

Gambling Harms Support Policy



EMPLOYMENT ZONE

Our policy

Glasgow City Council is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of all employees and recognises the harmful effects that gambling can have on an individual's personal life, work performance and productivity.

We aim to assist employees to proactively manage harmful gambling problems, helping them to maintain an effective and motivated position in the workforce.

We will achieve this aim by:

- Ensuring our policy on harmful gambling is central to our approach to health and wellbeing and has parity to our policy on alcohol and drugs.
- Understanding and acting on our duty of care and legal obligations concerning gambling related harms, raising awareness on the risks and potential consequences.
- Supporting and training employees, line managers and trade union representatives to help recognise the signs of harmful gambling.
- Giving line managers and trade union representatives the tools to hold sensitive, confidential conversations and signpost employees to sources of support.
- Promoting a positive culture, with effective management standards that ensures employees suffering or at risk of suffering from gambling-related harms feel supported and valued.
- Encouraging employees to seek help at an early stage in managing difficulties resulting from harmful gambling.

- Providing professional counselling and practical information and support through our independent Employee Assistance Provider (EAP).
- Making reasonable adjustments to allow employees to recover from gambling-related harms including any return-to-work plans.
- Ensuring that employees are treated appropriately and with sensitivity when concerns are raised either informally or formally through grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Exceptions

This policy applies to employees who have an identified problem as a result of harmful gambling which affects their health, work performance or conduct.

It does not apply to those employees who due to occasional gambling commit a serious breach of the council's conduct rules, such instances will be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary procedures.

Approved types of Gambling within GCC

With prior approval from your Head of Service we do allow some forms of socially acceptable gambling on council premises for example, the use of competitions with prizes for employee engagement purposes and the selling and buying of charity raffle tickets. If in doubt, please seek guidance from your Service HR.

Participation in all other forms of gambling such as visiting gambling establishments during core hours or using our IT equipment for gambling is not permitted.

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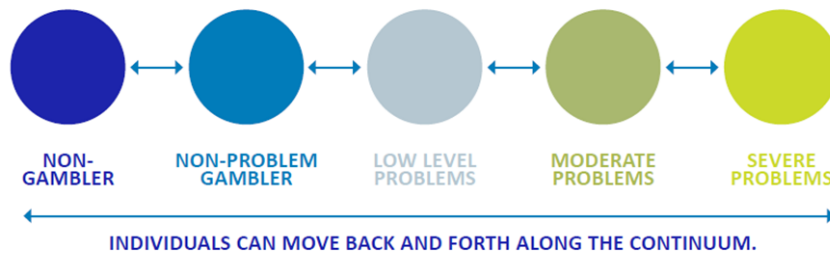
Definitions

Harmful gambling

Harmful gambling, sometimes referred to as ‘problem gambling’ is defined as “gambling that disrupts or damages personal, family or recreational pursuits”

The Gambling Continuum

Gambling behaviour takes place along a continuum from none to severe and those that do gamble can move in and out of problematic gambling periods throughout their life.



Affected Others

Harmful gambling affects more people than just the problem gambler. For every problem gambler, between 6 and 10 additional people, such as friends, family or co-workers are directly affected. The impact of harmful gambling on affected others is varied and wide-reaching and ranges from relationship breakdowns, debt, and housing problems.

Support available from the Council

We have a comprehensive framework of support and resources available for all employees; whether they are experiencing harmful gambling themselves or are an affected other.

The support available for those concerned about gambling or seeking help to resolve difficulties at home or work includes: -

- Access to our Work Life Balance and Special Leave provisions to allow employees to manage life changing events.
- Referral to the council’s Occupational Health Service Provider for medical problems related to harmful gambling such as stress.

In addition, employees can access help and guidance via our [Employee Assistance Provider](#) (EAP).

Independent Support - Employee Assistance Provider

Our Employee Assistance Provider will provide an independent assessment to establish the existence, nature, and extent of any problem, and offer the appropriate support. Access to EAP is by: -

- **Self-referral** - Employees who are concerned about harmful gambling or who are experiencing difficulties as a result of this can seek advice and support from our EAP directly and in confidence by calling our free 24-hour dedicated Addictions helpline on **0808 196 9460**.

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- **Management referral** - If a manager suspects that an employee has issues relating to harmful gambling, they will encourage them to seek help. If the employee is reluctant to make contact with our EAP themselves, a manager can do this on the employee's behalf with the employee's permission.
- **Disciplinary referral** - In line with the Council's [Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure](#), if an employee advises that their conduct and/ or unsatisfactory work performance is related to harmful gambling, then the disciplinary proceedings will be suspended pending advice from our EAP.

Terms of Management and Disciplinary Referrals

For both management and disciplinary referrals to EAP the following conditions must be met: -

- The line manager or chair of the disciplinary hearing must confirm the terms of referral to the employee in writing.
- The employee must agree to the terms of the referral by signing the EAP referral form and comply with any recommended counselling.
- The employee must demonstrate a sustained improvement in work performance, commitment, and behaviour.
- Paid time off as necessary will be granted for the employee to attend counselling.

For disciplinary referrals, if the employee is accepted by EAP as having a gambling problem, proceedings will be suspended providing they co-operate and successfully undertake counselling.

Disciplinary proceedings will however resume if the employee: -

- Fails to comply with the terms of referral.
- Is not accepted by EAP as having a gambling problem and cannot therefore be considered for counselling.

Where the employee complies with the terms of referral and demonstrates the required improvement in conduct or performance, the disciplinary hearing will be reconvened to confirm that the procedure has been concluded and no further action required.

Re-referrals

Where disciplinary proceedings resume or after a programme of counselling the employee's work performance and/or conduct results in a further disciplinary hearing as a result of harmful gambling, the manager may decide to make a further disciplinary referral. They will consider each case on an individual basis, taking all relevant information into account.

Duty of Care

Managers in conjunction with support and advice from Service HR will make an assessment of all the factors linked to an employee's harmful gambling as part of the council's duty of care.

This is to identify the level of risk to the employee, the council and service users and if necessary, allow for appropriate measures to be put in place to minimise these.

Manager's will use this information to inform any decisions on reasonable adjustments or safeguarding measures and to facilitate a formal discussion with the employee on this matter.

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Whilst receiving counselling for harmful gambling every effort will be made to ensure that the employee will be able to continue to do the same job unless doing so would risk undermining a return to a satisfactory level of job performance or it is mutually agreed that a change will be desirable or beneficial.

Reasonable Adjustments

Where the manager assesses as necessary or at the request of an employee seeking help to manage their condition, reasonable adjustments may be taken to support and protect the employee.

Reasonable adjustments will not be needed for all employees but may be required for those with more severe difficulties, such as those who need formal treatment and will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the employee's role and service delivery requirements.

Safeguarding

There may be circumstances where management require to put in place safeguarding arrangements. An example could be, if the employee is receiving counselling for harmful gambling and is in a position of trust with service user's money or belongings.

This is to protect the employee, service users and the council from harmful behaviours linked to gambling.

Again, this would be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account service delivery needs and discussions between the manager and employee to determine what is appropriate and proportionate.

Both reasonable adjustments and safeguarding measures will be subject to review when the counselling has been completed.

Confidentiality

For both management and disciplinary referrals, reports regarding an employee's progress on a recovery programme including recommendations on reasonable adjustments and/or safeguarding measures and further referrals will be sent to the referring manager on a regular basis to inform case management.

This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.