



Montana Department of Corrections
FACT SHEET
HB61: More gambling addiction treatment

Background

Gambling addiction is a growing problem.

- The number of women offenders receiving gambling addiction treatment at the Passages prerelease center increased from 1 in 1999 to 11 in 2012.
- Gambling addiction often is associated with crimes and other addictions.
- 165 women offenders in the corrections system have a history of theft or embezzlement that is an indicator that they may be problem or pathological gamblers
- The number of participants in gambling treatment programs nearly tripled between 2003 and 2010, according to the Montana Council on Problem Gambling.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), scheduled for release in May 2013, will recognize gambling in a new category of behavioral addictions.

Montana administrative rules already allow licensed addictions counselors (LACs) to obtain education in compulsive gambling as part of the license renewal process.

The problem

State law does not allow 593 licensed addiction counselors to treat gambling addiction. Only 15 individuals who have a master's in social work or are licensed clinical professional counselors are allowed to treat gambling addiction.

What HB61 does

- Adding gambling to the types of addictions recognized in the statute dealing with licensure of addiction counselors will allow those nearly 600 LACs to provide gambling addiction treatment.
- A large number of treatment providers will give offenders with gambling problems greater access to treatment.

Licensed addiction counselors contracting with the Department of Corrections to provide treatment to offenders support the bill.