



New York City Casino Gambling Harms Mitigation Recommendations

On February 19, 2025, The New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG), in conjunction with the NYC Problem Gambling Resource Center (PGRC) hosted a stakeholder panel discussion and community conversation at The Center (aka the LGBTQ Center) in Manhattan, to develop recommendations for gambling harm mitigation efforts that should be required as part of the new downstate casino license applications.

While at NYCPG we take a neutral stance on gambling, it is important that Problem Gambling is addressed during this application process. Come the end of June Community Advisory Councils will begin evaluating bids and holding public meetings for comment. In addition to our advocacy efforts, we are encouraging community members to demand that problem gambling be a high priority for anyone with the power to determine if a community will benefit from new, accessible forms of gambling.

In a recent interview with Gaming Commission Chairman, Brian Odwyer, he was quoted saying, “...It’s important that the communities in which these casinos are located feel **100% comfortable with having those casinos**. The Legislature made it very clear they don’t want the casino shoved down the throat of any community that doesn’t want them. They relied on the local officials appointing a committee to see that the community is **satisfied with the way the casino is being operated**. And at that point in time, if the community through its elected representatives is **satisfied, they want the casino there**, the application will move forward.”

The Community Advisory Board must ensure the community is ready for the casino, comfortable and satisfied. Therefore, based on the feedback received from stakeholders and community members in attendance at the at this event, the Council recommends that each casino license applicant include an additional five million dollars dedicated to gambling harm mitigation in the surrounding community and specifically earmark those funds for problem gambling advertising, education, treatment innovation, research, outreach, and addressing problem gambling on the casino property.

All the above recommendations must be implemented with culturally responsive and appropriate staff and tools and must be available in multiple languages, minimally English, Spanish and Mandarin.

When Community Advisory Boards meet with casino applicants there should be someone with problem gambling experience and expertise at the table for those discussions. Formally addressing these recommendations should be required of the casinos as part of the process of ensuring community comfort and satisfaction. The New York Council on Problem Gambling and its regional PGRCs stand ready to assist in this process.

To learn more about recommendation specifics please contact Michelle Hadden at mhadden@nycpg.org. More information on the New York Council on Problem Gambling and the New York City Problem Gambling Resource Center can be found by visiting NYProblemGambling.org

These recommendations are supported by the following organizations and individuals:

The New York Council on Problem Gambling

The New York State Problem Gambling Resource Centers

Friends of Recovery –NY

NYS Parent Teacher Association

Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership

Patrick Caruso, Community Board 10

Andrew Hidalgo- Program for the Development of Human Potential Brooklyn Diocese

Anita Kennedy-Mount Sinai Hospital

Annette Evans-Samaritan Daytop Village Bronx Peer Alliance Recovery Center

Awildat Torres-Inwood Community Services

Beatrice Chen-Immigrant Social Services

Carol Deng-Lower Eastside Service Center

Christine Cavallucci-Archdiocese of NY Drug Abuse Prevention Program

Danny Peguano-Inwood Community Services

Debbie Wolfe -In Unity Alliance NY

Dr. Brown-Phoenix House

Hailey Gibson-Phoenix House Bklyn.

Janet Smith Dobson-DOHMH

Jessica Feliciano-PARC Bronx

Jessica Steinmetz-The Safe Foundation

Juan Jordan-Exponents

Karen Wang-Hamilton Madison House

Ken Brown -Bronx Community Planning Board 8

Martha Dolmo -Manhattan Council

Milo Ward-New York City Prevention Resource Center

Nicholas Steele-Elmcor/QPCC

Thanh Pham-OPINY

Yvette Jeanty-NYC Dept. of Education Director of Prevention & Intervention Services

Scott Meyer-Peer Specialist

Jenn Hecker- NYC Dept. of Education Director of Prevention & Intervention

Norwood Keaton- Program for the Development of Human Potential Brooklyn Diocese

[Your Organization and Individual Name Here]



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The following recommendations are intended to be delivered by local organizations in the communities surrounding the newly licensed casino. These are not intended to replace or duplicate State funded efforts to address gambling harm but rather to supplement and boost efforts in the immediate local communities most affected.

Problem Gambling (PG) Advertising

Advertising efforts should be funded specifically in and targeted to the New York City market using the same media and marketing mediums used by the casino itself. Advertising messaging should focus on promoting problem gambling treatment services, raising awareness of gambling harms, destigmatizing gambling disorders and prevention. Additionally, each casino should provide these advertising messages directly to their patrons onsite, online and privately through their Player's Club communications.

Problem Gambling Outreach

There will be an ongoing need for outreach and awareness efforts in the immediate communities surrounding the new casinos. This outreach should be grassroots, street level work conducted by Recovery Specialists and other staff trained to spread awareness of gambling harms, work towards reducing stigma around gambling problems and increase the utilization of intervention and treatment resources.

Problem Gambling Education

Increasing knowledge about the risks of gambling and educating key influencers as well as youth and young adults in the NYC market will help to ensure that there is balanced and accurate information surrounding the realities of being involved in newly accessible gambling opportunities within the community. Education should be focused at minimum on myths, facts and odds, facts about the addiction potential of gambling, especially for vulnerable populations, and gambling harms. Education should be community and school based and specifically targeted to youth, college age young adults, parents, athletes, casino staff and professionals in related fields.

Treatment for Problem and Disordered Gambling

In addition to the existing available outpatient treatment services, walk-in treatment facilities that are open 24/7 and within one mile of the casino should be developed. For those in need of a higher level of care a stand-alone (not as part of an existing mental health or substance use inpatient facility) inpatient treatment facility to address disordered gambling should be opened in NYC and accessible by all NYers.

In addition to the community-based work described above, the following are additional recommendations for development, that are essential to servicing the NYC communities and the residents that will be impacted.

Addressing Problem Gambling Onsite at Casinos

More can be done onsite at casinos to address the harm caused by gambling and to assist those who are struggling to keep gambling for entertainment only. All casinos should have Problem Gambling Ambassadors available onsite to help and talk with someone 24/7. These are dedicated casino staff or 3rd party contracts that are available in each area of the casino and who specialize in each type of gambling (sports, Mahjong, craps, etc.), they are trained to identify and address someone who may be dealing with gambling harms. Additionally, Voluntary Self Exclusion (VSE) support, conducted with care and concern, should be available on-demand at all times. Each casino must have an onsite Resource/Support Center style room where patrons can take a break from the casino floor, have access to resources and materials on healthy play and gambling harm, and can request aid for VSE if needed. Easily accessible/visible and promoted by the casino to patrons.

Problem Gambling Research

While research efforts in have grown over the past few years related to gambling harms and gambling harm mitigation there is still a lack of research to direct the implementation of clear evidence-based programming in the following areas:

- Treatment models and session tools
- Effective red flags and predictor data for problem gambling and gambling disorder on Players Club and online accounts
- Youth prevention programming
- Special populations needs assessments and effective interventions (NYC specific)
- Best practices in intervention during play (both online and at brick-and-mortar facilities)

Problem Gambling Treatment Innovation

New modes of gambling include the use of technology as well as app-based play. Prevention, intervention and treatment solutions to address gambling harm should also be developed and accessible to those in need. These app-based services should be NY specific and shared by the casino with their patrons. Additionally, an on-demand network of treatment professionals that can be accessed and provide support 24/7 directly from the patron's Player's Club account or the casino website is essential.