



# Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul PRESS RELEASE

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## **ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES FANS PLACING MARCH MADNESS WAGERS TO EXERCISE CAUTION TO PROTECT INFORMATION, FUNDS** *Raoul Recommends Checking into Betting Operators Before Placing Bets Online, Using Apps*

**Chicago** – As the 2025 NCAA March Madness Tournament gets underway, Attorney General Kwame Raoul today urged Illinoisians who are considering making a wager on basketball games to be fully informed about the risks of online and app-based sports betting before deciding whether to place a bet.

March is [Problem Gambling Awareness Month](#), as well as the month designated for the NCAA Tournament for college men and women’s basketball. Attorney General Raoul is encouraging fans who may be filling out Brackets and thinking about placing wagers on their favorite teams to be aware of the risks of unlicensed operators.

“March Madness is the most exciting time of year for college basketball fans. Whether you are rooting for your favorite team or getting behind this year’s ‘Cinderella’ team, be sure to take steps to protect your money and personal information before placing wagers online or using sports betting apps,” Raoul said. “Sports betting operators must be licensed by the Illinois Gaming Board in order to operate in the state of Illinois. Be sure you are not inadvertently using an unlicensed betting operator before putting your money on the line. The only feeling worse than having your Bracket busted in the first round is losing your money or personal information by using an unlicensed sports betting operator.”

Certain sports betting apps and websites are allowed to operate within the state of Illinois; however, operators must be licensed by the Illinois Gaming Board and in compliance with state regulations. People can visit the Illinois Gaming Board’s website and check its [licensee list](#) to find out if a sportsbook is authorized to operate in Illinois.

“The IGB is pleased to collaborate with Attorney General Raoul to remind Illinoisans who plan to wager on March Madness games to do so responsibly and safely, which includes avoiding unlicensed and illegal operators,” said Illinois Gaming Board Administrator Marcus D. Fruchter. “Don’t be fooled by unregulated sportsbooks whose offerings mimic legal betting products without any patron protections and regulatory safeguards. If you plan to bet, stay within your financial limits and only patronize approved, legal Illinois sports wagering, video gaming and casino operators.”

The Illinois Gaming Board is cracking down on unlicensed betting operators, including those that offer casino-style gambling in addition to sports and fantasy betting. Last month, the Gaming Board issued [cease and desist letters](#) to betanysports.eu; BetOnline.ag; betus.com.pa; Bookmaker.eu; Drafters Inc., doing business as drafters.com, Harp Media B.V., doing business as Bovada.com and Bovado.com; heritagesports.eu; parlayplay.io; SidePrize LLC, doing business as PrizePicks; and Talid Sports Inc, doing business as chalkboard.io, allegedly unlicensed sports wagering sites, warning them to cease unlicensed sports betting in Illinois. Separately, fantasy sports operator PrizePicks has agreed to cease offering single-player contests in Illinois, as the Legislature considers regulating fantasy sports wagering. In addition, Sleeper, another fantasy sports operator, confirmed it does not offer single-player contests in Illinois.

Attorney General Raoul also encouraged March Madness fans to consider the following tips before placing a bet:

- Check to make sure the operator you are considering holds a valid Illinois license by using the Illinois Gaming Board's [online licensee list](#).
- Do your research. Check websites like the [Better Business Bureau](#) and search using the company's name and "scam," or read reviews on gambling forums.
- Beware of suspicious texts/emails inviting you to participate in gambling, especially if sent from unfamiliar sources. Messages could be coming from scammers trying to steal your money and personal data.
- Beware of fake websites. Scammers may use ads and sponsored links to trick you into visiting their websites, so double check to ensure you typed the name of the right website.
- If something seems too good to be true, it probably is. Be wary of suspicious bonuses or similar offers.
- Read the fine print of promotional offers to make sure there are not hidden costs or obligations.
- Be aware that state law prohibits Illinois residents from betting on Illinois collegiate teams, regardless of whether wagers are placed using online or app-based sportsbooks or in person.

Gambling inherently comes with risks, and gambling addiction affects Illinoisans from all walks of life. Illinois residents struggling with an addiction to gambling can contact the Illinois Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER, or text "ILGAMB" to 833234 for help and resources. Those struggling with a gambling problem can also sign up for the Illinois Gaming Board's [Self-Exclusion Program](#) to prevent themselves from being able to gamble at casinos, online and using app-based sportsbooks.

If you believe you have been the victim of fraud, Raoul encourages you to file a complaint with the [Attorney General's website](#) or the [Illinois Gaming Board](#). Consumers can also call one of the Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Hotlines:

1-800-386-5438 (Chicago)  
1-800-243-0618 (Springfield)  
1-800-243-0607 (Carbondale)