

What is online chat with a gambling counselor?

Who should use this service?

This is a free service open to any West Virginian who has questions about gambling addiction. We encourage you to contact us if you are concerned about your own gambling, or are concerned about the gambling behavior of a loved one.

When is it available?

Currently the service is available during most business hours (9-5, M-F). If our 1-800-GAMBLER line rings, our online counselor will not be available until that call is finished. We are working on expanding the hours of online chat, and hope to have evening and weekend hours soon.

Who are the counselors?

The same staff members who answer the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline will answer online chat inquiries. These are professional counselors, social workers or psychologists who are trained in treating problem gamblers. See our STAFF section for more details.

Is this actual *counseling*?

No. We have trained gambling counselors in almost every community in West Virginia and our staff can arrange for you to have a free face-to-face consultation with one of them. This online service is provided to answer your questions about gambling addiction, provide support and direct you to the right resources.

What if I am in crisis?

Please do not use the chat service if you need immediate crisis help. If you feel suicidal you should contact your physician or go to your local emergency room. If you need immediate help with a gambling problem call 1-800-GAMBLER, or if you are from outside WV call 1-800-522-4700.

If I use the chat service, may I remain anonymous?

Yes. You do not have to give us your name. The only information we require is your zip code, so we can let you know about the specific type of help available in your area. If you request a face-to-face consultation we will need your name to arrange the appointment, but this information is kept confidential. Our counselors are bound by licensure requirements not to divulge confidential information.