

1 [Recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month - March 2024]

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3 **Resolution recognizing March 2024 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City**
4 **and County of San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, Gambling, in both legal and illegal forms, is becoming more omnipresent
7 in our everyday lives, including through casinos and card rooms, lotteries, sports betting,
8 online gambling, video games, Daily Fantasy Sports, internet casinos, social media games,
9 and sweepstakes cafes; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2023 Americans lost a record \$111.5 billion at commercial and tribal-
11 owned casinos; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2023 Americans wagered nearly \$120 billion on sports, a 27.8%
13 increase over 2022; and

14 WHEREAS, A 2018 NICOS Chinese Health Coalition study found that 87% of
15 California's casino bus patrons are “probable problem gamblers”; and

16 WHEREAS, 6 to 8 million Americans, including more than 1.2 million Californians, meet
17 the criteria for problem gambling and, by their gambling behavior, negatively affect the lives of
18 another 48 to 80 million individuals; and

19 WHEREAS, Problem gambling is defined as gambling behavior which causes
20 disruption in any major areas of life: psychological, physical, social, vocational, health,
21 spiritual or emotional; and

22 WHEREAS, Problem gambling (“gambling disorder”) has been classified by the
23 American Psychiatric Association as an addiction with similarities to the causes and
24 consequences of alcohol and drug dependence; and

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1 WHEREAS, Behavioral signs of problem gambling include gambling to escape
2 boredom, pain or loneliness, lying to loved ones to conceal the extent of gambling, needing to
3 gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve excitement, borrowing money to
4 gamble, and trying repeatedly over time to win back money lost; and

5 WHEREAS, Americans gamble more money each year than they spend on groceries,
6 betting upwards of \$900 billion annually; and

7 WHEREAS, Problem gambling is a public health issue impacting relationships,
8 families, businesses, and communities; and

9 WHEREAS, Populations at high risk for gambling problems include seniors, youth,
10 college students, veterans, African Americans, Asian Americans, LatinX and Native
11 Americans; and

12 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has classified "gaming disorder" as a
13 mental health condition with behavioral signs mirroring those of gambling disorder; and

14 WHEREAS, Many video games include elements and practices of gambling such as in-
15 game purchases of loot boxes and token wagering and could possibly condition children and
16 youth for gambling/gambling addiction; and

17 WHEREAS, Approximately 8.5% of youths aged between 8-18 suffer from gaming
18 disorder; and

19 WHEREAS, Only 15% of problem gamblers ever seek treatment; and

20 WHEREAS, Numerous free resources, including self-help workbooks, phone-based
21 counseling, individual counseling, support group counseling, residential care and a locally-
22 based helpline (1-888-968-7888) are now available for problem gamblers and affected
23 individuals; and

24 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health - Community Behavioral
25 Health Services (SFDPH–CBHS), in partnership with NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

1 (NICOS), made the City and County of San Francisco one of the first municipalities in the
2 nation to offer a problem gambling prevention program to its residents, beginning in 1998; and

3 WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated
4 nationwide; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2023, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
6 unanimously adopted a Resolution declaring the month of March as Problem Gambling
7 Awareness Month; and now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
9 recognizes the outreach efforts by SFDPH-CBHS and NICOS to communities struggling with
10 problem gambling; and, be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco will continue to
12 support outreach, education and treatment programs for problem gamblers, in addition to
13 strengthening prevention strategies; and, be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes the month of March
15 2024 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San Francisco.

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