Problem Gambling – Responsibility as a Large Gaming Merchant

What is Problem Gambling?

Gambling is making or placing a bet or wager where outcomes are dependent at least partly upon chance.

Problem gambling is considered an addictive disorder that shares symptoms and signs similar to substance use disorders. Problem gambling includes all gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits.[1]

Why should we care?

Gaming and gambling is on the rise nationwide, with over 30 states currently offering some form of legal gambling, gaming, or sports betting. In 2020, the Virginia legislature expanded access to gaming and gambling opportunities across the Commonwealth with legalization of iLottery, Sports Betting, and Casino gambling. Gambling addiction may develop in 2-3% of the adult population. Three C's may be shown in someone with an addiction: cravings, continued behavior, and loss of control.

The Symptoms and Consequences Include:

1 Betting more money more frequently, irritability when attempting to stop, and "chasing" losses.

2 Loss of control from continual gambling despite mounting, serious, negative consequences.

3 In extreme cases, problem gambling can result in financial ruin, legal problems, loss of career and family, or even suicide.

Attitudes towards Problem Gambling: [2]

Addiction to gambling is a lot like addiction to drugs and alcohol.

15%	13%	72%

The gambling industry should do more to help people with an addiction.

14%	24%	62%

■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree

! What are the warning signs for Problem Gambling? [3]

Financial

✓ Money missing from bank accounts/wallet
✓ Regularly short on money even with a waged job
✓ Having many loans and borrowing money
✓ Being secretive about financial records/pay slips

Mood and Behavior

✓ Becoming withdrawn from others/family events
✓ Performance at work is being affected
✓ Seeming worried, agitated, hopeless, or depressed
✓ Controlling and/or manipulative behavior

Time

✓ Spending more and more time gambling
✓ Often being late or taking days off from work
✓ Taking an unusual amount of time for simple tasks (e.g., taking two hours to get the paper).

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[1]What is problem gambling? - . Virginia Council on Problem Gambling. (2022, February 23). https://vcpg.net/about/what-is-problem-gambling/
[2]National Council on Problem Gambling. (2019, March 11). National Survey on Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experiences (Virginia). National Survey on Gambling Attitudes and Gambling Experiences. https://www.ncpgsurvey.org/virginia/
[3]Signs of a problem. Gambling Help Online. (n.d.). https://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/helping-others/signs-of-a-problem

Advertising Regulations

Merchants should restrict ad placements to minimize messaging impact on youth and restrict the number of ads per lottery retailer to minimize ad exposure, including:
- removing gaming/gambling advertising in places below three feet
- removing gaming/gambling advertising from close to candy displays
- removing gaming/gambling advertising from counter tops and the surrounding areas

Community Awareness Efforts

Merchants should post signs promoting problem gambling hotlines and resources, as well as warnings about the legal age for gambling being 21 at sale points and near electronic gambling and lottery machines.

Checking ID

Merchants should check the I.D. of anyone entering the gaming floor. They also should agree to ensure all staff are trained on properly checking I.D.s. If a Lottery machine is set outside the gaming floor, they should agree to ensure no-one under 18 accesses it.

What are the Penalties for Illegal Gambling and Underage Betting?

To prevent fraud and protect consumers, gaming operators must comply with anti-fraud regulations: Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti-Money Laundering (AML). Gaming operators must put measures in place to prevent underage gambling, and procedures to identify, protect and support gambling addicts.

As such, identity verification efforts are increasingly important for gaming operators who must ensure that players are old enough to gamble through verification of a valid photo ID.[5]

Conducting Illegal Gambling

The operator of an illegal gambling enterprise, activity or operation shall be guilty of a **Class 6 felony.** This may include fines and imprisonment.

Underage Betting

No person shall knowingly accept or redeem a bet for a person under the age of 21 years. Any person convicted of violating this section is guilty of a **Class 1 misdemeanor.** [4]

Accessories to Illegal Gambling

Any person, firm or association of persons who knowingly aids, abets or assists in the operation of an illegal gambling enterprise, activity or operation, shall be guilty of a **Class 1 misdemeanor.**[4]

> **If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, please call our confidential and toll-free helpline at**
>
> # 1-800-GAMBLER or
> # 1 (888) 532-3500
>
> **Chat: 1800gamblerchat.org**
>
> For more information about local resources, contact your area's Community Service Board, which can be found by visiting
> dbhds.virginia.gov/community-services-boards-csbs/

[4]Virginia General Assembly. (n.d.). Chapter 8. Crimes Involving Morals and Decency: Article 1. Gambling. Virginia State Law Portal. https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title18.2/chapter8/#article1/
[5]Why is identity verification important for gaming operators?. GBG. (n.d.). https://www.gbgplc.com/en/blog/why-is-identity-verification-important-for-gaming-operators/