

Problem gambling treatment

Overview

Beginning in SFY 2024, publicly funded problem gambling treatment services are now available to eligible individuals and their families through two programs: the State Problem Gambling Program and Apple Health.

Eligibility requirements

1) State Problem Gambling Program (low-barrier entry)

- Resident of WA (client and/or family)
- Assessed and would benefit from treatment¹
- Has no way to pay for treatment services
- Not enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid)

2) Medicaid (Apple Health)

- Enrolled in Apple Health
- Assessed and would benefit from treatment

Usage of Problem Gambling Treatment Services SFY 2024

- 278 Client cases (adults served)
- 6596 Client services billed:
 - Assessments = 148
 - Treatment sessions = 5527
 - Group sessions (incl add-on) = 468
 - Case management² = 463

Accessing services

Clients access problem gambling services in several ways --

- [Problem Gambling Helpline](#) 1-800-547-6133 (in WA) /1-800-GAMBLER (National)
- [State Problem Gambling Program](#)
- [Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling](#)
- [Apple Health \(Medicaid\)](#) through Managed Care Organizations and direct referrals by clinicians

¹ Gambling assessments must be administered by a Certified Gambling Counselor (CGC) or CGC in-training, per WAC (246-341-1200).

Programmatic changes in SFY 2024:

- Effective 7/1/24, the Legislature doubled the percentage of funding from business and occupation tax on commercial gambling and authorized the same percentage increase from the WA State Lottery. This new funding has allowed the Program to expand prevention, treatment, recovery, clinical training, workforce development, and research and evaluation efforts
- Apple Health (Medicaid) now covers problem gambling assessment and treatment through licensed DOH-certified problem gambling treatment agencies (as of Jan 2024)
- Treatment reimbursement rates for the State Problem Gambling Program increased (as of Jan 2024—first rate increase since 2005)
- Disordered Gambling Advisory Workgroup launched (DGAW -- ongoing)
- Problem Gambling Prevention Workgroup (PGPW -- through May 2025) launched.
- Launched Workforce development expansion project, In collaboration with the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling. Goal is increase in Certified Gambling Counselors, with a focus on clinicians working with populations and communities historically underrepresented (BIPOC), speaking languages other than English, and in geographic areas without local state-funded problem gambling treatment services.

Usage (by specific program)

Medicaid (Apple Health – new in 2024)

As of January 1, 2024, Medicaid (Apple Health) began covering problem gambling assessment and treatment. The matching funds are approximately 30% state and 70% federal. As access to problem gambling treatment services expands, treatment services are expected to increase over the next several years (in line with fiscal projections).

Client cases & services (Medicaid)

²This total underrepresents case management --Medicaid does not have a problem gambling-specific modifier for case management.

- 34 Client cases
- 406 Client services (sessions) billed:
 - Assessment = 24
 - Individual treatment = 179
 - Group & Group add-on = 203

PG Program (non-Medicaid)

Client cases

- 244 Client cases
- 113 clients were newly assessed, with an 85% admittance rate (up from 79% in SFY 2023)
 - 96 admitted to outpatient treatment
 - 17 did not enter treatment
- 148 clients received treatment only
- Average cost per client case was \$2,596 (excluding assessment-only cases)

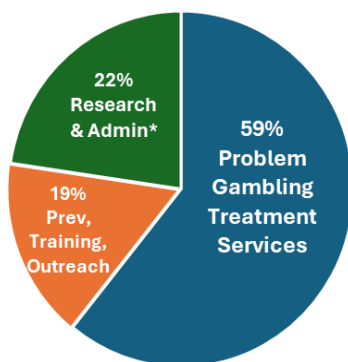
Treatment services³

In total, the State Problem Gambling Program reimbursed contracted treatment providers for 6,190 separate services:

- 114 assessments
- 5348 individual/conjoint/family sessions
- 265 group sessions
- 463 case management sessions

Overview of SFY 2023-2025 Budget

In the 2023-2025 Biennium, the PG Program's spending authority is \$2.43M (budget below):⁴



³ In SFY 2024, the Program reimbursed \$592,572 for clinical treatment. This amount will increase in SFY 2025 with new contracts.

The State Problem Gambling Program provides gap treatment reimbursement funding for eligible individuals and family members seeking clinical treatment for problem gambling and Gambling Disorder (DSM-5). The program funds or directly provides the following services:

- Training for Certified Gambling Counselors and other clinicians, Peers, and others
- Reimbursement for problem gambling treatment providers and agencies
- Prevention, awareness, outreach, and educational activities
- Research and evaluation as needed

Authority

Revised Code of Washington 43.20A.890, and Washington Administrative Codes 246-341-1200. Problem gambling program established by RCW 41.05.750; problem gambling account established by RCW 41.05.751. WAC 182-100-0100 defines the scope of the State Problem Gambling Program under the Health Care Authority, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery.

Partners

- WA State Gambling Commission
- WA Indian Gaming Association
- State Lottery & Horse Racing Commissions
- Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling
- Behavioral Health Advisory Council/DBHR
- The Recovery Café (Seattle) & reSTART Life
- National Council on Problem Gambling

For more information

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www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-and-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/problem-gambling

⁴ *Research & Admin includes a new 1.0 FTE in Fall 2024 (PG Prevention Coordinator) and additional data analysis for problem gambling prevalence for Young Adults.