

1 [Problem Gambling Awareness Month - March 2026]

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3 **Resolution recognizing March 2026 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, prediction markets, internet casinos,
9 social media games, and sweepstakes cafes; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2025, Americans lost a record \$125 billion at commercial and tribal-
11 owned casinos and wagered an estimated \$167 billion on sports; and

12 WHEREAS, A 2018 NICOS Chinese Health Coalition study found that 87% of
13 California's casino bus patrons are "probable problem gamblers"; and

14 WHEREAS, Between six to eight million Americans, including more than 1.2 million
15 Californians, meet the criteria for problem gambling, and by their gambling behavior,
16 negatively affect the lives of another 48 to 80 million individuals; and

17 WHEREAS, Problem gambling is defined as gambling behavior which causes
18 disruption in any major area of life, including psychological, physical, social, vocational,
19 health, spiritual or emotional; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

12 WHEREAS, Many video and mobile games include elements and practices of gambling
13 such as in-game purchases of loot boxes and token wagering and could possibly condition
14 children and youth for future gambling or gambling addiction; and

15 WHEREAS, Approximately 8.5% of youths aged between eight to 18 suffer from
16 gaming disorder, and only 15% of all problem gamblers ever seek treatment; and

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

21 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health - Behavioral Health
22 Services (SFDPH-BHS), in partnership with NICOS Chinese Health Coalition (NICOS), made
23 the City and County of San Francisco one of the first municipalities in the nation to offer a
24 problem gambling prevention program to its residents, beginning in 1998; and

1 WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated
2 nationwide; and

3 WHEREAS, In the past five years, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of
4 San Francisco unanimously adopted a resolution declaring the month of March as Problem
5 Gambling Awareness Month; and now, therefore, be it

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

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

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

