

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE CALLS THE GAMBLING HELPLINE?

The Virginia problem gambling helpline allows for the caller to be completely in control of the call and never have to share anything you're uncomfortable with. Here's what happens when you call 1-800-GAMBLER or 1-888-532-3500.

Every call is answered by a trained gambling disorder specialist. They are equipped to answer even the most challenging questions and have been trained in suicide prevention to provide crucial help if and when you need it.

The call will begin with the counselor asking you to tell them what's going on and what you are struggling with. The tone is conversational, and you can share as much or as little as you want. You do not have to share your name! Your gambling disorder expert may ask you questions about:

- Your safety and if you're in a life-threatening situation.
- Your need for crisis counseling.
- The extent of your gambling problem and how long you've been struggling.
- Situations you are in due to your gambling disorder.
- Your wish for referrals to treatment programs or support groups.
- While you're on the line, the counselor will go over local treatment options available, share facts about gambling disorders, and even suggest gambling support groups and events happening near you. If you're interested, your phone counselor will send you self-help materials and connect you with a peer recovery support specialist (someone with lived experience), to provide ongoing support and help set up an appointment for you with one of our state-wide counselors.

The best part about calling a gambling helpline is receiving free, 24/7, confidential support when you need it most. It's a great first line of defense when you feel like your gambling behavior is getting out of control.