



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2026

Commonwealth Recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board ("PGCB") along with PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs ("DDAP"), the Pennsylvania Lottery, and the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania ("CCGP") are recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in order to promote resources intended to help individuals with a gambling problem.

Elizabeth Lanza, Director of the PGCB's Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling, explains that the purpose of Problem Gambling Awareness Month is to enhance public understanding of gambling disorder by educating individuals about its warning signs, as well as the treatment options and recovery resources available to those affected.

"While the majority of Pennsylvanians are able to gamble responsibly, it is essential to recognize that an estimated 2 to 4 percent of individuals will develop a gambling disorder at some point in their lives," says Lanza. "The Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling staff are dedicated to working with Board licensees, other state agencies, and state and national advocacy groups to further responsible gambling efforts, and when needed, provide a safety net of options for those who find that gambling is causing harm in their lives."

Kevin O'Toole, Executive Director of the PGCB, recognizes the efforts made by the gaming industry in PA during PGAM and throughout the year.

"Although the Board mandates that all licensees implement appropriate safeguards, many have gone beyond these requirements by partnering with national, state, and local organizations to support trainings, outreach initiatives, and additional problem-gambling resources. We commend those entities that consistently demonstrate this elevated commitment."

One of those non-government organizations is the Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA whose Executive Director Josh Ercole agrees that partnerships are essential to provide the best assistance to those who develop a gambling problem.

"Last year, in addition to increased participation in legislated gambling in Pennsylvania, we saw a record-breaking number of individuals contacting the helpline for assistance," Ercole says. "It's more important than ever that we work together to continue raising awareness, during PGAM and throughout the year, not only of risks that are associated with gambling and of problems that may develop, but of the many prevention and treatment resources that are available throughout Pennsylvania."

DDAP collaborates with county drug and alcohol offices known as Single County Authorities, clinicians, prevention providers, and organizations to provide resources and programming for problem gambling treatment and prevention throughout Pennsylvania.

“We want all Pennsylvanians to learn about the signs of problem gambling. Having that knowledge base is the first line of defense in stopping problems before they start,” said DDAP Secretary Dr. Latika Davis-Jones. “And understanding that treatment and other resources are available to help is often the first step on the road to recovery. Recovery is possible.”

Pennsylvania Lottery Executive Director Drew Svitko says his agency has a longtime commitment to promoting fun, responsible play while generating funds to support older Pennsylvanians.

“By helping to fund the Pennsylvania Problem Gambling Helpline and working with our partners to provide tools and resources to players, we help ensure that PA Lottery games remain a safe and enjoyable form of entertainment for everyone of legal age,” Svitko says. “Players in Pennsylvania can call 1-800-GAMBLER for free, confidential support and guidance if gambling ever becomes a concern.”

At its February 26, 2026 public meeting, the PGCB approved a resolution memorializing the importance of Problem Gambling Awareness Month. A copy of that resolution can be found at this [link](#).

Governor Josh Shapiro also issued a proclamation recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. That proclamation is found at this [link](#).

These organizations will all be at an awareness event in the East Wing of the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg on Thursday, March 25th. Those interested in talking with representatives of these organizations and obtaining information are welcome to stop by from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm that day.

About the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board is tasked to oversee all aspects of gambling involving 17 land-based casinos, online casino games, retail and online sports wagering, and Video Gaming Terminals (VGTs) at qualified truck stops, along with the regulation of online fantasy sports contests.

The land-based casino industry in Pennsylvania consists of six racetrack (Category 1) casinos, five stand-alone (Category 2) casinos, two resort (Category 3) casinos and four mini-casinos (Category 4). A significant job generator in the Commonwealth, casinos and the other types of Board-regulated gaming returned \$2.98 billion in tax revenue and fees to Pennsylvanians in 2026.

Additional information about both the PGCB’s gaming regulatory efforts and Pennsylvania’s gaming industry can be found at gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov.

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