



26<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **AIB introduces voluntary gambling block to support customers**

Recognising that some customers may be experiencing difficulties with gambling, AIB has introduced a voluntary block feature on debit and credit card transactions which are classified as linked to gambling. Customers can request to have a block placed on their personal or business card which will block transactions identified as gambling.

AIB also offers a range of supports and advice to people who contact them experiencing gambling problems. Data from [gamblingcare.ie](https://www.gamblingcare.ie) shows that a person will, in many cases, first disclose a gambling problem with staff at their financial institution, and not to family or friends.

AIB Managing Director Retail Banking, Geraldine Casey, said: “We understand that when gambling becomes harmful it can affect not just the person involved, but their families and friends too. It can damage relationships, finances, employment, and mental health. The financial services industry has a role to play in supporting customers as they combat any gambling difficulties they may have, and it’s important AIB does what we can to help them stop the harm. That is why we are putting in place additional supports for customers who wish to take steps to protect themselves from problem gambling.”

GAA All Ireland Football Championship winner with Armagh Oisín McConville, who has spoken openly about overcoming his gambling problem, urged anyone experiencing gambling issues to avail of the supports on offer.

“I am very pleased to see AIB is offering this voluntary gambling block to help their customers to begin to tackle their gambling problems. I would like to reassure people that you can recover, that there is life after gambling addiction and that help is available to anyone who needs it.”

McConville is passionate about supporting people and guiding them towards meaningful help including from [gamblingcare.ie](https://www.gamblingcare.ie) where he also works. “The service is free, it’s confidential and it’s for you” he added.

AIB has highlighted some of the signs that can help assess when gambling is becoming harmful:

- Concealing or lying about gambling.
- Gambling to try and make money to cover rising costs of living/bills.
- Overdue and/or unpaid bills.
- Continuing to gamble even after significant financial losses.
- Selling possessions, borrowing, or even stealing money to gamble.
- Difficulty sleeping which has resulted in gambling at night.
- Making repeated unsuccessful attempts to reduce or stop gambling.
- Preoccupation with gambling.
- Losing interest in other activities and hobbies.
- Denying that a problem with gambling exists, or believing it is under control.

- Experiencing relationship and occupation problems because of gambling.
- Unexplained mood changes.
- Continuing to gamble even when you don't have the money to do so.

The AIB gambling block feature is optional and is only initiated at the request of the customer. AIB customers requesting the gambling block can call the AIB Additional Support Helpline on 0818 227 056 Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00 (excluding bank holidays).

AIB has also advised there are other services available if you or someone close to you is experiencing gambling problems.

Gamblingcare.ie provides advice, support, and information to those who are concerned about their own or another person's gambling, with dedicated support services across the country. Its National Gambling helpline can be reached on 1800 936 725 from 9.00 am - 11.00 pm daily.

Mabs.ie, which supports people with money advice, budgeting, and problem debt also offers a helpline at 0818 072000.

**ENDS.**

Photo caption: AIB Managing Director Retail Banking, Geraldine Casey and GAA All Ireland Football Championship winner with Armagh Oisín McConville launch AIB's voluntary gambling block to support customers.

**Notes to Editors:**

- EBS, which is part of the AIB Group, has also introduced a voluntary gambling block. Customers can contact EBS on 0818 300 107 (Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm).