

Problem Gambling and the Justice Impacted Population

What is Gambling and Problem Gambling?

Gambling is anytime you RISK something of VALUE on a game of CHANCE seeking a REWARD.

Problem Gambling is when gambling causes problems in someone’s life. In some cases, gambling becomes an addiction called gambling disorder, which can be treated with counseling.

Types of Gambling in NYS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cards/dice for money ▪ Bingo ▪ Casinos ▪ Video lottery terminals at Racinos ▪ Online gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Horse racing (racetrack and OTB) ▪ Numbers games ▪ Scratch off tickets ▪ Keno and similar instant games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pull tabs ▪ Sports betting ▪ Office pools ▪ 50/50 raffles ▪ Animal fighting ▪ Stock market
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Gambling & Crime Statistics

- Rates of problem gambling in populations experiencing incarceration range anywhere from 5.2% to 38%, a rate 19 times higher compared to the general population. Canadian studies estimate rates of 6.3% to 13% among primarily adult incarcerated males.
- Problem gambling rates range from 0.4% to 7.5% in the general population. About 1/2 of the individuals experiencing problem gambling commit a crime.
- The most common crimes for adult gamblers are forgery, embezzlement, selling drugs, and theft.
- According to stats from the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Program, with a sample of 2,307, researchers found rates 3-5 times higher for problem gambling among individuals in the correctional system than in the general population. Nearly 1/3 of the sample population identified as pathological gamblers, and had committed robbery in the previous year, and approximately 13% had assaulted someone for money.
- The need to socialize, and/or engage in exciting activity to pass the time or relieve feelings of stress, anxiety, depression, or to escape reality and recreate while incarcerated leads to gambling for money, cigarettes, commissary items, food, specific tasks, sexual favors, etc., further complicated by violence if debts are not paid.
- Research indicates prison gambling is associated with crime and substance use disorder when individuals reenter the community, and can complicate formerly justice impacted individuals efforts to live crime-free. If individuals are to transition successfully from prison to community life, screening, assessment, and treatment by a Problem Gambling Treatment Specialist (PGTS), and connection to the Recovery Community is recommended.

The Northeast PGRC can connect individuals with treatment, recovery, and support services for problem gambling. Please visit NYProblemGamblingHELP.org or call 518-801-1491 for more information.

Problem Gambling Screening Tools

[E-Screener](#)

[Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen](#)

References:
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/203197.pdf>, [https://www.greo.ca/Modules/EvidenceCentre/files/Kryszajts%20and%20Matheson%20\(2017\)%20Problem%20gambling%20and%20crime%20and%20its%20costs.Pdf](https://www.greo.ca/Modules/EvidenceCentre/files/Kryszajts%20and%20Matheson%20(2017)%20Problem%20gambling%20and%20crime%20and%20its%20costs.Pdf), Williams, D. J. New Research on Prisoner Gambling: Correctional Considerations and Implications for Re-entry | Prison Legal News. (2009). at <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2009/sep/15/new-research-on-prisonergambling-correctional-considerations-and-implications-for-re-entry/>