

# Gambling Disorder &

# Older Adults

For many, gambling is a fun activity, but for those who become addicted, it can be a devastating disease.

**It can be even worse for the older adult.**

Today, there are more Americans than ever before who are over the age of 65 and living alone. As a result, many may turn to gambling, not only as a social and entertaining activity, but also as a means of trying to deal with loss, grief and time alone.

Gambling among older adults is on the rise, largely due to availability and accessibility. A gambling problem can be particularly challenging for older adults because recouping a financial loss during this stage of life can be very difficult, if not impossible.

Even if they recognize that there is a problem, they may not know that help is available or where to get it.



Council on  
Compulsive Gambling  
of Pennsylvania, Inc.

**Help is available**  
**1-800-GAMBLER®**  
**1-800-848-1880**

## **Gambling Disorder & Older Adults**

Several factors can contribute to why older adults may develop gambling related difficulties.

**For many older adults, gambling is used as an escape, brought on by the following:**

- Increase of unstructured time after retirement
- Loss of a spouse or other loved one
- A limited social network
- Changes in physical or mental health
- Boredom

### **Potential Dangers of Older Adults' Gambling**

- Loss of life savings
- Lack of understanding of addiction
- Lack of willingness to seek help
- Hiding gambling due to the stigma
- Ease of access to gambling

### **Getting Help for Older Adults**

Certified gambling counselors see clients of all ages. Several counseling options exist in Pennsylvania for the gambler, and their loved ones. Additionally, support groups, such as Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon, welcome people of all ages.

### **What Help Is Available?**

If you think you, or someone you know, may have an issue related to gambling, please call the 24/7 toll-free Pennsylvania Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER® or 1-800-848-1880.

### **Help is just a phone call away.**

For more information about frequently displayed warning signs, ways to maintain responsible play limits and additional resources for help, please visit [www.pacouncil.com](http://www.pacouncil.com)

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