



Gambling reform is everybody's business.

A joint statement from the United Workers Union, the NSW Council of Social Service and Wesley Mission on gambling harm

The United Workers Union, the NSW Council of Social Service (ncoss) and Wesley Mission all recognise the harmful impacts of gambling, including on staff in gambling venues like casinos and pubs and clubs with electronic gambling machines.

Together, we are committed to working actively and, where possible, in joint action to reduce gambling-related harms. Gambling reform is everybody's business.

Staff working in gambling venues are an under-recognised cohort of people who experience harm from gambling and are at greater risk of developing gambling problems than the general public. Staff regularly witness the distress and anger of people who struggle to manage their gambling and may themselves experience harms ranging from financial stress and family relationship problems to significant physical and mental health impacts.

There is an inherent conflict between the objective of gambling venues to maximise profits and the proper design and implementation of codes of conduct that aim to prevent or minimise gambling harm. Research shows that most gambling expenditure in Australia is from people experiencing some form of gambling-related harm.

Gambling codes of conduct should be developed in consultation with workers and people with lived experience of the impacts of gambling, including gambling counsellors, and based on the most recent independent research.

Specific measures to reduce harm should include:

- Staff in venues receiving better and more regular training to respond to gambling harm in their workplaces, with the training independently designed and delivered;
- All venues have an appropriate number of Registered Gambling Officers who are directly elected by workers in the relevant workplace and have sufficient powers to take action based on the relevant Gambling Codes.

Gambling harm is a public health matter; the responsibility for reducing and preventing harm should not rest entirely on individuals. Venues, the industry, governments and regulators should work with lived experience advocates and the United Workers Union to develop appropriate safeguards and control mechanisms.

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About

- The United Workers Union represents 150,000 workers across many industries, including casinos, pubs and clubs all around Australia. unitedworkers.org.au
- The NSW Council of Social Service (ncoss) works with and for people experiencing poverty and disadvantage, and those organisations that support them, to achieve positive change in NSW. We believe that all people, communities and the community services sector should be supported and empowered to prosper in our state. ncoss.org.au
- Wesley Mission provides practical care and support for more than 130,000 people annually in NSW and across Australia, including help for people experiencing homelessness, local community action groups preventing suicide, and gambling and financial counselling among more than 120 programs. wesleymission.org.au