

DHHS Problem Gambling Program Background

Program History

Nevada was an early adopter of legalized commercial gaming, has become a leader in the global gaming industry, yet was behind many other states in establishing dedicated funding to address problem gambling. In 2005, Nevada introduced legislation to expand its approach to legalized gambling by investing in the development of problem gambling treatment and prevention systems. The legislation resulted in the creation of a Revolving Account for the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling and an Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling (ACPG) to advise the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in its administration of this account. Program funding was linked to the number of slot machines operating in the state, \$2 per slot machine per quarter, totaling an amount sufficient to build the infrastructure for a statewide gambling treatment system and the groundwork for a problem gambling prevention and workforce development system. 2019 legislature revised the funding structure for the Revolving Account for the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling from a \$2 per machine levy on gaming operators to a straight \$2,000,000 per year general fund allocation for state fiscal years 2020 and 2021. The legislature also approved the DHHS proposal to relocate the problem gambling program from the Office of Community Partnerships and Grants (OCPG) to the Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness and Prevention (BHWP). In the second half of FY2020, the COVID-19 pandemic reached Nevada creating a statewide public health and economic crisis. The BHWP supported gambling treatment system rapidly retooled to meet challenges faced by public health needs by expanding telehealth services and developing new public awareness campaigns. Amidst a state budget crisis caused by the pandemic, the 2020 legislature enacted budget reductions across state agency departments that ultimately lead to a large reduction to the FY2021 Problem Gambling Services budget (from \$2,098,054 to \$1,274,513).

Current Problem Gambling Services System

DHHS Problem Gambling Services are guided by a Strategic Plan that describes six program areas: Prevention, Research, Workforce Development, Treatment, Information Management, and Administration [http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Grants/Programs/Problem_Gambling/Problem_Gambling_Services_\(PGS\)/](http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Grants/Programs/Problem_Gambling/Problem_Gambling_Services_(PGS)/). Investments into each of these program areas shifted over the past three years with some program areas impacted more than others (see Figure 1).

