



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 27, 2022  
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### ***Statement and Tips to Avoid Lottery Scams***

**SACRAMENTO** – The California Lottery releases the following statement in light of [today's announcement](#) by the United States Department of Justice regarding the sentencing of a Georgia resident to 5 years in prison for a lottery fraud scheme that victimized elderly Californians:

“This is an incredibly important reminder for everyone who plays any of our California Lottery games,” said Alva V. Johnson, Director for the California State Lottery. “We want to make sure everyone knows that the California Lottery does NOT charge taxes or fees for players to claim their prize. We take these sorts of scams very seriously, and our best defense is to continue educating Californians so they can continue to play and win in a safe manner.”

In addition to understanding that the Lottery doesn't charge players to claim prizes, people should also be aware of the following facts:

- A Lottery official would **NEVER** personally contact a player about winning a jackpot before the player files a prize claim form.
- There's absolutely **NO WAY** to win a lottery prize if you don't play a lottery game.
- Never give your credit card number, social security number, bank account information, or any other sensitive information to anyone promising lottery cash prizes, and be suspicious of “urgent” solicitations that suggest you will lose a prize if you don't act immediately.
- Buy lottery tickets only from authorized California lottery retailers, of which there are more than 23,000 locations and none of which are online.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

People can also watch [this video](#) for more information on Lottery-related scams, including what to do if they think they're being targeted by scammers. The Lottery also has a customer service phone line, 1-800-LOTTERY (1-800-568-8379), for people to call if they see fraudulent activity and/or need assistance with a claim form.

*The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled more than \$1.8 billion for fiscal year 2020-21, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated almost \$8.4 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education. The California Lottery urges its customers to play responsibly. Problem gambling resources are available to anyone at 1-800-GAMBLER.*

[www.calottery.com](http://www.calottery.com)