



News Release

Dulce M. Quintero, Secretary

State of Illinois Recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Confidential app, helpline, and text line offer support while statewide art contest highlights recovery and hope

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CHICAGO—The State of Illinois is recognizing March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month, highlighting free, confidential resources for people struggling with problem gambling and raising awareness about prevention and recovery. Governor JB Pritzker, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the Illinois Lottery, the Illinois Gaming Board (IGB), and the Illinois Racing Board (IRB) are partnering on statewide outreach efforts throughout the month.

To raise awareness and honor individuals in recovery, participating buildings in downtown Chicago will be lit teal during March. A statewide art contest will also spotlight the power of recovery, and IDHS will partner with providers across the state to promote treatment services.

“Recovery is possible, and no one has to face a gambling disorder alone,” **said Dulce M. Quintero, Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human Services.** “Our goal is to ensure every person in Illinois knows that confidential support and treatment are available when they’re ready to seek help.”

“The IGB is committed to addressing problem gambling awareness and responsible gambling education to ensure the safety of Illinois gaming,” **said Illinois Gaming Board Administrator Marcus D. Fruchter.** “The IGB is

pleased to collaborate with IDHS, the Illinois Lottery, the IRB, the Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago, and other entities this month and throughout the year, to encourage responsible gaming and address problem gambling to be sure that those who need help receive the support, resources, and services they deserve.”

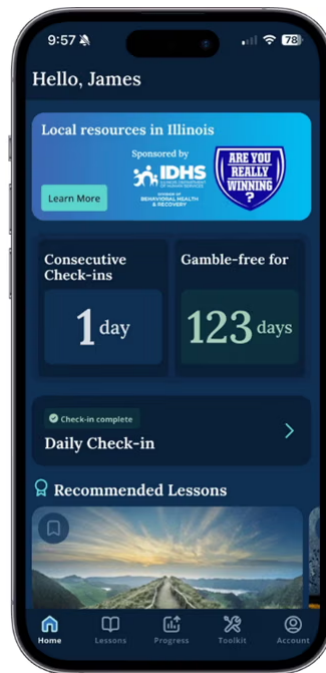
During March, the Illinois Lottery will raise awareness about problem gambling through radio spots, billboards, digital and social media, and direct outreach to players and lottery retailers.

“March is the month when the concentrated efforts of the state can amplify and bring attention to this important issue and is a continuation of the work we do all year round. In collaboration with IDHS, our focus is to raise awareness and show people where they can go to seek help,” **said Illinois Lottery Director Harold Mays.**

“This March, the Illinois Racing Board is partnering with Governor Pritzker, the IGB, IDHS, and the Illinois Lottery to help raise public awareness of problem gambling in Illinois,” **said Racing Board Executive Director Domenic DiCera.** “For more than a decade, the Racing Board has been working with the Illinois Alliance on Problem Gambling to connect people with the resources they may need to get help. Through this partnership we look forward to increasing awareness of all the forms of assistance that are available for people struggling with problem gambling.”

New and Expanded Resources

IDHS’s Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) continues to work with gambling providers to expand outreach and raise awareness of the harms associated with problem gambling.



The Evive app is designed to help individuals better understand and manage their gambling behavior.

This year, IDHS-DBHR, in collaboration with Evive and the Illinois Council on Problem Gambling, launched a new mobile app designed to help individuals better understand and manage their gambling behavior. The Evive app offers tools to support mental well-being, track habits, and connect users with resources. It is available for download on the Apple App Store and Google Play, and at [AreYouReallyWinning.com](https://www.areyoureallywinning.com).

As part of the "Are You Really Winning?" Campaign, IDHS-DBHR has launched the fourth annual gambling disorder art contest. Open to Illinois residents ages 14 and up, the contest accepts a wide range of artistic media, including drawings, paintings, digital art, glass art, and photography. Winning submissions will be unveiled in June and featured in several public exhibits across the state. Contest eligibility requirements and submission information are available [online](#).

Meeting the Need Across Illinois

According to research by Health Resources in Action, 400,000 Illinois residents (4%) have a gambling disorder and another 700,000 (7%), are at risk.

To meet this need, IDHS-DBHR has helped providers prepare for an increase in individuals seeking treatment. Illinois ranks fourth nationally in total calls, texts, and chats to the national 1-800-GAMBLER helpline. In State Fiscal Year 2025, over 64,000 gambling screenings and assessments were conducted by treatment providers.

Over the past five years, more than 950 clinicians have been trained to provide gambling disorder treatment services in Illinois. In 2026, IDHS-DBHR and the Gambling Disorder Center of Excellence will provide:

- Monthly webinars focused on gambling disorder
- A two-day Summit on Problem Gambling
- A 30-hour Gambling Counselor Training
- Three culturally-focused conferences (Black/African American, Latinx, and Asian American communities)
- A healthcare-focused conference on gambling disorder
- A virtual introduction to the Eisenberg Disordered Gambling Emphasized Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (EDGE SBIRT) screening tool

A full schedule of upcoming trainings and conferences can be found on the Illinois Problem Gambling [events page](#).

The Illinois Gaming Board hosts the State's Self-Exclusion Program for Problem Gamblers, which allows individuals to voluntarily exclude themselves from all casinos and sports wagering in Illinois.

As of December 2025, a total of 16,062 individuals were enrolled in the Self-Exclusion Program. More information about the program, including how to enroll, can be found on the Illinois Gaming Board's Help for Problem Gamblers [webpage](#).

If gambling has become a problem for you or someone you know, call 1-800-GAMBLER. Help is also available through the website [AreYouReallyWinning.com](#), the Evive app, and by texting ILGAMB to 833234.

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Illinois Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services is one of Illinois' largest agencies, with more than 13,000 employees. Illinois created IDHS in 1997, to provide our state's residents with streamlined access to integrated services, especially those who are striving to move from welfare to work and economic independence, and others who face multiple challenges to self-sufficiency. IDHS is proud of its diversity, efficiency, and the services that the agency and its community partners provide to Illinois citizens.

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