



The Massachusetts Council  
ON GAMING AND HEALTH

# Sports Betting FACT SHEET

## What is gambling?

Gambling is risking something of value on the outcome of an event when the probability of winning is less than certain.

## What is problem gambling?

Problem gambling is characterized by gambling behavior which leads to adverse consequences for the person who gambles, others, and the community.

## What constitutes social gambling?

Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, typically will not risk more than they can afford, often gamble with friends, chase losses briefly, gamble for limited periods of time, and are not preoccupied with gambling.

## MACGH:

### A Resource For Help

Do you have a gambling related question? MACGH provides live, confidential, and compassionate support 24-hours a day, 7-days a week: 800-426-1234 and on LiveChat at [macgh.org](http://macgh.org)

Sports betting is a form of gambling, where money is bet on the events that occur during a game or the outcome of a game. In 1992, Congress enacted the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA) to prohibit states from sanctioning or sponsoring sports gambling. In 2018, PASPA was overturned, opening up the return of legalized sports betting on a state-by-state basis. As of September 2022, 36 states had voted to legalize sports betting, including the [Commonwealth of Massachusetts](#). Americans are exposed to increasing amounts of gambling advertising. Sports betting companies spent more than \$1.2 billion on acquiring new U.S. customers in 2021 with [gambling advertisement expenditures](#) for 2022 expecting to be around \$2.1 billion.

## What is the impact of the legalization of sports betting?

Increasing numbers of Americans are engaging in [sports betting activity](#):

- Sports betting increased from 20% in 2018 to 26% in 2021.
- Fantasy sports participation increased from 17% in 2018 to 24% in 2021.
- Online gambling participation increased from 15% in 2018 to 25% in 2021.
- Sports betting now represents more than 40% of the online gambling market.
- Americans have spent [\\$125 billion on sports betting in the first 4 years](#) after the ban was overturned.
- Gambling advertising in the US is increasing dramatically with gambling advertisement expenditures expected to reach \$2.1 billion in 2022



**LiveChat 24/7  
at [macgh.org](http://macgh.org)**

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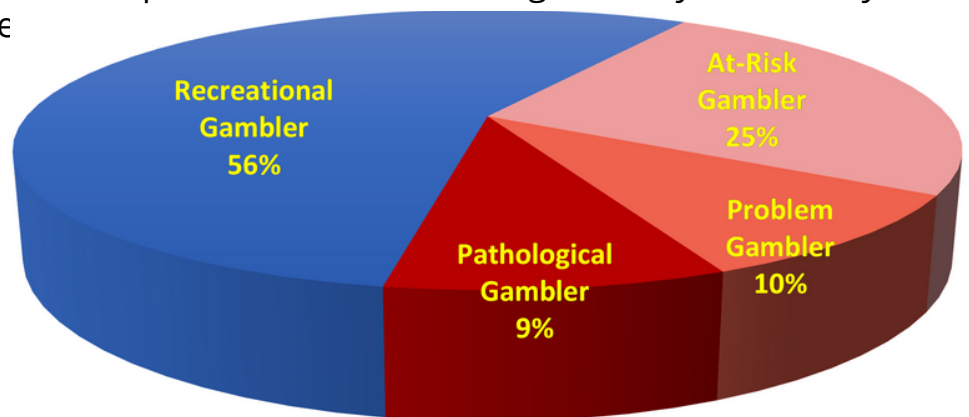
# Sports Betting FACT SHEET

## Who bets on Sports in Massachusetts?

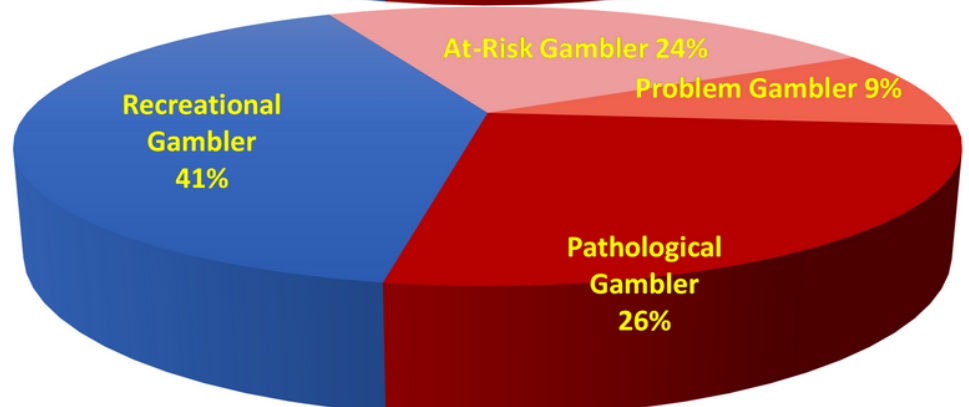
- Despite Sports betting not previously being legal, 1 in 5 Massachusetts residents have wagered on Sports.
- Men were more than twice as likely to have bet on sports in the past year compared to women.
- Adults aged 25 to 54 were more likely to have bet on sports in the past year compared to adults aged 65 and older.
- Respondents with a college or graduate degree were more likely to have bet on sports.
- Homemakers, disabled, and retired individuals were less likely to bet on sports than those who were employed.
- Respondents with annual household incomes less than \$50,000 were less likely to bet on sports.

Despite sports betting not being legal in Massachusetts, sports betting increased among residents between 2014 and the first half of 2022. Specifically, sports betting increased among females, residents aged 25-34, Latino residents, residents with High School Education, and people who identified as Unemployed. Of increasing concern, The Massachusetts study also showed that Sports Bettors are now significantly more likely to be Pathological or Problem Gamble

**Sports Bettors in Past Year  
(BOPS) 2014**



**Sports Bettors in Past Year  
(FOPS) 2022**



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