

Office Pools, Brackets, and Fantasy Leagues: Where Should HR Draw the Line?



WORKPLACE
WELLBEING

Most workplaces treat office brackets as team-building tradition. But when money moves and participation feels pressured, **the line between recreational and harmful blurs quickly.**

By the Numbers

19.3%

of league/season
fantasy players meet
gambling-disorder
criteria.

17.5%

of daily fantasy
players meet those
same criteria.

81.4%

of daily fantasy
players play weekly or
more often.

13.3%

of casino table/
dice players meet
gambling-disorder
criteria.

Source: 2022 Missouri Gambling Prevalence Study

WHAT COUNTS AS WORKPLACE GAMBLING



March Madness brackets and
Super Bowl squares.



Fantasy football, baseball, or
basketball leagues with buy-ins.



Group lottery-ticket purchases and
Powerball pools.



Casino-themed events, holiday
parties, or team outings.



Baby due date and weight pools



Reality TV and award show pools

Source: NCPG Gambling in the Workplace Toolkit; The
Better Institute.

WHAT THE DATA SAYS

Among Missouri past-year players, **heavy fantasy participation** tracks with the highest problem-gambling severity.

ACTIVITY	MEETS GD CRITERIA	PLAYS WEEKLY+
League / season fantasy sports	19.3%	59%
Daily fantasy sports	17.5%	81.4%
Sports betting (non-fantasy)	7.5%	51.3%
Casino table or dice games	13.3%	48.1%

GD = gambling disorder

Source: 2022 Missouri Gambling Prevalence Study.

BEFORE YOU GREENLIGHT A POOL

Legal exposure varies by state, pressure to join can exclude employees in recovery, and endorsing pools can undercut your written policy. If you allow them, set guardrails: cap the dollar amount, ban any pressure to join, keep play off company devices and time, and make clear that opting out carries no career impact.

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