

# WORKING TOGETHER TO TACKLE GAMBLING RELATED HARMS IN THE WORKPLACE & COMMUNITY



GAMBLING COMMISSION



BeGambleAware®



## A CHARTER TO REDUCE GAMBLING RELATED HARMS IN THE WORKPLACE

"Gambling Related Harms" goes wider than the impact on the individual and covers the adverse impacts from gambling on the Health and Wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and society.

We would encourage employers and trade unions to support this charter and work collaboratively to help address gambling related harms at workplace level."

**Jim Mowatt**

Director of Education (Unite the Union)





# CHARTER AGREEMENT

## Step 1: We will make a commitment

- We confirm that there will be a clear commitment from senior management that policies on gambling are central to the organisation's approach to health and wellbeing. This commitment is stated in a form that is visible and understandable to all employees.

## Step 2: We will build our approach

- We confirm that the senior management team will understand and act on all its duty of care and legal obligations concerning gambling related harms and risk management in the workplace.
- The senior management team will communicate, consult and include trade union representatives/employees at all levels in building that approach.

## Step 3: We will promote a positive culture

- We will ensure there will be effective management standards in place in order that employees feel supported and valued whilst suffering from or at risk of suffering from gambling-related harms.

## Step 4: We will support and train

We confirm that the leadership of the organisation will ensure that information is freely shared, that we will consult with trade unions and that every employee knows how to access support and who to discuss their needs with, in relation to gambling related harms.

- Line managers and trade union representatives will receive training that helps them understand and signpost individuals to sources of support in regard to gambling related harms, with key members trained in the **"BET YOU CAN HELP PROGRAMME"**.

## Step 5: We will provide the right support

- We confirm that managers and trade union representatives will be trained and confident in recognising gambling related harms and how to hold sensitive, confidential conversations and represent members.

## Step 6: We will help people to recover

- We confirm that employees who experience gambling-related harms and have to take time off work are given appropriate support to help them return when ready and adjustments will be made for their successful return to work through regular contact with their manager in consultation with trade union representatives.

## Step 7: We will seek parity and handle issues with sensitivity

- Ensure problematic gambling issues are given equal parity to policies regarding drugs and alcohol.
- Workers are treated with sensitivity and are handled appropriately when concerns are raised either informally or formally through grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Signed ..... Position ..... (on behalf of the employer)

Signed ..... Position ..... (on behalf of the trade union)

This **Workplace Charter** provides a framework for action to help employers and trade unions build good practice in health and work in their organisation. The charter supports all types of employers, large and small, from public, private and voluntary sectors.

Harmful gambling can be the causes of, and contributors to, short and long term ill health for a considerable proportion of people of working age. For example, it is estimated that there are in the region of 400,000 problem gamblers in the UK and with many times that number experiencing gambling-related harms.

This charter offers practical, evidence based ways in which employers and trade unions can commit to promoting the health and wellbeing of their workers experiencing gambling related harms. It endeavours to help reduce sickness and absence and support those who want or need to change their relationship with gambling.

Employees are the lifeblood of any organisation. Their health and wellbeing are central to its sustainability. An organisation that supports its employees to make healthier choices and overcome problems with their gambling behaviour is more likely to prosper, through higher productivity, improved staff retention and improved performance.

The business case for supporting employees to make healthier choices relative to harmful gambling is compelling. A healthier workforce has a positive impact on the productivity and sustainability of organisations. It also benefits society as a whole, by reducing health and social care costs, and the human costs of ill-health. Problematic gambling makes a considerable contribution to workplace absence. This has a significant cost to business and the economy. The economic burden of problem gambling is substantial, with estimates placing the annual cost in the UK to be over £1.2 billion.

Problem gamblers are:

- **2.69 times** more likely to have visited their GP in the last 12 months with a mental health issue
- **8.54 times** more likely to be accessing mental health services
- **5.53 times** more likely to have been a hospital inpatient within the last 3 months
- **4.4 times** more likely to be in prison **than the general population** (IPPR 2016).

Tackling harmful gambling is an issue that employers and trade unions can work on collaboratively and such combined efforts underpin the approach adopted by this agreement.