



Illinois Department of Revenue

For Immediate Release
March 25, 2010

Contact: Susan Hofer (Revenue)
312.814.8197

March is Problem Gambling Month

Lottery, Gaming, Racing Boards offer tips for recognizing problems

CHICAGO – Illinois agencies that regulate gaming in Illinois recognize that for some people the fun and excitement of winning a little extra money at the races, casinos, or by playing the lottery can become unhealthy. But, it may be difficult to tell in some cases whether or not someone simply enjoys gambling, or if they have an actual problem.

Here are some signs to help recognize if you or someone you love has a gambling problem:

- Preoccupied with gambling and unable to stop
- Bragging about gambling, exaggerating wins and minimizing losses
- Restless and irritable when not gambling
- Gambling to win back what you've lost
- Borrowing money for gambling
- Lying to hide time spent gambling or unpaid debts
- Frequent unexplained absences
- Losing work time because of gambling
- Doing something illegal to get money for gambling
- Jeopardizing a significant relationship or job by gambling

“We want Illinoisans to enjoy playing lottery games without putting their families’ budgets at risk and if we can offer help to those gamers with problems, we’re happy to do so,” said Jodie Winnett, Illinois Lottery Acting Superintendent.

“A gambling addiction is a serious matter. The Gaming Board urges problem gamblers and their families to seek help through professional counseling, Gamblers Anonymous or Gam-Anon,” said Mark Ostrowski, Administrator of the Illinois Gaming Board.

To date the IGB has enrolled 7,366 persons in the IGB’s Self-Exclusion Program for Problem Gamblers. Persons seeking to self-exclude from Illinois casinos should visit the IGB’s website for additional information on the program.

“We want to make sure that Illinoisans enjoy going to the races and not have financial or personal problems as a result. That’s why we link right to Gamblers Anonymous’ home page from our website,” said Marc Laino, Director, Illinois Racing Board.

The Illinois Council on Problem Gambling (ICPG) provides advice and assistance to Illinois game regulators and families coping with problem gambling.

“By recognizing the signs of problem gambling, we can help to avert the devastating community, social, family and individual costs attached to it,” said Elizabeth Houston, Executive Director of ICPG. “Treatment, prevention and public awareness have demonstrable impacts on these problems.”

Governor Pat Quinn today issued a proclamation recognizing that March 2010 is Illinois Gambling Awareness Month. The text of the proclamation follows:

WHEREAS, problem gambling is a public health issue affecting an estimated several hundred thousand Illinoisans of all ages, races and ethnic backgrounds in all communities and which has a significant societal and economic cost; and

WHEREAS, problem gambling is treatable and treatment is effective in minimizing the harm to both individuals and society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, numerous individuals, professionals and organizations have dedicated their efforts to the education of the public about problem gambling and the availability and effectiveness of treatment; and

WHEREAS, throughout the month, the Illinois Council on Problem Gambling, the Illinois Lottery, the Illinois Gaming Board and the Illinois Racing Board, have joined together in promoting March as Illinois Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, promoting this awareness period provides individuals in the problem gambling community an opportunity to educate the public and policymakers about the social and financial effectiveness of services for problem gambling;

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim March 2010 as **ILLINOIS PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH**, in support of the important public awareness campaign, and encourage all citizens to help spread the message that there is help for problem gamblers through treatment, and to support those who are in recovery from it and in treatment for it, as well as their families and communities.