

For Immediate Release

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Illinois Department of Human Services Announces Statewide Assessment of Gambling Challenges and Addiction Treatment Needs

Study will determine the extent of gambling and addiction in the state and assess gaps in available treatment and services

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) announced today the launch of a year-long study of gambling, gambling addiction, and support service needs in Illinois. Results from the study will be used by IDHS for future strategic initiatives to prevent problem gambling and increase access to treatment and services. The half a million-dollar initiative is funded by revenue from the state’s gambling tax and allocated funds from the fiscal year 2021 budget.

“This gambling prevalence study is unprecedented in Illinois and will give us a clearer understanding of the prevalence of gambling disorder in the state. Understanding the pervasiveness of gambling disorder will allow us to target communities that may be disproportionality impacted by the expansion of gambling in the state,” said IDHS Secretary Grace Hou. “The study will also help us to understand where we can make further investments in Illinois communities to support treatment and recovery as well as education for responsible gambling. Knowing the starting point will help us measure our impact on gambling disorder in Illinois.”

The Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR) at IDHS launched the study in response to legislation that expanded access to gaming across the state. The assessment will be conducted with IDHS’ partner, Health Resources in Action, Inc., a non-profit public health organization that provides research, evaluation, training, and program support services around the country, including administering the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances.

A team of researchers from IDHS and Health Resources in Action will determine the extent of gambling and problem gambling across the state, including in populations that are vulnerable or marginalized due to race, culture, economic or social disparity. They will also explore risk



JB Pritzker, *Governor*

Grace B. Hou, *Secretary*

factors for developing a gambling problem, barriers residents face in accessing services in different regions of the state, and what practices and initiatives can address the problem gambling needs in the state. The resulting report will be used by IDHS and other key stakeholders to improve access to public health services related to problem gambling among Illinois residents.

If you or someone you know is experiencing problems with gambling, go to weknowthefeeling.org, call 1-800-GAMBLER, text "ILGamb" to 53342, or [chat here](#).

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