

# Problem Gambling Helplines: Improving Access and Service for Those in Need



Legalized gaming has experienced tremendous growth over the last three decades, expanding from just 13 legal states in 1993 to 44 states and the District of Columbia today. With this growth, the gaming industry has ensured our commitment to responsible gaming grows in tandem by dedicating both financial and human resources to educate and research responsible and problem gambling.

While most customers enjoy gambling as a form of entertainment, resources—like problem gambling helplines—are vital for providing support and counseling to those for whom gambling is no longer fun. Today, multiple helplines operate across the country providing referrals for individuals seeking help for a gambling problem.

Unfortunately, as the industry works to raise awareness about legal, regulated gaming options for consumers, current state-specific regulations have led to confusion and inconsistency in how operators must display problem gambling helpline disclaimers:



## **DIMINISHED AWARENESS**

Requirements compel licensees to display multiple national and state-specific numbers in published and broadcasted national advertisements. A national or multi-state advertisement may have to display more than a dozen different helplines and disclaimer language resulting in tougher to read fonts and diluted messaging.



## **CUSTOMER CONFUSION**

Multiple helpline numbers cause consumer confusion as to the appropriate number to call. For example, should the consumer call the number for the state in which he or she resides or the number in the state where he or she is gambling? The mix of numbers also creates unnecessary barriers to help, like remembering the appropriate numbers to call when in crisis.



## **OUTDATED OFFERING**

The requirement to use a call-in helpline overlooks modern services including websites and text-based resources that many consumers may prefer.

**THE AMERICAN GAMING ASSOCIATION AND ITS MEMBERS SUPPORT UTILIZING NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINES IN NATIONAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS TO HELP CONSUMERS IN NEED ACCESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY.**

This will decrease consumer confusion, prevent diminished awareness of available resources, and improve customer experience and accessibility. National helpline numbers connect consumers with appropriate state resources or directly help consumers in situations when state resources are not readily available. Incorporating technology, such as SMS texting and website and mobile platform applications, will also provide additional avenues for the consumer to quickly seek and receive help in the format best for them.

**WE BELIEVE THIS WILL ACHIEVE THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL: PROVIDING CONSUMERS HELP FROM THE MOST DIRECT AND LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDER WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST.**

## Optimizing Helplines in National Ads

✗ ORIGINAL



✓ OPTIMAL



**FEATURING A NATIONAL HELPLINE NUMBER IMPROVES READABILITY AND HIGHLIGHTS THE RESOURCE.**