



## COVID-19 AND PROBLEM GAMBLING

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Individuals with gambling problems may be impacted more severely by the covid-19 pandemic due to increased individual health risks, and/or shifting gambling preferences. – National Council on Problem Gambling

“As a result of the current stressful situation in the world around us, problem gamblers may experience issues with depression, anxiety and even suicidal thoughts, which may trigger an urge to gamble. People who are in recovery from gambling disorders or those who are currently experiencing gambling problems are particularly at risk.” says Blozinski, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling.

The lack of other favorite activities, like going to a group sports activity, or seeing a movie may no longer be available. Financial and other stresses may occur as people experience job changes or loss due to the covid-19 situation. Many times when people gamble, they see it as a way to get rich quick which feeds in to the desperation they may be feeling because of their current situation. It is important to remember that the odds are against any long term wins. Blozinski encourages people to not gamble with money that is needed to pay for groceries, rent or mortgage, utilities, and other necessities of daily living expenses.

If someone chooses to gamble, it is important to use only legal platforms that are licensed by their state. When gambling, it is important to set limits of the amount of time and money they want to spend on the activity before beginning, and be sure to stick to it. Most people can gamble for fun and entertainment but when gambling goes beyond that there is help available.

***If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-426-2535. The call is free and confidential), Text at 1-850-888-Hope or Live Chat through the WCPG website at [www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org). We Can Help!***

*The **Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling** is funded by a public awareness grant from the State of Wisconsin and additional funding from donors, including Wisconsin Native American Tribes. The Council operates a 24-hour Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5 1-850-888-HOPE Text line, and Chat available on [www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org), distributes informational brochures, organizes an annual statewide conference, makes presentations on problem gambling and conducts training sessions for treatment providers interested in the special requirements for working with compulsive gamblers and their families. For more information, visit the [Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling](http://www.wisconsin-council-on-problem-gambling.org) website, visit us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling](https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling) or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/wcpqgambling>*

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