



## **Providing HelpLine Services, Programs, and Supports for Gambling Addiction in the State of Florida**

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG) has a longstanding history in the state, and three decades of experience in the gambling addiction field. The FCCG is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) independent corporation whose primary mission is to increase public awareness about problem and compulsive gambling and to advocate for and provide services and supports to individuals in need of assistance for a gambling problem. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling while also seeking to assist citizens in need of problem-gambling-specific supports. As the only statewide organization of its kind in Florida, the FCCG has served under contract with Florida state government for more than three decades.

The FCCG operates the statewide Problem Gambling HelpLine service 888-ADMIT-IT, providing free, confidential, and multilingual problem gambling assistance to thousands of callers each year, from gamblers and their loved ones to employers, treatment professionals, educators, law enforcement and judicial professionals, probation departments, bankruptcy and financial counseling organizations, gaming industry members, state government policymakers, and others. However, although the FCCG is recognized by most through its 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, this is only one of the many services and programs it provides.

The FCCG partnership with the Florida Lottery from 1992 – 2012 supported problem gambling prevention, education, outreach, and research activities in the state of Florida, including culturally specific initiatives. Lottery Responsible Play Programming was also developed and implemented, increasing public and employee awareness about responsible gaming while at the same time promoting the FCCG HelpLine, and included training programs for gambling industry employees, agents, and equipment manufacturers.

In the late 1990's, and prior to implementation of the responsible gaming programming provided to slot-licensed pari-mutuel gambling facilities in South Florida, the FCCG developed programming and assisted the Seminole Tribe of Florida in devising the State of Florida and the Tribe's first-ever Responsible Gaming & Player Protection Program (RGPPP), as well as a "Train-the-Trainer" component, which has been significantly enhanced over the past two decades.

In similar fashion, the FCCG has been providing gaming industry operators with responsible gaming program development and implementation services in the establishment and maintenance of responsible play programs. In 2005, the FCCG devised the State of Florida's first-ever training protocol, and Train-the-Trainer manual, for regulated slot-licensed pari-mutuel facilities located in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, which is still provided today.

Equally important, the FCCG is also the Florida-designated state affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG). Affiliate Members serve as the official representatives of the NCPG in their respective states, responding to all calls for help with a gambling problem received through the national helpline, and work cooperatively on issues of importance.

**Programs and services include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- **HelpLine Services:** The FCCG HelpLine utilizes a very strict referral system, offering a variety of problem gambling specific programs, services, and referral resources, to assist individuals with their specific needs, based upon individual circumstances. The HelpLine is accessible 24/7, 365 days a year, via phone, text, LiveChat, by email, mobile app, or social media. The FCCG also has extensive print publications, (many available electronically and in multiple languages, including Spanish and Creole), including brochures, toolkits, workbooks, and research, and provides specific materials and information.
- **Gambling Addiction Certification Training Program:** To better aid Floridians in need of assistance for a gambling problem, the FCCG joined forces with the Florida Certification Board in 2007 to establish a credential for compulsive gambling counselors in the state of Florida. Over a decade later, the Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor Credential remains an available certification for mental health providers seeking to provide problem gambling counseling services in the state.
- **Responsible Gaming & Player Protection Program for Gambling Operators:** The FCCG’s RGPPP provides facilities with employee training (online and live), assists in ensuring a responsible gaming organizational philosophy, and provides exposure to the HelpLine and self-exclusion resources through print and collateral items featuring the 888-ADMIT-IT number.
- **Military Programming:** Recent research reveals that as many as 56,000 active duty members of the Armed Forces meet the criteria for gambling disorder, and studies have shown that veterans have elevated rates of gambling problems – at least twice the rate of the general adult population. The FCCG’s military program, [Combat Gambling Addiction: A Toolkit for the Military](#), was designed to educate and provide resources for military members (both active duty and retired) and their families.
- **Youth/College Specific Prevention Programming:** The FCCG provides educational prevention and behavioral change programs for students from grades 1 through 12, as well as campus-wide problem gambling awareness programs for colleges and universities, that includes training guides, lesson plans, and associated materials for college counselors, peer advocates, resident advisors, financial aid personnel, coaches, students and student athletes, administrators, and others.
- **Senior Service Provider Programming: Senior Service Provider Online Continuing Education Unit Module “A Chance for Change”** - This training module offers a comprehensive approach for elder service providers to use to address common situations that seniors encounter. It offers viable approaches to problem gambling prevention, assessment, intervention, treatment, and outreach, as well as recreational options, resource referrals, and population-specific programs.
- **Healthcare Programming: Medical and Healthcare Provider Online Continuing Medical Education Unit (CME) Program** – The FCCG has developed an online module designed to educate medical professionals of the link between compulsive gambling and health problems, which is available for CME credit through the University of South Florida.
- **Financial Programming and Supports:** The burden of financial problems can be overwhelming for many individuals who contact the HelpLine. The FCCG’s [A Chance for Change Recovery Workbook Series](#) for gamblers, loved ones, and older adult gamblers features one book within each of the 7-book series (Workbook #4) that addresses financial matters. In addition, a financial budgeting assistance program is available that provides financial guidance for problem gamblers through peer supports. [The Budget Toolkit](#) provides financial guidance through assistance in the development of a budget and payment plan while reinforcing accountability for problem gamblers.
- **Legal Programming and Supports:** Whether criminal in nature (embezzlement, theft, fraud, etc.) or civil (divorce, foreclosure, etc.), the FCCG provides expert assistance and resources for those faced with any type of legal action in a gambling-related case, completely free of charge. The FCCG’s [A Chance for Change Recovery Workbook Series](#) for gamblers, loved ones, and older adult gamblers features one book within each of the 7-book series (Workbook #5) that addresses legal issues and can be used independently or under guidance with a treatment professional, while attending counseling and self-help support groups. The FCCG has also created a program specifically for the judicial system entitled [A Chance for Change: Gambling Addiction and Crime](#). This program provides free supports throughout every phase of the criminal justice process for law enforcement, legal, and judicial professionals; probation officers; and state and federal prison authorities.

*All programming and services are outcome-measured and reported to the State on a monthly and annual basis. This information is not to be viewed as a comprehensive list of programs and services provided, but aims to give a broader understanding of the purpose and work of the FCCG on behalf of the State of Florida.*

For additional information on the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling  
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