



For Immediate Release

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IDHS Recognizes March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

The city skyline will be lit orange and events will be held across the state to raise awareness for gambling disorder and celebrate recovery in Illinois

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is raising awareness for gambling disorder and partnering with providers across the state to recognize March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. In addition, Governor JB Pritzker proclaimed March to be Problem Gambling Awareness Month in Illinois.

This year IDHS and gambling disorder providers are hosting events in the city of Chicago and throughout the state. The purpose of the month is to increase awareness and understanding of problem gambling and celebrate the people who recover. Awareness events will include gambling screenings on March 10th for National Screening Day, gambling presentations and open houses, workshops, and other public events. A full list of Recovery Month events can be found on the IDHS [website](#). Buildings in the city of Chicago will also be lit orange from March 1-7 to raise awareness.

“Our goal for Problem Gambling Awareness Month is to increase the understanding of problem gambling and let individuals know that “We Know the Feeling” through our hotline at 1-800-GAMBLER and website at WeKnowTheFeeling.org,” said IDHS Secretary Grace B. Hou. “Individuals who struggle with gambling disorders seldom seek help and often hide their behavior from family members. This month is an opportunity for IDHS and our providers to come together and continue to get the word out about the recovery support services that are available to them. We would like to thank our community partners for hosting events this month, and the Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago for lighting their buildings up orange to raise awareness.”

Gambling legislation recently passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Pritzker has allowed the IDHS Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR) to increase the funding for new treatment resources, prevention, and outreach this year by approximately five times the amount that was approved last year. SUPR has increased the number of organizations that have gambling programs by 43%.



JB Pritzker, *Governor*

Grace B. Hou, *Secretary*

SUPR has also been working with the gambling providers to expand outreach and increase awareness about the problems that gambling can cause, the services that are available and the local organizations who provide them. This month, Illinois will be launching a gambling awareness campaign that will include billboards, a targeted pay-per-click strategy, as well as radio and TV ads. SUPR has also helped providers to prepare for an increase in problem gamblers coming in for treatment. To date, there have been over 100 practitioners trained to provide gambling disorder treatment services in Illinois. This year SUPR will also be hosting five additional trainings for 175 practitioners in different four regions of the state.

To learn more about gambling disorders, please visit WeKnowTheFeeling.org. If you or a loved one is struggling with gambling disorder, call 1-800-GAMBLER or text ILGAMB to 53342.