

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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OTDA-4037EL (Rev. 11/98)

Transmittal No: 99 LCM-40

Date: December 20, 1999

Division: Commissioner's
Office

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Information on Problem Gambling

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A - Pamphlets, Palm Card and Program List
(not available on-line)

I would like to bring your attention to the availability of resources related to problem gambling that you and your staff may find useful when working with some of your clients. As a significant percentage of social services clients experience financial, mental health, substance abuse and/or related difficulties, it is probable that a segment of this population may view gambling as a viable option to addressing economic hardships or other daily challenges.

Compulsive gambling is a progressive disorder in which an individual has a preoccupation and an uncontrollable urge to gamble. Unless treated, this disorder can escalate to the point where it compromises, disrupts and ultimately destroys the gambler's personal and family relationships and economic security. This disorder has a relationship to alcohol use as well as mental health problems.

The New York Council on Problem Gambling is a not-for-profit corporation, under contract with the State Office of Mental Health, to increase public awareness of problem gambling and to advocate for support services and treatment for persons adversely affected. The Council operates the State's 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline (1-800-437-1611) and offers a Speakers Bureau, on-site training and assessment, and referrals to treatment and education/outreach problem gambling provider programs throughout New York State (see attached list) and the self-help fellowship groups of Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon.

The Council has produced a variety of publications, as well as a palm card. I have enclosed a sample of these materials, many of which are also available in Spanish.

For additional copies of any of these brochures, contacts for training or speakers, or additional information about problem gambling, please contact:

New York Council on Problem Gambling, Inc.
119 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12210
(518) 427-1622
(518) 427-6181 (fax)
24-Hour Helpline: 1-800-437-1611

I hope you find this information useful.

Brian J. Wing