



2023 STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSIONS

The Office of Problem Gambling Services brings together a variety of partners, community members, and advocacy groups to participate in annual Stakeholder Listening Sessions (SLSs). These sessions are virtually held in the communities of Everett and Springfield. The goals of the SLSs are:

- To engage the community to promote health and racial equity
- To gain input on the continued development of programs and services regarding problem gambling



ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholders provide input on a variety of topics including populations disproportionately impacted by problem gambling, service delivery regarding problem gambling, and community-level interventions.



EVALUATION

The perspectives shared by the stakeholders are compiled by the OPGS and later shared in the form of a memo and a report.



ACTION

Stakeholder input is then used to inform the OPGS' programs and services to address problem gambling in Massachusetts.

OFFICE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Office of Problem Gambling Services (OPGS) serves to ensure a comprehensive and integrated public health response to problem gambling that uses data to inform initiatives, engage communities, and ensure cultural intelligence and humility.

The OPGS has worked with over 2,000 community members through its community engagement strategies. This includes the regional planning process, needs assessments, Stakeholder Listening Sessions, Community Listening Sessions, and many other activities.

For more information on the Office of Problem Gambling Services, please visit:

mass.gov/opgs

WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is "the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people." The Massachusetts Department of Public Health promotes the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity for all people.



2023 STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSIONS



Overview

The 2023 Stakeholder Listening Sessions Report, hosted by the Office of Problem Gambling Services, details the findings from community engagement sessions designed to gather feedback to inform future priorities and programs. These sessions focused on the impact of sports wagering, media advertising, and community interventions, seeking to understand and mitigate gambling-related harms while promoting health equity.



Key Findings

The report highlights several critical areas of concern, including the increasing impact of sports wagering and media advertising on problem gambling behaviors. Community feedback emphasized the need for tailored programs and services, especially in vulnerable populations, and raised concerns about the accessibility and attractiveness of online gambling platforms to younger demographics.



Recommendations and Participant Quotes

Based on the feedback collected, the report outlines key recommendations:

1

Enhance Stakeholder Engagement

OPGS should continue engaging diverse stakeholders, especially community members and behavioral health providers, in designing and implementing problem gambling programs that are culturally relevant and community-driven.

"The most effective work I've done is when I'm doing individual engagements... once I explain to them that this initiative... would assist men of color with a history of substance misuse."

2

Evaluate Media and Educational Campaigns

Assess existing media and educational campaigns to identify what works in reducing gambling harm, especially for youth and vulnerable groups. These findings will be used to improve outreach.

"But with the commercials, it's just a constant bombardment... you watch any sport... every commercial is for DraftKings, FanDuel, BetMGM, Barstool Sportsbook."

3

Grow Support for Stricter Advertising Protections

Collaborate with regulatory bodies to limit youth exposure to gambling ads. Launch public campaigns to educate parents and provide tools to talk with their children about gambling risks.

"A lot of parents are really concerned because that advertisement gets into very young age children... They don't have that cognitive level to mitigate the harm."