

Re: **Problem Gambling support services available to veterans and their families**

Dear Veterans:

I am writing to ensure that you are aware of services available to veterans and their families regarding problem gambling addiction, and to ask for your assistance in making sure that veterans in your communities are aware of these services as well.

We have seen gambling addiction impact far too many people and their families, often leading to loss of jobs, severe debt, relationship failures, and depression. According to recent studies, veterans are more likely to suffer from gambling addiction, and the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is conducting a further study on the issue.

The Government Accountability Office also recently completed a study in which they recommended that the Department of Defense treat problem gambling consistently with other addictive disorders and screen all active military members for problem gambling disorder.

We know that veterans are often reluctant to seek proactive help regarding problem gambling and other addictive behaviors. That is why we are seeking your help to get the word out and to urge veterans to seek assistance. **If you become aware of veterans in your community who may be dealing with gambling addiction, we encourage you to have them contact the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling's helpline at 1-800-426-1234.**

This is the state's only 24-hour helpline for problem gambling addiction. We have staff who are specifically trained to help veterans and understand the unique challenges they may face. Our helpline is also available to answer your questions or questions that family members may have.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is committed to supporting active military members and veterans who may be confronting gambling addiction. We also are so thankful for the work that you do each and every day.

If you have additional questions or suggestions for ways we can further support our veterans on this important issue, please contact myself or Jackie Dias, Director of Programs and Services, at our office at 617-426-4554.

Thank you again for all you do.

Marlene Warner  
Executive Director, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling