

Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

# Grant Opportunity

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

**Special Population Grants for Those At-Risk of  
Problem Gambling**

**Deadline: September 22, 2024**

## **OVERVIEW:**

The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (the Center) is implementing a special populations problem gambling prevention program for the State of Maryland. A special population is a population that has been shown either through National or Maryland data to be at greater risk of gambling problems. A list of the special populations is listed below. The Program is funded through the Center from funding from the Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration (BHA).

The Center will be offering limited grant opportunities to community organizations serving populations at-risk of problem gambling. The grant award is for fiscal year 2024, July 2023-June 2024. Each grant will be between \$1,000-\$10,000, depending on the reach of the organization and the amount of prevention strategies proposed. Grant funding will be available until all funds are expended.

## **GRANT PROGRAM GOALS:**

There are three main goals of the problem gambling prevention special populations grant program. The first goal is to educate community organizations and the populations they serve on the risks associated with gambling, how problem gambling can be prevented, and the resources for problem gambling help in the State of Maryland. Maryland community organizations become empowered to become leaders in the problem gambling prevention field. The second goal is for community organizations to integrate problem gambling prevention into their work with substance misuse prevention, mental health promotion, and public health promotion for underserved and at-risk populations. This will provide sustainability for problem gambling prevention strategies in Maryland. The final goal of the special population grants is to have a wider reach to promote public health among Maryland's communities across the State, especially as it relates to problem gambling. With limited funding and resources, working through community organizations that know their communities and have established networks is more efficient for problem gambling prevention.

Grantees will be provided technical assistance and support for their prevention programming when awarded a grant. This includes staff training, collaboration on webinars, and/or printed or

electronic materials free of charge. Promotional items with the 1-800-GAMBLER Helpline number are provided free of charge for distribution at community events.

Research both Nationally and in Maryland show the following populations are at greater risk of gambling problems:

- Youth (middle school, high school)
- Young adults (college age)
- Males
- African Americans
- Hispanics
- Asians
- Native Americans
- Those at risk of suicide
- Those with poor health
- Veterans and active military
- Those who are less educated
- Those who are low income
- Those who use drugs or are in treatment or recovery from substance misuse
- Those with mental health disorders
- Those involved in domestic violence or child maltreatment
- Those who are incarcerated or involved with the criminal justice system (youth and/or adults)

Priority areas in Maryland for the grant are identified by prevalence study data as areas with a higher percentage of disordered gamblers and/or areas that have not had a problem gambling prevention grant last fiscal year or had minimal support.

For FY 2024, the priority areas in Maryland are:

- Calvert County
- St. Mary's County
- Charles County
- Baltimore City
- Allegany County
- Garrett County

If you are serving other areas of the State, please apply as we would like to maintain the grants we currently have in other counties.

The Priority populations for FY 2024 are:

- Youth/ Young adults
- Hispanic/ Latino population
- Corrections/ Juvenile Services

These priority populations were either underserved or have not been reached through a problem gambling prevention grant in the past. If you are serving other special populations at risk of problem gambling, please apply so we can maintain the special populations we are currently serving.

Possible prevention themes to integrate problem gambling prevention into the work of substance misuse prevention, mental health promotion, and other public health promotion for underserved populations include:

- Alcohol, drug misuse, and gambling addictions are multi-generational.
- Alcohol, drug misuse, mental health disorders, and gambling addictions often co-occur.
- Brain images of those with addictive behaviors are similar regardless of the type of addiction.
- Those who have physical health problems are more likely to have mental health disorders and vice versa.
- Due to brain development through the age of 25, youth and young adults are at greater risk of engaging in risky behaviors.
- Those from minority populations are at greater risk of experiencing discrimination and racism making them more vulnerable to engage in unhealthy coping strategies. They are more likely to live in poverty and have decreased access to educational opportunities.
- Those with mental health disorders are more likely to have unhealthy coping strategies such as problem gambling or substance misuse.
- At-risk and problem gamblers are more likely to experience mental health problems.
- Those who are involved in the criminal justice system are more likely to have substance misuse, mental health, and/or gambling problems.

### **RESEARCH:**

Maryland Gambling and Problem Gambling Facts:

- 92% of Maryland adults have gambled in their lifetime (Tracy et al., 2020)
- According to the Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland, 5.5 % were found to be disordered gamblers, 3.1 % to be problem gamblers, and 11.5 % were found to be at-risk gamblers. In the 2017 sample, these percentages were 1.2 %, 0.7 % and 2.6%, respectively, indicating an increase overtime (Tracy et al., 2020).
- Minority populations were more likely to be disordered gamblers; Maryland adult African Americans (11%), Asians (10.4%), Hispanics (18.4%), and American Indians (8%) are more likely to be disordered gamblers compared to the White population (6%) (Tracy et al., 2020).
- Those who use illicit drugs are more likely to be disordered gamblers (Tracy et al., 2020).
- Those with gambling disorders in Maryland are more likely to make less than \$75,000 per year (Tracy et al., 2020).
- Depression is significantly associated with gambling disorder (Monaghan et al., 2017).
- Those with decreased levels of education are more likely to be disordered gamblers (Tracy et al., 2020).

- Those who misuse substances are more likely to be disordered gamblers (Tracy et al., 2020).
- 22% of the veterans in a Maryland study met the criteria for disordered gambling (Levy et al., 2014).
- 40% of clients in an inner-city substance use treatment center met the criteria for disordered gambling (Himelhoch et al., 2016).
- Of those at-risk of problem gambling, 63% had knowledge of the toll-free helpline (Tracy et al., 2020)
- 79% of Marylanders surveyed agreed addiction to gambling is a lot like addiction to drugs or alcohol (National Council on Problem Gambling, 2018).

### **GRANT APPLICATION CRITERIA:**

#### **To Be Eligible to Apply:**

1. Must not be a for profit organization in Maryland.
2. Must provide a description of the community organization and its services.
3. Must describe the populations that the community organization serves.
4. Must demonstrate an active interest in integrating gambling awareness and problem gambling prevention and outreach within current scope of work.
5. Must be available to meet with the Prevention Manager to determine training needs for the organization.
6. The organization must designate one or more employees to attend the Center's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Maryland Conference on Problem Gambling in June, 2024. Community organizations may be able to present their final projects at the conference.
7. Must track Grant activities and submit a final activity report to the Center on or before July 30, 2024.

### **SAMPLE PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER WHEN APPLYING:**

Grant activities will be proposed by the community organization in the grant application. When selected for funding, the community organization will meet with Center staff to refine the prevention strategies. The letter of agreement will be drafted and then approved for language by the community organization and the Center. Once approved, the letter of agreement will be signed by both parties. When the letter of agreement is signed, the community organization can begin to work on the prevention strategies. Each community organization must propose at least three prevention strategies in their grant applications. Others can be added based on the initial meeting with the community organization and the Center. Prevention strategies must be completed by June 30, 2024. This is a list of prevention strategies that have been completed by grantees in the past. New strategies or those listed below can be proposed.

1. Include a problem gambling prevention article(s) in the organization's printed or e-newsletter.
2. Host a problem gambling prevention webinar through your organization's contacts.
3. Promote Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) using the Center's PGAM guide.

4. Promote other Center communication campaigns such as December Gift Responsibly and May Mental Health month through your organization's contacts.
5. Post a blog on problem gambling prevention on your organization's website.
6. Host a problem gambling prevention community forum either in-person or virtually.
7. Host an in-person problem gambling prevention presentation.
8. Display problem gambling prevention materials at health fairs and community events.
9. Post problem gambling prevention messages on your organization's social media accounts.
10. Host a staff training on problem gambling prevention and resources for help.
11. Distribute problem gambling prevention materials in lobbies, through food drives, or in waiting rooms.
12. Issue a press release announcing your organization's collaboration with the Center and send to local media outlets.
13. Produce a problem gambling prevention video.
14. Integrate problem gambling prevention into your organization's current educational programs.
15. Translate materials or website content from English to another language spoken in your community.
16. Add the Center's logo or problem gambling information to your organization's website.
17. Post problem gambling awareness flyers on your website, email them to your e-list, and/or post them on social media.
18. Conduct a survey on problem gambling in collaboration with the Center.
19. Add questions on problem gambling to a survey currently conducted by your organization.
20. Add the Center's information to your organization's or your community's resource guide.
21. With assistance from the Center, advocate for or provide testimony on problem gambling prevention legislation.
22. Forward the Center's emails to your organization's e-list.
23. Integrate problem gambling prevention resources into employee assistance programs or in workforce wellness presentations.
24. Promote problem gambling screening or host a problem gambling screening day using the Center's resources: <https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/self-evaluation/>
25. Post flyers on problem gambling prevention at libraries, laundromats, doctor's offices, or other community businesses.
26. Encourage your organization's staff to attend the Center's webinars to educate themselves on problem gambling in Maryland.

**GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Grant applications will be accepted through this link:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M6K758V>**

Contact information and at least three suggested prevention strategies must be included in the application. Grant applications will be accepted until all funding is allocated for fiscal year 2024.

Please contact **Heather Eshleman, Prevention Manager by email:**

**[heshleman@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:heshleman@som.umaryland.edu) or phone 667-214-2120 Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling, if you have any questions.**

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