

Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

Grant Opportunity

January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026

**Maryland Colleges and Universities Underage
and Problem Gambling Prevention Grants**

Deadline: September 19, 2025

OVERVIEW:

The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (the Center) is implementing the Maryland Universities and Colleges Underage and Problem Gambling Prevention Grant Program for the State of Maryland. Young adults ages 18-24 are of greater risk of problem gambling in comparison to other age groups. According to Maryland Helpline data, helpline calls from young adults ages 18-24 have tripled. In calendar year 2023, 74 calls were received from people in this age range. Calls from those ages 25-34 are also increasing. According to the 2022 Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland, 2.3% of 18–24-year-olds, 4.2% of 25–34-year-olds and 4% of Marylanders overall have a gambling disorder. Of those of any age who gambled on sports online, 20% had a gambling disorder (Tracy, 2022). Due to the increased risk for young people to engage in risky gambling behaviors that may lead to a gambling disorder, the college-aged population is a priority to reach with underage and problem gambling prevention strategies. This Program is funded through the Center with funding from the Maryland Department of Health, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA).

The Center will be offering limited grant opportunities to Maryland colleges and universities in FY 2026. The goal is to fund at least 16 colleges/universities. Each grant will be between \$5,000-\$15,000, depending on the reach and the amount of prevention strategies proposed. Grant funding will be available when the Center's finalized contract is received from BHA and all funds are expended.

GRANT PROGRAM GOALS:

There are three main goals of the Maryland Universities and Colleges Underage and Problem Gambling Prevention Grants Program.

- The first goal is to educate college and university communities at all levels, from administration to students, on the risks associated with gambling, how problem gambling can be prevented, and the resources for problem gambling help in the State of Maryland.
- The second goal is for colleges and universities to integrate problem gambling prevention into their current courses, programs, and policies to create sustainability.
- The final goal of university and college grants is to have a wider reach to promote safer gambling practices, thus protecting public health among Maryland's communities across the State, especially in younger populations.

With limited funding and resources, working with colleges and universities that know their communities and have established networks is more efficient for problem gambling prevention.

It is expected that grantees will make materials and messaging, either developed by the Center or by the college/university, relevant for the student population.

GRANT DESCRIPTION:

Grantees will be provided with technical assistance and support for their prevention programming when awarded a grant. This includes staff training, collaboration on webinars, and/or printed or electronic materials free of charge. Promotional items with the 1-800-GAMBLER Helpline number are provided free of charge for distribution at campus events.

It is ideal to have colleges and universities participate from all regions of the State, covering all demographic groups.

Maryland colleges and universities will be implementing strategies according to the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)'s Seven Strategies for Effective Community Change. For more information, visit <https://aodpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/seven-strategies-for-community-change.pdf> or <https://www.cadca.org/>

The Seven Strategies for Community Change are: providing information, enhancing skills, providing support, enhancing access/reducing barriers, changing consequences, physical design, and modifying/changing policies.

Examples of each of the Seven Strategies for Community Change are:

1. Providing Information:

- Dissemination of problem gambling printed materials
- Hosting a presentation on the topic of problem gambling
- Education on the risks of gambling
- Social media posts on problem gambling
- Provide problem gambling information on a website.
- Promote resources for help: Helpline, Gamban, Bet blocker, Gamblers Anonymous, etc.
- Promote March Problem Gambling Awareness Month.
- Promote the Holiday Gift Responsibly Campaign.
- Host a problem gambling screening event.

2. Enhancing Skills:

- Provide training to student leaders and/or peer health educators on problem gambling to train other students.
- Train campus administrators, faculty, and/or staff, especially those more likely to work with students in crisis to recognize signs of problem gambling and resources for help.

3. Provide Support:
 - Work through clubs and activities on campus to support positive activities that promote wellness.
 - Work with departments on campus to integrate problem gambling prevention into existing programs or courses.
 - Work with groups or departments on campus that have a similar message of promoting student wellness (mental health promotion, substance misuse prevention) and integrate problem gambling prevention into programming.
4. Enhancing Access/ Reducing Barriers:
 - Promote problem gambling prevention tools on campus such as the Helpline, Gamban, and Bet Blocker.
5. Changing Consequences:
 - Assess enforcement of gambling on campus (are students with gambling problems referred for help?)
6. Physical Design:
 - Conduct an environmental scan on campus to assess if there is signage promoting gambling on campus.
 - Promote permanent signage with problem gambling prevention messaging and resources for help.
7. Modifying/Changing Policies:
 - Investigate if there are gambling policies on campus. Work to strengthen problem gambling prevention policies.
 - Testify on behalf of a problem gambling prevention bill.

Other prevention strategies recommended by the grantee may also be implemented, if included in the grantee Letter of Agreement.

Grantees may also conduct polls or surveys of students on campus but must receive approval from administration. The Center's goal is to develop a survey that can be used on all campuses, but this may take a few years before it is ready for implementation.

Grantees will be required to conduct short pre/post-test outcome surveys in March/April and again in October. The pre/post-test will be provided to grantees for their use around the time Letter of Agreements are signed. A QR code linked to Survey Monkey will be used to collect data. All grantees will collect pre/post tests using the same QR code. One number on each outcome measure will be provided to BHA.

The grantee will provide the following outcome measures to the Center through biannual pre/post-tests:

- Basic demographic information of those served: age, gender, and race.
- Percentage of students who gambled in the last year and number of people who experienced problem gambling.
- Percentage of students who know someone who gambled in the last year and number of people who know someone who experienced a gambling problem.

- Percentage of students who have seen messaging about problem gambling either in print or electronic on campus.
- Percentage of students who have seen any social media messaging about problem gambling.
- Percentage of students who have seen/attended programming on campus related to problem gambling such as an exhibit table or presentation.
- Percentage of students who have heard of the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline.
- Percentage of students who have heard of online resources for problem gambling such as Bet Blocker and Gamban.
- Percentage of students who feel comfortable telling a friend to get help for a gambling problem.

Output/process evaluation measures including numbers of students reached will be included in biannual reports. Report templates will be provided by the Center.

Grantees are encouraged to target sub-populations of students that are at greater risk of problem gambling including: males, minority students, student athletes, sports bettors, those who gamble on-line, students with mental health or substance use disorders, low-income students, and/or students with brain injuries.

Grantees should have a sustainability plan describing how strategies will be continued when the grant funding is over. The plan should include maintaining funding, integration of prevention strategies into on-going campus initiatives, and leveraging community partnerships.

RESEARCH:

Maryland Gambling and Problem Gambling Facts:

- 90% of Maryland adults have gambled in their lifetime (Tracy et al., 2022)
- The most common forms of gambling are lottery, casino, and sports betting (Tracy et al., 2022)
- Those that gamble are more likely to use tobacco products, alcohol, and/or illegal drugs compared to non-gamblers (Tracy et al., 2022).
- According to the Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland, 4% of Maryland adults 18 and over are disordered gamblers (Tracy et al., 2022).
- Some minority populations were more likely to be disordered gamblers; Maryland adult African Americans (8%), and Asians (3%), are at equal or increased risk of problem gambling compared to the White population (3%) (Tracy et al., 2022). More data needs to be collected on the Hispanic population.
- 20% of Marylanders who gambled on sports online were disordered gamblers (Tracy, et al., 2022).

GRANT APPLICATION CRITERIA:

To Be Eligible to Apply:

1. Must be applying on behalf of a college or university in Maryland or a department within the college or university.

The Application Must Include:

1. Information on the college or university's contact, including name, phone number, mailing address, and email address.
2. Basic demographics of the student population.
3. A description of the college or university and the department within the college or university that will implement the grant.
4. Selection of at least three prevention strategies.

Grantees Must Agree to:

1. Meet with the Prevention Coordinator to discuss grant deliverables.
2. Must track grant activities and submit reports to the Center in June and December 2026.
3. Submit copies of all original work to the Center.
4. Use the Public Awareness Policy on the Use of Gambling Imagery.
5. Take at least two of the Centers webinars or trainings during the fiscal year.
6. Attend the Annual Maryland Problem Gambling Conference in June, if available.

When selected for funding, the college/university contacts will meet with Center staff to refine the prevention strategies. The letter of agreement will be drafted and then approved for language by the college/university and the Center. Once approved, the letter of agreement will be signed by both parties. When the letter of agreement is signed, the college/university can begin to work on prevention strategies. Each college/university must propose at least three prevention strategies in their grant application. Others can be added based on the initial meeting with the college/university and the Center. Prevention strategies must be completed by December 31, 2026.

One check will be dispersed by April or May of 2026 after a w-9 form and invoice has been submitted by the college/university. Electronic payments are available to colleges/universities who complete the paperwork requesting electronic payment.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

An optional, virtual pre-application workshop will be held Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 1 pm. Please email Brina Olunkwa, bolunkwa@som.umaryland.edu, to register.

<https://umaryland.zoom.us/meeting/register/mbIDRRfIRJC2PxhO-ZOcUg>

Grant applications will be accepted through this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z9XMPDK>

Grant applications will be accepted until September 19, 2025, or until all funding is allocated for fiscal year 2026. Applicants are encouraged to apply early as applications may be evaluated on a rolling basis.

Grant timeline:

Grant submission: June 1, 2025-September 19, 2025

Pre-application workshop: August 20, 2025, 1 pm

Grant Review: September 19, 2025-October 19, 2025

Notify grantees of award: October 21, 2025

Please contact **Brina Olunkwa, Prevention Coordinator by email:** bolunkwa@som.umaryland.edu or phone 667-214-2120 at the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling, if you have any questions.

Funded by:

