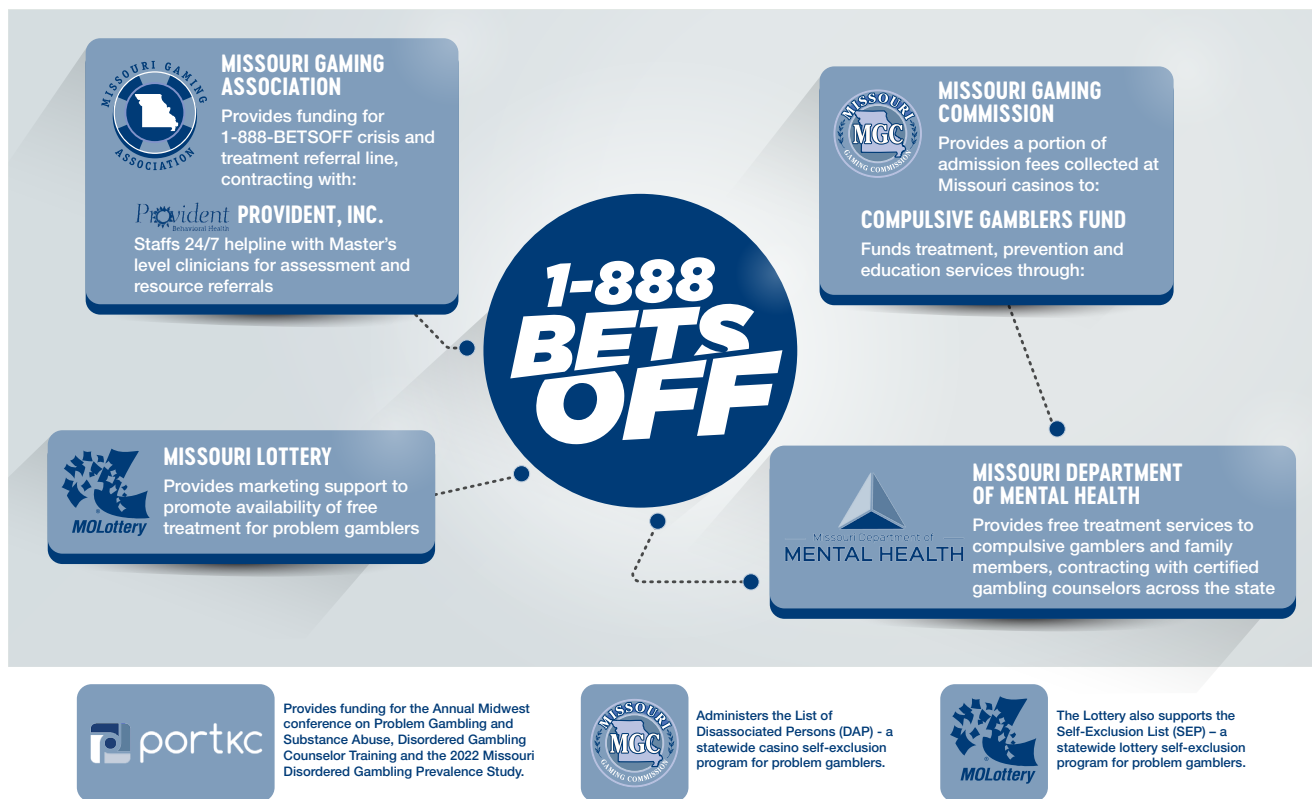


2023 ANNUAL REPORT



The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling is a partnership between the Missouri Department of Mental Health’s Division of Behavioral Health, the Missouri Gaming Association, the Missouri Gaming Commission, the Missouri Lottery and the Port Authority of Kansas City.

The purpose of the Alliance is to educate Missourians on the potential characteristics and dangers of problem and compulsive gambling, to refer compulsive gamblers and their family and friends to free treatment through a toll-free help line and/or email address, to prevent underage play and to promote responsible gaming. Alliance members also work together to provide the services of the Bets Off help line to assist problem gamblers and their loved ones.

To learn more about the Alliance, visit 888betsoff.org.

A Message from the Alliance Chair

Our Declaration of Independence begins with the words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident.” Similarly, the 1997 bylaws of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling stated their objectives based on self-evident truths regarding legalized gambling were to:

- **Heighten** public awareness of the dangers of problem gambling;
- **Promote** the availability of treatment for those who suffer from a gambling problem;
- **Encourage** those who choose to gamble to do so responsibly;
- **Educate** the public about the dangers of problem gambling;
- **Organize** and promote problem gambling prevention and treatment alternatives for all Missouri citizens;
- **Promote** prevention and education programs for Missouri’s youth, seniors and other at-risk populations.



(continued on page 2)

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In 1997, due to the absence of scientific prevalence research, Alliance members believed Missouri citizens who met the category of compulsive gambling to be less than 1.5%. Scientific evidence in the [2022 Missouri Prevalence Study](#) documented a much higher and more **consequential prevalence of disordered gambling among the citizens of Missouri, with their survey responses disclosing that 4.1% met the criteria, with a further 20.8% identified as At-Risk for gambling disorder.** Further, of Missouri’s 200,000 citizens who met the criteria of gambling disorder, 27.5% have contemplated and 27% attempted suicide. No one knows what percentage succeeded or will yet succeed.

These documented self-evident truths paint the importance of the efforts of the [Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling](#) in a whole new light, with a heightened level of urgency and harmful consequences to Missouri citizens, their families, and communities.

Twenty-seven years later, the current diagnostic language is “gambling disorder.” **It is now a well-known and researched disorder that is diagnosable and treatable.** Missouri citizens’ access to trained treatment staff and programs designed to provide services – ranging from out-patient to residential service that mirror the scope available to substance use disorder – is minute to nonexistent. The current level and scope of State funding and the complete absence of Federal funding is inadequate to motivate The Department of Mental Health and its contracted providers to provide the life-saving services Missouri individuals and families desperately need.

The [Disassociated Persons](#) and [Self-Exclusion](#) options provided through the Missouri Gaming Commission and Missouri Lottery, respectively; the help line provided by Provident; informational brochures, advertising; [Alliance website](#); the annual five-state sponsored Mid-West Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse, and Port KC funded disordered gambling counselor training are valuable and important as a foundation. Sadly, those knowing about and accessing services is constantly diminishing. Missouri and various municipalities gather billions in revenue, yet their contribution to services for individuals, families, and communities negatively impacted is not commensurate with the harm disordered gambling causes.

When Missouri voters legalize [Sport-Betting](#) in Missouri, which is looming on the horizon, this will unquestionably add consequences and impact those suffering from and affected by disordered gambling. The Alliance member staff, their commission members have previously played even greater roles in and impacted Alliance efforts to curb problem gambling.

I would like to assert that in our efforts “to Curb Problem Gambling” we misstated our purpose. The better wording might be “The Missouri Alliance to Ensure Education and Services for Citizens Impacted by Disordered Gambling.”

Keith Spare, MS, M.Div., LPC

Chair, Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling
Chair, Kansas City Port Authority Problem Gambling Fund Advisory Committee

“Gambling disorder” is gambling behavior that is damaging to a person or their family, often disrupting their daily life and career. Anyone who gambles can be at-risk for developing a gambling problem. Gambling disorder is a recognized mental health diagnosis.

Some warning signs of a gambling problem are:

- Thinking about gambling all the time.
- Feeling the need to bet more money and more often.
- Going back to try to win your money back (“chasing losses”).
- Feeling restless or irritable when trying to stop or cut down.
- Feeling like you can’t control yourself.
- Gambling despite negative consequences.
- In extreme cases, problem gambling can cause bankruptcy, legal problems, losing your job or your family, and thinking about suicide.

Alliance Member-Funded Service Highlights

Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-888-BETSOFF (1-888-238-7633) saw a 37% increase in calls with 2,399 calls in 2023 vs 1,746 calls in 2022

Life Crisis Services operates a 24-hour helpline service for callers seeking help for a gambling problem. When contacted, Life Crisis Services provides counseling, assessment and referrals to callers while attempting to collect various socio-economic and gambling behavior information. A breakdown of this information can be found on the following pages.

Free Compulsive Gambling Treatment Services experienced a 179% increase with 190 referrals through helpline in 2023 vs 68 referrals through helpline in 2022.

With money appropriated from the Compulsive Gambler’s Fund The Department of Mental Health is able to contract with certified outpatient treatment programs to provide treatment services, including individual and group counseling, family therapy, financial planning, remediation, and referrals for legal assistance.

Disassociated Persons (DAP) List: 165 referrals through helpline in 2023 vs 141 referrals through helpline in 2022

the Missouri Gaming Commission’s DAP List allows problem and compulsive gamblers to enter into a lifetime ban (with a one-time option for removal at five years) from all Missouri riverboat locations and direct marketing lists while invalidating their player’s club account and denying check-cashing privileges.

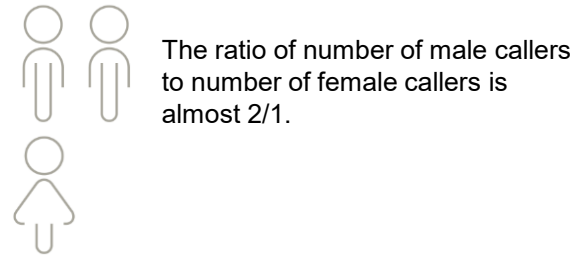
Lottery Self-Exclusion Program (SEP): 18 referrals through helpline in 2023 vs 3 referrals through helpline in 2022.

Missouri Lottery’s SEP is a responsible gaming resource for players who classify themselves as problem or compulsive gamblers that aims to reduce the incentive to play Lottery games. By submitting an application, individuals voluntarily enter into a lifetime ban from claiming Lottery prizes of more than \$600, accessing their loyalty club account, and receiving email and text message communications.

Helpline and Referral Information				
Calendar Year	Calls Placed to Helpline	Free Treatment	Disassociated Persons (DAP)	Self-Exclusion Program (SEP)
1998	871	54	356	N/A
1999	1,034	113	596	N/A
2000	1,738	186	1,093	N/A
2001	2,846	335	1,403	N/A
2002	2,889	373	1,290	N/A
2003	3,339	344	1,367	N/A
2004	3,527	377	1,506	N/A
2005	2,593	360	1,696	N/A
2006	1,834	370	1,553	N/A
2007	1,682	358	1,412	N/A
2008	1,915	332	1,279	N/A
2009	2,263	343	896	N/A
2010	2,740	368	797	N/A
2011	2,093	231	790	N/A
2012	2,454	168	1,023	N/A
2013	2,057	154	961	N/A
2014	2,073	537	778	N/A
2015	1,954	419	663	N/A
2016	1,630	375	657	38
2017	1,497	305	758	27
2018	1,492	217	363	37
2019	2,452	225	762	37
2020	1,817	51	115	5
2021	1,593	45	38	12
2022	1,746	68	141	3
2023	2,399	190	165	18

2023

In 2023, we answered **2,399** gambling calls.



172 callers were assessed for suicidality, among which 95% were NOT at risk for suicide

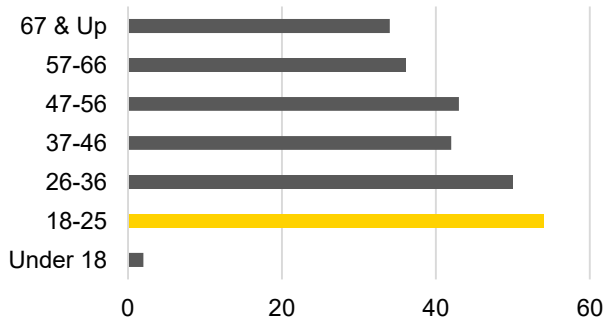
For callers at risk:



110 callers reported their Race, the majority (**61%**) callers are Caucasians; 26% - Black/African Americans; 7% - Hispanic/Latino; 4% - Asians; and 2% - Native American or American Indian.

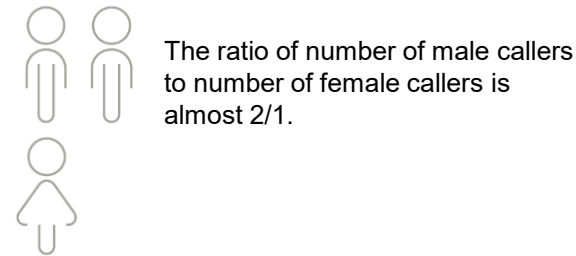
101 callers reported their Marital Status, 51% are Married; 28% - Single; 11% - Divorced; 3% - Widowed; 3% - Separated; and 3% - Other.

261 callers reported their Age (persons).



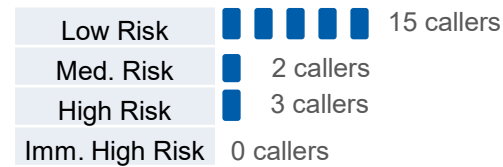
2022

In 2022, we answered **1,746** gambling calls.



274 callers were assessed for suicidality, among which 93% were NOT at risk for suicide

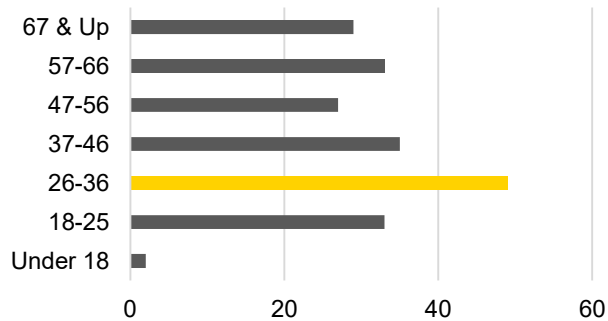
For callers at risk:



96 callers reported their Race, the majority (**68%**) callers are Caucasians; 25% - Black/African Americans; 4% - Hispanic/Latino; 2% - Asians; and 1% - Native American or American Indian.

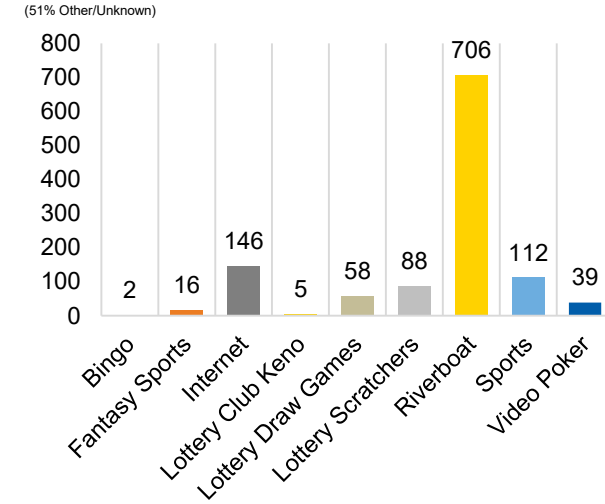
103 callers reported their Marital Status, 56% are Married; 32% - Single; 7% - Divorced; 3% - Widowed; and 2% - Separated.

208 callers reported their Age (persons).

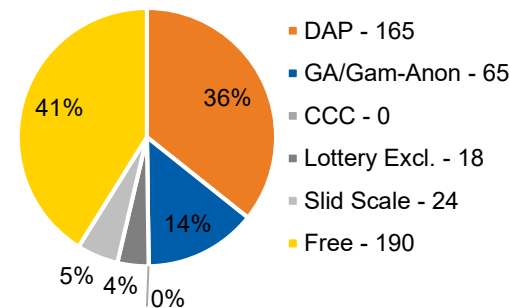


2023

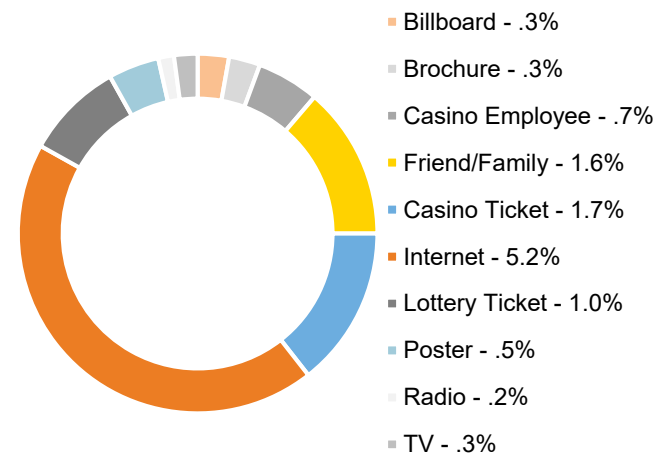
Type of Gambling Problem (persons)



Referrals Given



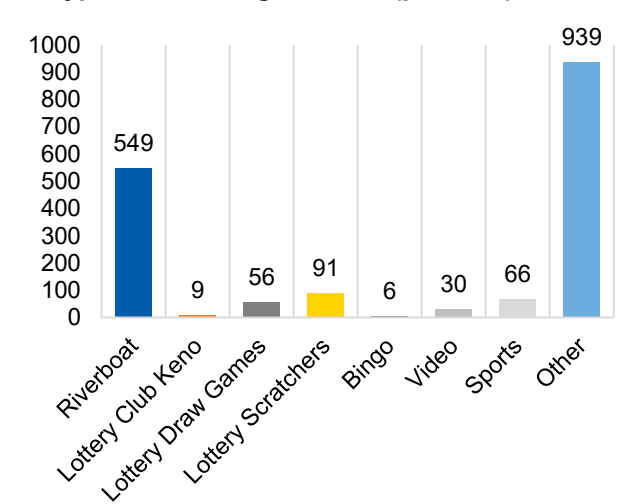
How did caller hear about the line?



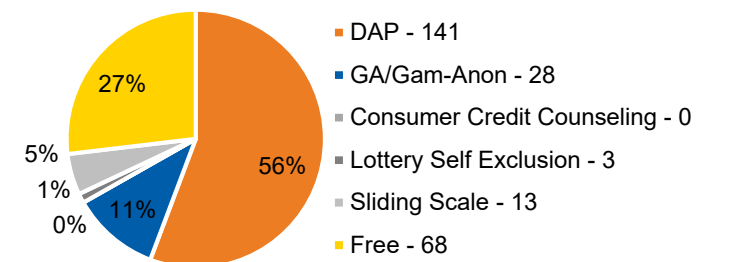
Callers were mostly located in **St. Louis County, St. Louis City, St. Charles, and Jackson County MO.**

2022

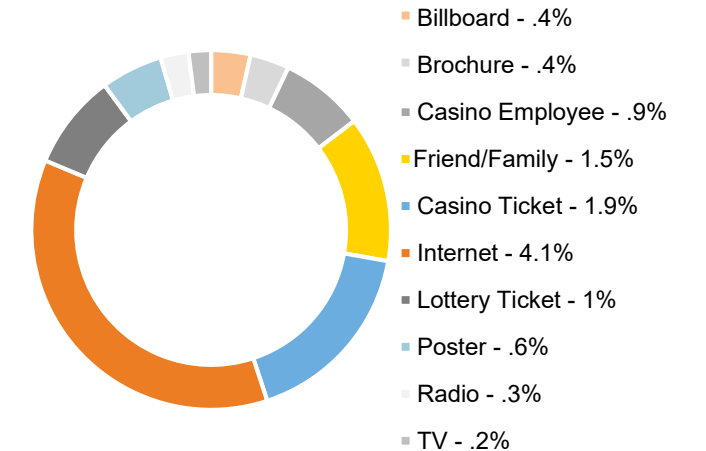
Type of Gambling Problem (persons)



Referrals Given

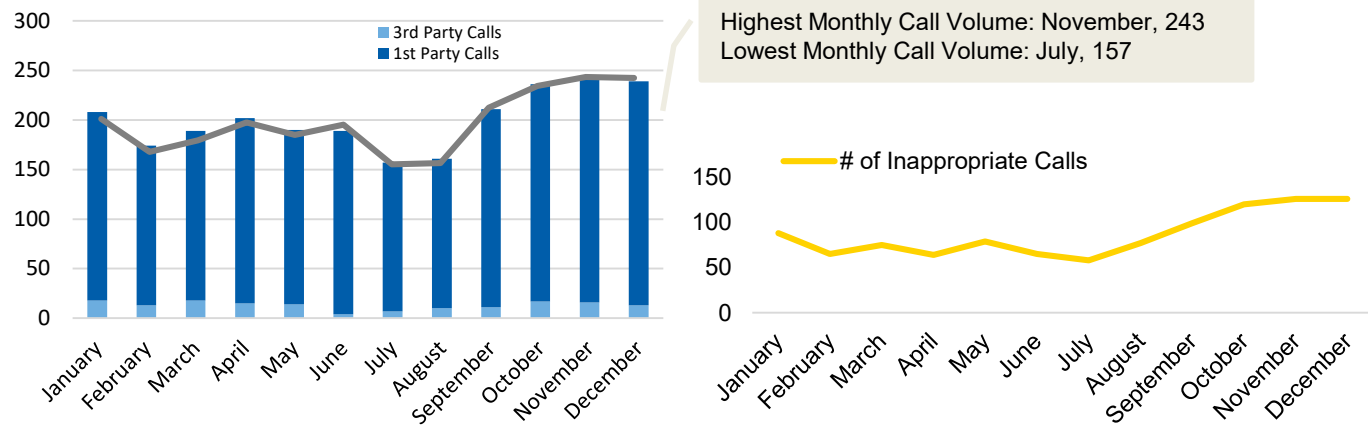


How did caller hear about the line?

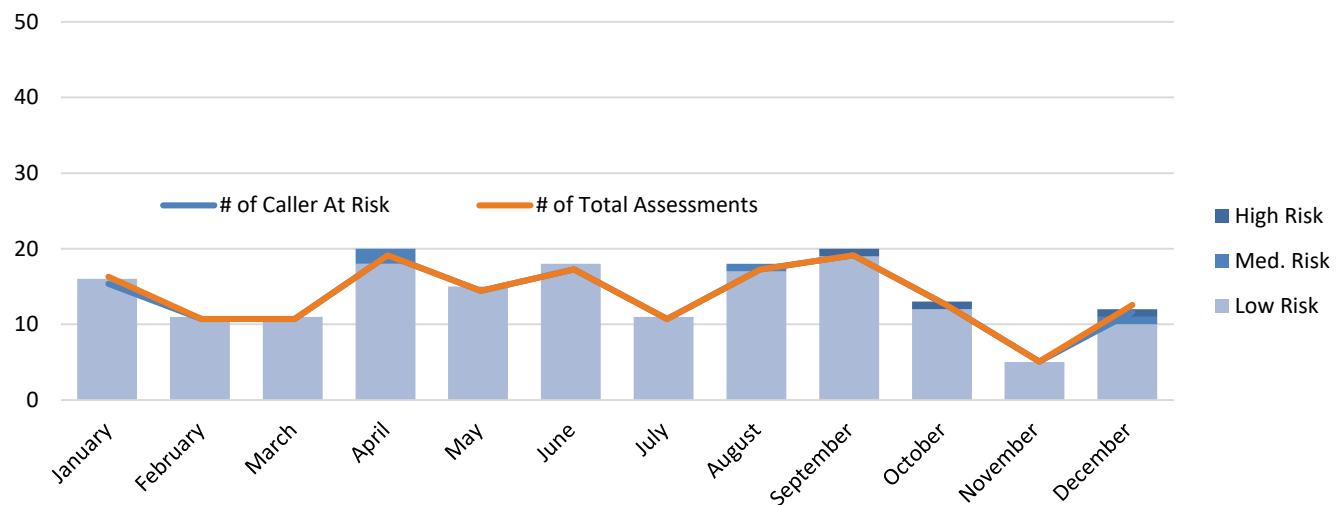


Callers were mostly located in **St. Louis County, Jackson County MO, St. Louis City, and St. Charles.**

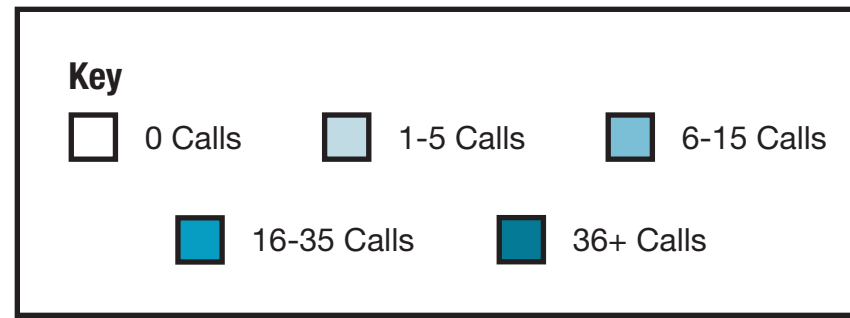
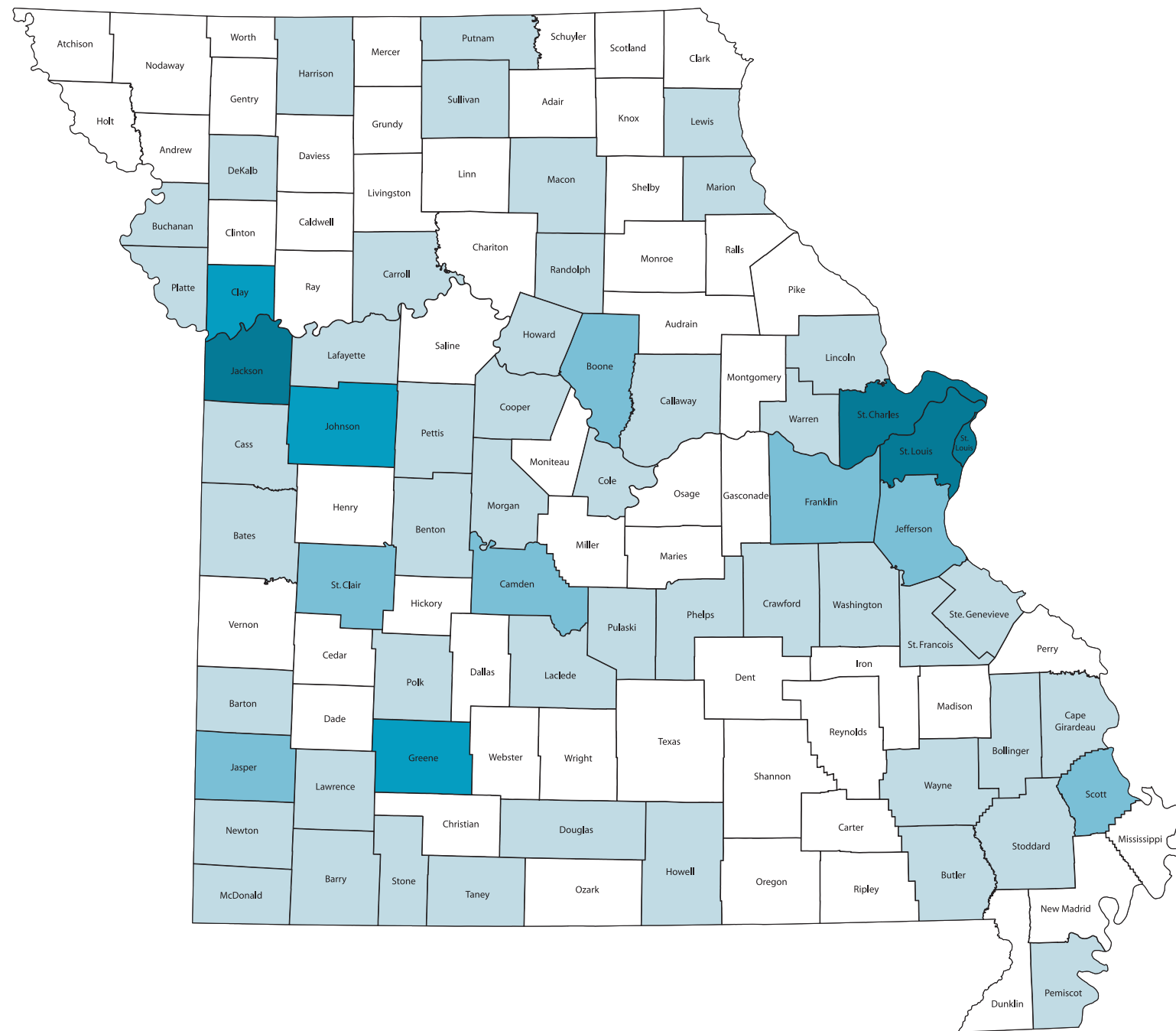
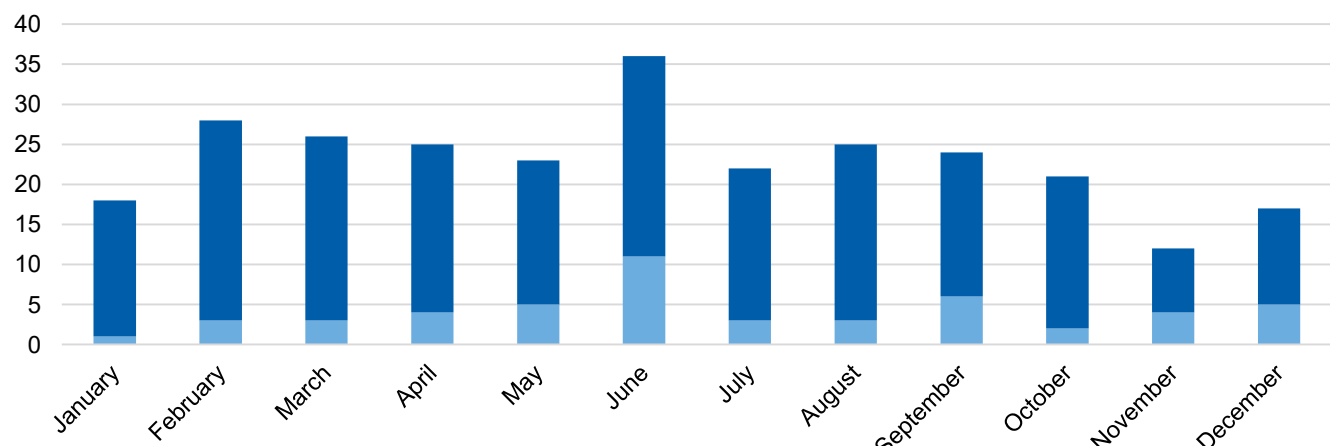
Trend of Call Volume



Risk for Suicide



Gambling Enhancement Program



Summary: In 2023, there was a moderate decline in the number of callers in 18 counties. Three counties saw the number of calls decrease by at least half, with no calls reported in 63 counties statewide. In contrast, there was an increase in the number of callers in 27 counties, with the majority being in the 1-5 caller range. There were also 25 callers from out-of-state that are not depicted in the map above.



- Join the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling at the 22nd Annual Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse, Kansas City, MO June 18-20, 2025.
- You won't want to miss this opportunity to network and collaborate with professionals throughout the four state region – Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska.
- Learn from keynote speakers in the field of Gambling Disorders and Substance abuse.
- To learn more, visit themidwestconference.org.

LINKS AND PUBLICATIONS

- [Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling](#)
- [Missouri Department of Mental Health](#)
- [Missouri Gaming Commission](#)
- [Missouri Gaming Association](#)
- [Port Authority of Kansas City](#)
- [Missouri Lottery](#)
- [2022 MO Gambling Prevalence Study](#)
- [MCPGSA 2024 White Paper - Sports Betting in Missouri: Responsible Gambling Policy](#)
- [MCPGSA 2023 White Paper - Gambling Disorder Awareness and Policy](#)
- [MCPGSA 2022 White Paper – Substance Use and Gambling Disorder](#)

Missouri Department of
MENTAL HEALTH

MISSOURI GAMING
ASSOCIATION

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1-888-BETSOFF

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Editor: Dalea Johnson, responsible gaming coordinator for the Missouri Lottery

MACPG

Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling

The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling's mission is to heighten public awareness for the dangers of problem gambling; develop prevention and education programs for gamblers of all ages; and direct problem gamblers and their families to the 1-888-BETSOFF helpline and treatment.