.

✓ **Online Gambling Operator Self-Exclusion Programs**

Many years of research have concluded how crucial online gambling self-exclusion can be. Online self-exclusion from Online Gambling Operators is enacted at the player’s will. It is a personal choice to restrict access to specific online betting platforms, helping to weaken the impact of problem gambling.

The nature of addictions varies, as do the options offered by Online Gambling Operators. Examples of Online Self-Exclusion Categories that may be provided by Online Gambling Operators follow, though contact with each specific site to determine available program options should always be made:

- **“Cooling-off” Self-Exclusion** – The period is set by the player. It can stretch from several days, to several months, to years. During that self-exclusion gambling period, the Online Operator will stop sending promotional offers and will block the player from their site. In cases where the Gambling Operator hosts additional platforms, the self-exclusion process may be applicable to all of them. The goal of Online Self-Exclusion Programs is to prohibit loopholes and make it difficult for excluded players to find ways around the ban. Once a gambler has self-excluded for a certain period, he or she cannot change it the next day or any other day during that interval, until the exclusion period is completed.
- **Limit Setting** – Online Gambling Operators offer limit setting (both time and money) through their websites to assist people in gambling responsibly when they play online. **Players can usually choose limit-setting options from the dedicated menu on the sites as offered by the Operators. Typically, it is a LOSS limit, meaning the exclusion is activated when an individual loses a predetermined sum of money. Rarely do operators set a WIN limit.**
- **“Permanent” Self-Exclusion** – Any kind of online gambling self-exclusion ban is irrevocable. Once that step is taken, you will not be able to return to that online betting website to gamble. Keep in mind that some of the online betting platforms operate offline casinos. Regardless of the duration the gambler chooses for his or her online gambling exclusion, it may apply to the related land-based casinos too.
 - This year, **one-hundred and eighty (180)** HelpLine contacts (**11%**) were referred to an **Online Gambling Operator Self-Exclusion Program**.

○ Self-Exclusion Access to Cash Programs

Self-exclusion Access to Cash Programs provide resources and tools to help support financial recovery and promote financial wellness. The FCCG provides referrals to Financial Service Providers such as **Everi Cares** and **Automated Systems America (ASAI)**, which provide access to cash for gambling operators through networks of ATMs, cash access kiosks, booths, credit, and other financial access services. Additionally, **True Link Financial** provides access to cash restrictions through a customizable and reloadable VISA debit card that can be obtained and customized to work where gamblers need it to and to block where they don't, helping to provide restricted access to funds and limit gambling related losses. Self-Exclusion Access to Cash Programs are provided as a resource through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine as a tool to help people control their gambling behavior and restrict access to money if gambling has become problematic. Finally, **PayPal** offers its users the option to block gambling transactions upon request through their Message Center.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **two-hundred and thirteen (213)** HelpLine contacts (**13%**) were recommended a **Self-Exclusion Access to Cash Program** as a resource for help. This resource referral category continues to grow in popularity (up from 10% last year).

○ Self-Exclusion Programs – Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software

Self-Exclusion Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software such as **BetBlocker**, **Gamban**, **Gamblock**, and **Gambling Block** can also be powerful tools for those that gamble on the Internet and would like to block the ability to access gambling sites, track and control Internet usage, or restrict access at specific times. Like other forms of self-exclusion, web-based exclusion programs allow users to “ban” themselves from being able to gamble online. There are free options as well as paid options, and this resource allows users to continue to utilize their computer for work and leisure but attempts to reduce the temptation to gamble. Many offer valuable tools such as the ability to track Internet usage and even device location. A great feature of some web blocking software is that once installed, if the user tries to remove the program from their device, a prompt appears showing a map of available problem gambling resources in their area (such as the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine). There are also child protection websites such as **Net Nanny**, **Cybersitter**, **Norton Family**, **Netsweeper**, **OpenDNS**, and **Qustodio** available, to help prevent underage access to online gambling. **Freedom** is an app and website blocker designed to improve focus and productivity by temporarily blocking distracting websites and apps (including gambling websites and apps) across multiple devices. Additionally, family features and apps offered by wireless service providers such as **Verizon Family Plus**, the **AT&T Secure Family® App**, and **T-Mobile’s FamilyMode® App**, offer the ability for their customers to block gambling apps and websites in addition to other sensitive content.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **three-hundred and ninety-two (392)** HelpLine contacts **(24%)** were provided **Self-Exclusion Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software** as a resource for help. Here too, Self-Exclusion resources are growing as a referral category, with Internet Controls & Web Blocking Software referrals up from 265 (17%) last year.

○ Self-Exclusion Programs – Ad Blocking Settings & Controls

With gambling advertising appearing across all platforms (radio, television, online, social media, billboards, etc.) and targeted towards all demographics, it is more difficult than ever to avoid potential triggers these ads can cause. Constant exposure to these advertisements is known to have an adverse effect on those who are at-risk or in recovery. For those negatively impacted by gambling, trying to avoid all possible triggers, depending on the household's Internet, television, social media, and other habits, can be an almost impossible task. However, there are some protective measures available to help limit exposure to gambling advertisements through **Google** and on popular social media platforms like **YouTube**, **Facebook**, and **X (formerly Twitter)**. For an added layer of protection, there are also software and plugins designed to block all online advertising, such as **getadblock.com**, **adblockplus.org**, **ghostery.com**, and **adlock.com**.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **two-hundred and forty (240)** HelpLine contacts **(14%)** were provided **Self-Exclusion Ad Blocking Setting and Control Options** as a resource for help. **Referrals to Self-Exclusion Ad Blocking tools more than doubled this year over last (up from 92 contacts representing 6% of the total in 2022-2023)**. This could be indicative of the increased levels of gambling-related advertising that came along with Florida’s legalization of sports betting, with help seekers looking for an escape from constant triggers.

○ **Self-Exclusion Programs – Stock/Cryptocurrency Trading Restrictions**

Recent increases in online trading activities have resulted in the birth of new online trading platforms, larger budgets dedicated to advertising on various social media channels and an increased overall awareness of online trading. Additionally, cryptocurrency trading specifically has seen a significant rise over the last year with many day traders “shifting their attention to more speculative assets” (Financial Times, 2021).

Cryptocurrency trading and stock trading are the most prevalent and present a greater capacity for harm to problem gamblers, due to exposure to risk from speculative trading and volatility, when compared to bond or commodity trading. Restriction of access to these forms of trading (Cryptocurrency and Stock trading) provided by the FCCG’s **Self-Exclusion – Stock/Cryptocurrency** referral resource “**Gamban**” can be beneficial.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **twenty-three (23)** HelpLine contacts (**1%**) were provided **Self-Exclusion Stock/Cryptocurrency Trading Restriction Options** as a resource for help.

➤ **Financial Resources - Emergency & Non-Emergency Financial Resources**

The FCCG’s Financial Resources & Assistance Programs Include the following 2 categories of Financial Supports:

○ **Emergency Financial Resources**

The burden of financial problems is frequently overwhelming for many of the individuals who contact the HelpLine. For some, the financial problems must be handled first before seeking other recovery options, as homes may be under foreclosure, assets seized, or other emergency situations may be the top priority at the time of contact. The FCCG offers contacts access to the following types of **Emergency Financial Supports & Assistance**:

- ✓ **Cash**
- ✓ **Child Care**
- ✓ **Clothing**
- ✓ **Food**
- ✓ **Housing/Shelters**
- ✓ **Medications**
- ✓ **Telephone Bill/Cell Phone**
- ✓ **Transportation**
- ✓ **Utility Bill**

○ Non-Emergency Financial Resources

Non-Emergency Financial Resources include supports designed to help gamblers and loved ones with gambling-related financial difficulties rebuild, renew, and restore their finances in a sustainable way. FCCG Non-Emergency Financial Assistance Tools and Resources include Debt Assistance/Credit Counseling Services/Financial Education – (New Horizon, InCharge Debt Solutions, Money Management International, American Consumer Credit Counseling, Consumer Debt Counselors, Money Fit Florida Debt Relief, etc.), Financial Relief Support Groups (Debtors Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous Pressure Relief Groups, etc.), Financial Transaction Self-Exclusion Programs (Everi STeP, True Link Financial, ASAI, etc.), and FCCG’s Financial Assistance Tools & Literature (*Financial Debt & Budgeting Toolkit*, Book #4 in each *A Chance for Change* Recovery Workbooks series).

The FCCG offers 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine contacts access to the following types of **Non-Emergency Financial Supports & Assistance**:

- ✓ **Debt Management/Credit Counseling/Financial Education**
- ✓ **Financial Relief Support Groups**
- ✓ **Access to Cash Self-Exclusion – Financial Transaction Exclusion Programs**
- ✓ **Financial Assistance Tools & Literature/Materials Request Resources**
 - During this past fiscal year, **one-thousand one-hundred and thirty-four (1,134)** HelpLine contacts (**68%**) were offered one or more **Financial Assistance Tools and Resources** through the HelpLine. **This represents a continued increase from 919 (or 59% of) individuals** offered this category of referrals during the previous fiscal period.

➤ Impaired Professionals Resources

Problem and compulsive gambling is often referred to as a “hidden disorder,” because suffering persons often appear normal on the outside. Like alcohol and substance abuse, the disorder does not discriminate and affects persons from all backgrounds and walks of life. Recent research has shown that professionals, such as lawyers, judges, and doctors are among those most likely to be at risk for developing a gambling problem. Other professionals, including but not limited to athletes, firefighters, engineers, accountants, counselors, police officers, stockbrokers, educators, and persons practicing in hundreds of additional fields, also experience gambling problems.

Impaired Professional Programs are designed for a wide range of professionals who are among those most likely to be at risk for developing a gambling problem, including doctors, lawyers, judges, athletes, and others, and provide self-help/treatment options in non-public settings. Since many professionals find it extremely challenging and potentially detrimental to their careers to participate in traditional self-help (e.g., Gamblers Anonymous) and professional treatment programs, the FCCG provides confidential resources and referrals from a wide range of trained experts.

To further ensure such protections, the FCCG works closely with, and provides referrals for legal and health care service professionals in need of gambling-related supports to organizations serving individuals working in sensitive positions or fields in the legal and medical arenas, such as the Florida Lawyers Assistance Program (FLA) and the Impaired Practitioners Program of Florida – Professionals Resource Network (PRN).

- During 2023-2024 fiscal year, **nine (9)** HelpLine contacts (**1%**) were referred to **Impaired Professionals Resources** through the HelpLine.

➤ Legal Resources

It is not uncommon for problem gamblers to experience legal problems due to their addiction. Whether criminal in nature (embezzlement, theft, fraud, etc.) or civil (divorce, foreclosure, bankruptcy, etc.), the FCCG provides expert assistance and resources for those faced with any type of legal action in a gambling-related case, completely free of charge. Services range from providing Amicus Curiae Briefs to the court in support of the gambler's addiction, to advocacy for treatment as an alternative or in conjunction with incarceration, to professional testimony provided on behalf of the defendant along with important information about the strong correlation between problem gambling and illegal activities for all legal, criminal justice, and court professionals involved in the case.

The FCCG's Legal Resources & Assistance Programs provide supports for both problem gamblers and loved ones facing legal consequences due to a gambling problem, and for legal, criminal justice, and judicial authorities to identify and secure viable alternatives to incarceration alone, thereby providing the opportunity for rehabilitation to persons committing crimes as the result of a gambling addiction. Book #5 in FCCG's *A Chance for Change Recovery Workbook* series for Gamblers, Loved Ones, and Senior Gamblers contains legal-specific information related to problem gambling.

The FCCG's Legal Resources & Assistance Program and Referrals include the following **five (5)** categories of Legal Supports:

- ✓ **CIVIL Legal Referral Resources**
- ✓ **CRIMINAL Legal Referral Resources**
- ✓ **GUARDIANSHIP Legal Referral Resources**
- ✓ **HELP SEEKER - LEGAL Assistance Tools & Literature/Materials Requests**
- ✓ **PROFESSIONALS – LEGAL Assistance Tools & Literature/Materials Requests**

- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, **seventy-seven (77)** HelpLine contacts (**5%**) were provided **Legal Resources and Assistance** for help with either civil or criminal legal consequences incurred due to gambling problems.

➤ Hotlines/Crisis Lines & Social Services/Emergency Assistance (Non-Gambling Specific)

Very often, the HelpLine receives contacts from persons who require assistance beyond gambling supports due to a multitude of circumstances (e.g., domestic violence, rape, alcohol/substance abuse, etc.). Although the FCCG specializes in gambling-related matters, the organization does refer contacts to non-gambling services when appropriate. In the event individuals are in need of assistance for a non-gambling related or other traumatic issue, the FCCG refers people to National Hotlines and Crisis Lines, such as 211s, Domestic Violence, Child/Senior Abuse, Rape/Sexual Abuse, or Suicide Prevention Hotlines. These resources offer Clinical Crisis Operators who can provide additional specialized supports and resources as a wrap-around service.

The FCCG also provides access to emergency supports through a wide range of vital social services referrals, such as the United Way, Salvation Army, and housing shelters, to name a few. These are places where individuals in need can find immediate supports for food, housing, clothing, and possible financial assistance with rent and utility payments. Although social services are not a therapeutic resource, they are sometimes necessary to address immediate needs in critical areas of life that may have been damaged by the gambling addiction.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **two-hundred and four (204)** HelpLine contacts (**12%**) were provided **Hotlines/Crisis Lines & Social Services/Emergency Assistance** referrals as a resource for immediate help.

➤ Consumer Protection Services

In the event a help seeker needs consumer protection services or wishes to report illegal gambling operations, such as illegal gambling machines, lottery scams, sweepstakes scams, illegal game promotions, etc., the FCCG provides referrals to the **Florida Department of the Lottery – Division of Security, Department of Business and Professional Regulations - Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (Law Enforcement), Office of the Florida Attorney General, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs.**

- During the 2023-2024 period, **six (6)** HelpLine contacts (**<1%**) were provided **Consumer Protection Services** resources.

➤ Mental Health & Addiction Services (Non-Gambling Specific)

Gambling-specific self-help and professional treatment programs comprise the primary referrals furnished to HelpLine contacts. In the event a contact is in need of non-gambling specific mental health or substance abuse treatment or supports, the FCCG provides referrals to Baker Act Facilities, Psychiatric Hospitals, County and Community Mental Health Services, Anti-Drug Coalitions, and other Substance Abuse or Behavioral Health Services.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **thirteen (13)** HelpLine contacts (**1%**) were provided **Mental Health and Addiction Service** referrals as an additional resource for help.

➤ **Population Specific Resources for College Students; Military Members, Veterans, and their Families; Seniors; Youth & Parents; & Others**

The FCCG's **Population Specific Programs, Resources, Literature, and Materials** are designed specifically for specific populations who are experiencing gambling-related problems. The Council also offers related resources for the professionals who serve these populations, so they are equipped to respond to individuals with gambling problems (or their loved ones) who may present for services. FCCG Population Specific Programs and Resources are developed to provide education and awareness about gambling addiction and its impact among specific segments of the population, along with providing population specific resources for help.

The FCCG provides a wide array of population specific resources, programs, and materials for each of these populations.

- ✓ **Youth Resources**
- ✓ **College Resources**
- ✓ **Senior Resources**
- ✓ **Military/Veteran Resources**
- ✓ **Population Specific Professionals Resources**

- During the 2023-2024 period, **one-hundred and thirty-three (133)** HelpLine contacts (**9%**) were provided **Population Specific Resources** for help. The largest group were seniors (76) (5%) requiring specialized assistance.

➤ **National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) Affiliates**

For contacts located outside of Florida who are seeking problem gambling supports for themselves or loved ones, the FCCG provides referrals to the designated National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) Affiliate in that particular state.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **forty-three (43)** HelpLine contacts (**3%**) were provided **NCPG Affiliates** referrals as a resource for out-of-state assistance.

➤ **FCCG Website, Mobile App, and Social Media Sites**

The FCCG's Website (<https://gamblinghelp.org>); Blog Site (<https://gamblinghelp.org/blog/>); Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) Microsite (<https://gamblinghelp.org/pgam/>); Mobile App (<https://gamblinghelp.org/#mobile-app>), named "888-ADMIT-IT" and available for download free of charge on both the Apple App Store (Apple devices) and the Google Play Store (Android devices); and Social Media sites (listed below), are all valuable tools that offer additional information in an on-demand format, such as self-assessments and videos, as well as the ability to communicate directly with a HelpLine Specialist in the event a help seeker feels more comfortable with this method of connection, or has any follow up questions.

FCCG Website/Mobile App & Social Media Sites

- ✓ Chat with us on our website: <https://gamblinghelp.org>
 - ✓ Email us at fccg@gamblinghelp.org
 - ✓ Download our Mobile App <https://gamblinghelp.org/#mobile-app> (search for “888-ADMIT-IT” in the App Store) and download free of charge for Apple Devices and through the Google Play Store (Android devices)
 - ✓ FCCG Blog Site – <https://gamblinghelp.org/blog/>
 - ✓ FCCG Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) Website – <https://gamblinghelp.org/pgam/>
 - YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/@888AdmittIt>
 - Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/888AdmittIt>
 - X - <https://x.com/FLCouncil>
 - Reddit - <https://www.reddit.com/user/888-ADMIT-IT/>
 - Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/florida.gamblinghelp/>
 - Pinterest - <https://www.pinterest.com/888admittit/>
 - LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/888admittit>
- During the 2023-2024 period, **two-hundred and forty-seven (247)** Florida HelpLine contacts (**15%**) were directed to the **FCCG Website (gamblinghelp.org), 888-ADMIT-IT Mobile App, or FCCG Social Media Profiles** for additional information, services, and supports.

➤ **Employment Assistance Resources**

Often, individuals struggling with a gambling problem may develop work-related problems. As a result, the FCCG provides much needed Employment Assistance Resources to those in need of such supports. Referral resources include the following:

- ✓ Florida Department of Economic Opportunity – Career Source Florida
 - ✓ Agency for Persons with Disabilities Job Assistance, AARP, and Jewish Family Services Computer Lab/Employment Assistance
 - ✓ Apprentice Florida
- During 2023-2024, **twenty-five (25)** individuals (**2%**) were referred to **Employment Assistance Resources** through the FCCG HelpLine.

➤ Online Supports, Videos, Podcasts, and Mobile Apps

Online Supports, Videos, Podcasts, and Mobile Apps can provide real-time and ongoing motivational messaging, meditation techniques, support networks, and other self-care and stress-release activities that support behavioral change and assist individuals during their lifelong path to recovery from a gambling addiction.

- During the 2023-2024 period, **six-hundred and nineteen (619) HelpLine contacts (37%)** were provided recommendations to **Online Supports, Videos, Podcasts, and Mobile Apps. This represents a significant increase from the previous fiscal year, when 364 (23%) contacts were recommended this resource.** FCCG regularly researches and evaluates the most popular and upcoming Online Supports, Videos, Podcasts, and Mobile Apps that either directly cover the subject of problem gambling recovery or address specific impacts like mental health issues and financial difficulties. As this category of resources is strengthened, FCCG finds that they often can complement more traditional referrals and can help keep gamblers and loved ones on track with recovery in between counseling sessions or self-help group meetings.

➤ Literature and Materials Requests

The FCCG provides a wide array of written materials to callers that are both population and problem gambling specific as well as general in nature. Problem gambling specific brochures, fact sheets, bookmarks, workbooks, toolkits, research, and posters are offered in English and Spanish (and Creole in certain instances) and provided through the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine in a variety of formats, such as hard-copy, digital pdf, as video or audio files, and on discs. FCCG literature offerings serve as a means of reaching out to target populations who may be unable to seek other avenues of help due to a variety of reasons, such as transportation issues, language, and/or cultural barriers.

FCCG **HelpLine Literature packets** provide population specific information about problem gambling for individuals seeking help with a gambling problem, their own or someone else's, based upon their unique circumstances and situation as divulged through contact to the FCCG's **888-ADMIT-IT** HelpLine.

Additional components of FCCG HelpLine Literature Packets for Gamblers, Loved Ones, and Senior Gamblers are the ***Financial Debt and Budgeting Toolkit*** and the ***A Chance for Change Recovery Workbook Series***, as detailed below:

✓ **FCCG's *Financial Debt & Budgeting Toolkit "Budget Tool"***

The **FCCG's *Budget Tool*** is a financial budgeting assistance program that provides financial guidance and accountability for problem gamblers and loved ones through peer supports. The budgeting plan is developed based upon the available income (or amount of money coming in), regular bills that need to be paid (i.e. rent/mortgage, utilities, food, etc.), and the amount of gambling-related debts that may be owed.

✓ **FCCG's *A Chance for Change* Recovery Workbooks**

The FCCG's seven-part series of self-help recovery workbooks were developed for problem gamblers, loved ones and senior compulsive gamblers. Titled "***A Chance for Change***," the workbooks are designed to act as a self-help program for persons suffering from the adverse effects of problem and compulsive gambling. The **FCCG's "*A Chance for Change*"** recovery workbook series closely examines how persons can escape the grips of problem and compulsive gambling through such strategies as creating and maintaining a plan for positive change, dealing with financial and legal problems, and taking charge of one's life. Within each workbook series, the FCCG's "*A Chance for Change*" program covers topics including but not limited to getting started, assessing one's state of mind, triggers and boundary setting, managing finances, gaining a handle on legal related issues, navigating new terrain, and keeping the focus.

- During this past fiscal year, **one-thousand two-hundred and thirty-four (1,234)** help seekers (**75%**) were provided **FCCG HelpLine Literature** packets and workbooks as resources. This represents an increase from the previous year, when 986 contacts were sent literature (64%). FCCG Literature Packets, anchored by its *A Chance for Change* Workbooks, are useful for the vast majority of gamblers and loved ones seeking recovery from problem gambling and can enhance other resources like counseling, OPPG, Peer Connect, and self-help groups.

CONTACTS INITIAL SATISFACTION WITH HELPLINE SERVICES RECEIVED: “Was the HelpLine Contact Helpful?”

The FCCG HelpLine is dedicated to providing multiple services and information to contacts of all types, while providing an empathetic and understanding approach to problem gambling for both gamblers and their loved ones. At the end of the contact, when asked if the HelpLine contact was helpful, the vast majority of contacts indicated it was very helpful. Of the 1,241 respondents answering this question, 98% indicated the contact was helpful, and less than 2% (26 individuals) indicated it was not helpful. It should also be noted that it can take problem gamblers some time to assimilate the information and recognize the importance of the information provided.

A selection of noteworthy comments provided by help seekers after receiving HelpLine services are provided as follows:

- *Absolutely you are wonderful. I hope this will be a new beginning for us.*
- *All of the information you have provided is great.*
- *Almost everything you said I'm kind of familiar with, but hearing it again will help me get moving.*
- *I appreciate all your time and support.*
- *Every now and then you get the right person, and today, I got you. You were the right person.*
- *Getting it off my chest has been helpful.*
- *God has angels in all places, thank you so much. I am so glad there are resources for help like this.*
- *I am going to remember your name and this conversation every time I want to go back online and gamble and I really think it will give me the strength not to.*
- *I am ready for a change. I am looking forward to getting this under control. I appreciate everything. You are a wonderful help at a great service!*
- *I appreciate your time. You have helped so much.*
- *I can't thank you enough for listening*
- *I can't thank you enough for taking time this late at night to help me through this situation. You are doing a great service for people and I look forward to putting nights like this behind me and leaving them in the past forever. Thank you so much, you're an amazing person.*
- *I do appreciate the time you dedicated to hear me tonight.*
- *I don't know if you ever had gambling problems...How old you are...Or why you take this time with a stranger ... I don't know if you're paid for this or not ... but...I appreciate it.*
- *I feel a little bit of relief. I have never told anyone about this besides you. I appreciate the time that you're taking to explain these resources to me.*
- *I feel better just speaking with you.*
- *It feels good acknowledging it, and I feel better.*
- *I feel hopeful.*
- *I feel so low right now. But you have given me hope.*
- *I really appreciate what you all do.*

- *I really appreciate you taking the time to speak with me today.*
- *I really appreciate your guidance.*
- *I thank you kindly for your help and support. Just talked with hubby and we'll be ok!*
- *I wish I would've made this call a long time ago.*
- *I'd love to read and use all of the resources you'd like to share with me! This really means a lot to me, I'm also glad I came across that Facebook post! You've already helped me a lot with educating me today! Thank you so much.*
- *I'm glad I called and took this step. You had lots of resources, so I'm very interested in taking the time to look through them and work through them. I've been more honest with you than I have been in counseling and with my husband. It's time to say it out loud.. I really appreciate your time. Thank you.*
- *I'm glad I took this step today. I really didn't know what you would offer. I feel a lot better now that you've given us information about the resources that are available. I'm very optimistic.*
- *I'm just grateful this is available.*
- *It took a lot for me to call but I'm so glad that I did. You made this very easy for me.*
- *It's hard but good to know there is support out there and I'm not the only one. This was fantastic and looking forward to looking at the resources.*
- *It's nice that you have all the tools to provide me. It's a great first step. It's great that there are people like you.*
- *Just talking about it made me feel better.*
- *Just talking to you has given us hope.*
- *Making this phone call was the hardest thing I had to do all week. I am looking forward to putting this all behind me.*
- *People like you help many people going through dark times. Very helpful and I appreciate you very much.*
- *Quite a bit of things for me to look at. This has been wonderful. You are really helping people. I appreciate it.*
- *Really appreciate this. I was skeptical if this was gonna be helpful have heard bad things about some gambling lines in the past but this was great.*
- *Thank you for listening to me. Because of you, I'm just going to sleep now and I'm not going to gamble.*
- *Thank you for making me feel like there's hope*
- *Thank you for taking the time to speak with me and for having no judgement about my gambling past.*
- *Thank you so much for all the information and talking to me. Thank you for what you do for people also. You could be saving lives and not know it. I appreciate the help and talk.*
- *Thank you so much for all the information and the resources, and for understanding. I really appreciate it.*
- *Thank you so much for your help and I look forward to taking the next steps to recovery*

- *Thank you so much for your help. I'm so glad I gave you guys a call. I should have done this sooner but I'm so glad I did today.*
- *This call was initially very painful for me to make, but you made me feel so good about it. You have been so helpful. Thank you so much for everything.*
- *This chat has been very helpful. You're the first person I've told any of this to and I appreciate your help and kindness.*
- *This has been very helpful you have no idea. I'm so thankful that you're there and available to talk to. I just really want to thank you so much.*
- *This has been very helpful, thank you so much for being here for me so late.*
- *This is great, thank you so much! This is great!! Wonderful people in Florida! Appreciate it!*
- *This is perfect. This has been very helpful.*
- *This was a place to start when you don't know what you're doing.*
- *Yes, this has been extremely helpful. I didn't know there was this much help available. I told myself for years and had this notion that nobody helps a gambler because nobody wants their resources wasted. This counteracts the impression I had about myself and the problem itself.*
- *You have been great it's almost 3am and you have helped me as if I called you in the middle of the day!*
- *You have been great and are the first person I have admitted this to. Know that I will beat this no matter what.*
- *You have been very empathetic and helpful. You made this process very easy and less embarrassing. I appreciate you speaking with me and helping me through this.*
- *You have been very helpful. Thank you so much for the wealth of information.*
- *You have given me some really great insight into resources that are available and really understood what I was saying. Thank you so much.*
- *You truly have a gift for this. Not many people can make a difference and make someone feel like they matter. I am very grateful that you were the person I got to speak to and you definitely made a difference in my life. I feel so much better.*
- *You were so easy to talk to. Thank you for listening to my rambling. I think I needed to talk to someone about all of this and just speak freely because, man, this really makes me angry. I'm only 27 and I feel like my mother is the child. So thank you. I mean it a lot.*

^{i 1} Kerai, Alex. "Cell Phone Usage Statistics: Mornings Are for Notifications." *REVIEWS.Org*, 21 July 2023, www.reviews.org/mobile/cell-phone-addiction/.