

## Ohio Announces Gambling Survey Key Findings

(COLUMBUS- Oct.1, 2012) – Based on a recently completed survey of 3,600 Ohioans to measure at-risk and problem gambling, the state is on par with other states and national levels of potential problems related to gambling. Survey findings estimated that the prevalence of at-risk and problem gambling in Ohio is 2.8% in total, or about 250,000 individuals aged 18 and older. The at-risk group of Ohioans, prime for prevention and responsible gambling education, is about 220,000 individuals. Study findings were announced today at a Statehouse press conference.

Orman Hall, director of ODADAS, said, “This survey tells us that Ohio’s overall rates of problem gambling are low to normal at this time. We also know that people with alcohol or other drug addiction are much more likely to have a gambling problem, about 26 percent for Ohioans in addiction treatment.”

From February through July, 2012, the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS), through research partner Kent State University and in collaboration with Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG), undertook a prevalence study for problem and pathological gambling to establish a baseline among Ohioans before the opening of new casinos and video lottery terminals. Plans are for the study to be repeated at regular intervals of approximately three years to measure the impact of greater access to gambling opportunities. The study was funded by the Ohio Lottery Commission as part of the more than \$1.2 million allocated to problem gambling initiatives in 2011-12.

“The Ohio Lottery Commission has worked closely with ODADAS for more than 10 years on laying the foundation for a robust system of prevention messaging and addiction treatment for those with problem or pathological gambling,” said Commissioner Clarence E. Mingo. “In fact, the ORG problem gambling campaign from this year won an award from the National Council on Problem Gambling.”

Ohio Casino Commission Chair JoAnn Davidson commented, “The mandate of the Casino Control Commission provides for public outreach and education focused on problem gambling. A portion of the tax dollars collected from casinos will fund programs to assist Ohioans who struggle with a gambling problem. This survey is crucial for setting a benchmark to assess the level of needed counseling resources.”

The survey also compared frequency and level of problem gambling based on type of gambling. For the statewide sample, casino gamblers show the highest estimates for at-risk gambling compared to lottery and other gambling. Of Ohioans who participate in casino gambling, 8.2% are estimated to be at low risk, moderate risk or meet criteria for problem gambling, compared to 4.8% for lottery and 5.1% for other gambling.

According to a researcher at University of Illinois, studies have indicated that for every \$50 of economic benefit, there is \$300 of social cost. Those social costs can include a rise in bankruptcies, foreclosures, divorces, drunk driving, and suicides. Ohio’s survey pointed out the higher rates of

serious depression, health care costs from stress, and use of alcohol and other drugs to deal with painful situations.

The formation of ORG (Ohio for Responsible Gambling) was announced earlier this year with members ODADAS, the Ohio Casino Control Commission, Ohio Lottery Commission, and the Ohio Racing Commission. Racing Commission Chairman Robert K. Schmitz also took part in the press conference. Helpful information about at-risk and problem gambling signs and referral sources can be found on the group's website [www.org.ohio.gov](http://www.org.ohio.gov).

To recognize the risk or development of problem gambling in oneself or a loved one, watch for some of these signs and symptoms:

- Bragging about gambling, exaggerating wins, minimizing losses
- Restless and irritable when not gambling
- Borrowing for gambling
- Lying about how much time or money spent or lost on gambling
- Missed work, missed family time
- Unpaid debts

Help is available for problem gambling. Call the Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-589-9966.

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