



Research Snapshot

Gambling and Problem Gambling in North Dakota: 2024

June 2025

What you need to know

The majority of North Dakota adults aged 18 and over have participated in one or more types of gambling in the past year. There has been no significant change in the rate of problem gambling from 2016 (2.0%) to 2024 (1.4%) which is notable considering the introduction of E-tabs and sports betting during this period. The types of gambling most strongly related to problem gambling North Dakota included casino gambling machines, online gambling, bingo, E-tabs and sports betting.

What is this research about?

In January 2024, the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) awarded a contract to Gemini Research to carry out and report on a statewide gambling prevalence survey. The reason was that state-specific gambling data had not been collected in North Dakota since 2016, before the legalization of electronic pull tab devices (E-tabs) in 2018. NDHHS wished to obtain data identifying the prevalence of gambling and gambling problems in the state to allow for data-driven strategic planning for effective and efficient implementation of problem gambling prevention and treatment services.

What did the researchers do?

The research team obtained a probability sample of all North Dakota households and allowed individuals aged 18 and over to complete the survey online or on paper. The sample was stratified by region to ensure that all eight North Dakota Human Health Service Regions had adequate representation. The survey was conducted from July through October 2024, had a response rate of 20.8% and achieved a final sample size of 3,030 respondents.

Researchers defined “gambling” as betting money or material goods on an event with an uncertain

outcome in the hopes of winning additional money or material goods. This includes activities such as lottery games, raffles, bingo, playing E-tabs, betting against a friend on a game of skill or chance, and betting on sports or horse racing.

What did the researchers find?

- There was a range of opinion about the availability of legalized gambling in North Dakota with the majority of adults (64%) believing that some forms should be legal and some should be illegal. North Dakota adults also had mixed opinions about the balance of benefits and harms of legalized gambling although the majority (61%) believed that the harms outweighed the benefits. Seven in ten North Dakota adults felt that the current availability of gambling in the state was acceptable.
- In 2024, 74% of North Dakota adults had participated in one or more gambling activities in the past year. Participation was highest for raffles and the lottery followed by charitable gambling at bars and restaurants (excluding E-tabs), E-tabs and casino gambling machines. One in ten North Dakota adults had gambled in the past year on casino table games, sports,

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bingo and private wagering while past-year participation rates for online gambling and horse race betting were even lower.

- The prevalence of problem gambling in North Dakota in 2024 was 1.4% which represents approximately 8,400 individuals. An additional 4% of North Dakota adults were classified as high or very high at-risk gamblers, representing between 17,800 and 30,000 individuals.
- While those already experiencing gambling problems in North Dakota were equally likely to be male or female, those at risk of experiencing gambling problems were more likely than recreational gamblers to be male and to have annual household incomes over \$150,000. Moderate at-risk gamblers were more likely than recreational gamblers to be aged 18 to 34 and to be non-White. Recreational gamblers were more likely than those at risk of gambling problems to be retired and less likely to be employed.
- The types of gambling most strongly related to problem gambling North Dakota included casino gambling machines, online gambling, bingo, E-tabs and sports betting.
- North Dakota adults experiencing gambling problems as well as those at risk were more likely than recreational gamblers to use tobacco daily, engage in binge drinking and consume cannabis and other drugs.
- Approximately two in five North Dakota adults (43%) had seen or heard media campaigns to prevent problem gambling in the past year. Awareness of non-media campaigns in schools, workplaces or communities was much lower. Awareness of the problem gambling helpline in North Dakota was higher among those experiencing gambling problems compared to recreational gamblers.



What did the researchers recommend?

- Recreational gamblers and those at moderate risk should be encouraged to adopt responsible gambling measures such as setting deposit limits and time limits.
- More intensive efforts, such as Personalized Normative Feedback, are needed to influence the behavior of those at high and very high risk of gambling problems.
- Prevention efforts and motivational interventions are needed as well as greatly expended outpatient treatment, some form of residential treatment, training for healthcare professionals in screening and making referrals, and training for staff of gambling operators in recognizing and assisting individuals experiencing gambling problems in gambling venues.

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About the researchers

Rachel A. Volberg is the President of Gemini Research, one of the only organizations internationally that specializes in gambling research. Martha Zorn analyzed the data from the survey in North Dakota and Calyx Terrafen assisted in drafting the report.