



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month — Help Raise Awareness of Resources to Combat Problem Gambling

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Gaming (ADG), Division of Problem Gambling (DPG), in collaboration with the National Council of Problem Gambling (NCPG), recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. 2023 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

“Problem gambling is a serious addiction that affects an estimated two percent of adults and five percent of youth in Arizona,” said Katie Hobbs, Arizona Governor. “That is why I have issued a proclamation announcing March 2023 as Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Month — through education and outreach, we can spread the word and support those in Arizona who may suffer from problem gambling by getting them the help they need.”

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

This year, DPG will be hosting the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Problem Gambling. With the theme, “Sports Wagering: Arizona and Beyond,” this year’s symposium will be taking a closer look at problem gambling and the world of event wagering & fantasy sports.

“I am grateful for the leadership of Elise Mikkelsen, Director of DPG, and the entire DPG team for their dedication in addressing problem gambling in the state of Arizona,” said Jackie Johnson, ADG Director. “This year’s Annual Symposium on Problem Gambling will help further educate the state’s devoted healthcare professionals by creating a forum for information sharing between experts in the field of problem gambling.”

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

“With the state in its second year of legal event wagering, it is more critical than ever to share the subsidized treatment options available to all Arizonans,” said Elise Mikkelsen, Director of DPG. “For those who may have a problem with gambling or are affected by a loved one with problem gambling, we want you to know that you are not alone. By utilizing DPG’s free, 24/7 confidential helpline or visiting our website, those in the state can take the next step and access information and resources critical in addressing a problem with gambling.”

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

### **About ADG**

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

### **About the National Council on Problem Gambling**

NCPG is the national advocate for people and families affected by problem gambling. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling and works with all stakeholders to promote responsible gambling. For information on NCPG's 35th National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling, visit [www.ncpgambling.org/conference](http://www.ncpgambling.org/conference).

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# Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, many forms of legalized gaming exist in Arizona, including the Arizona Lottery, Indian gaming, racing pari-mutuel/simulcast wagering, bingo, event wagering, fantasy sports, charitable gaming, amusement gambling, and social gambling; and  
**WHEREAS**, Arizona Indian gaming provides substantial funds to support problem gambling programs throughout the State; and  
**WHEREAS**, an estimated 2 percent of adults and 5 percent of youth in Arizona have a problem with gambling and adults who seek problem gambling treatment often report gambling from an early age; and  
**WHEREAS**, the Arizona Department of Gaming provides and supports education, prevention, and treatment programs for people and families affected by problem gambling through its Division of Problem Gambling and 24-hour confidential helpline, 1-800-NEXT-STEP; and  
**WHEREAS**, since 1998, the State of Arizona has had a formal statewide responsible gambling program; and  
**WHEREAS**, the National Council on Problem Gambling and the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators have declared the month of March as National Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and  
**WHEREAS**, through education and programming, potential, and existing gambling-related problems can be addressed by individuals, organizations, and state and tribal governments.  
**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Katie Hobbs, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim March 2023 as

## ARIZONA PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

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



GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this twenty-first day of February in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Three and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Forty-Sixth.

ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE