

# Supporting a workmate who may have gambling issues



**Do you have a colleague who gambles in the workplace? Do you think they may be struggling with gambling? There are plenty of things you can do to help.**

You might want to reach out as a friend, but you're in a unique position. If you spot warning signs at work, you can help in other ways before your workmate places their job at risk.

## **Check out your workplace's gambling policy**

Make sure you know what your workplace's gambling policy is if it has one. It will help you understand your obligations as an employee, and when you need to speak up.

It will also let you know what gambling is okay in the workplace and what's not. For example, footy tipping and Melbourne Cup sweepstakes can be great for morale, but using workplace equipment to access online gambling sites may not be permitted.

## **Talk to your supervisor or HR**

If you think that your colleague's gambling is affecting their productivity, the team has to pick up the slack and cover for them, or their mental state has changed, or you suspect they're misusing funds, it's definitely an issue for someone higher up. Your employer has a duty of care to you and to your colleague, and they need to know. Approach your supervisor, HR team, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or GambleAware service for advice on who may be the best person to have the conversation.

**GAMBLEAWARE**  
**gambleaware.nsw.gov.au**  
**1800 858 858**



## Signs gambling may be an issue

You might start to worry about your workmate if they start turning up late for work or leaving early, playing the pokies at lunchtime or taking a lot of days off. They might start asking to borrow cash. You might find yourself under extra pressure to complete team projects. When you put the warning signs together, you might see a pattern.

### Time

- they arrive at work late or leave early, or take long lunch hours
- they disappear without explaining, or they're absent more frequently
- they gamble on company time (online, mobile, landline).

### Productivity

- they're irritable, moody or can't concentrate
- their mind is on other things
- they're not as productive, or they don't complete projects
- they're overusing the work phone or internet.

### Financial problems

- they're borrowing money from workmates
- they often ask for salary advances
- they get calls at work by companies chasing payment
- they frequently volunteer for overtime or additional shifts to cover debts.

### Other signs

- they may avoid taking holidays, so backfill to cover their job isn't required
- they're often on betting websites or reading the form guide.

## I work with them, but they're still my friend

If your workmate's also your friend and you don't like to see what gambling is doing to their life, maybe there are ways you can support them more directly. Visit [gambleaware.nsw.gov.au](http://gambleaware.nsw.gov.au) for ideas on what else you can do outside the workplace.

### Help is close at hand

No matter how you're affected by gambling – your own or someone else's – GambleAware can help. For free, confidential advice and support, and to find services near you, go to [gambleaware.nsw.gov.au](http://gambleaware.nsw.gov.au) or call us on **1800 858 858** 24/7.

GambleAware is funded through the NSW Government's Office of Responsible Gambling. GambleAware's purpose is to work towards zero gambling-related harm in NSW through research, education and support for individuals and communities.