



PRESS RELEASE

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California Lottery Issues Statement Following Arrest of Suspected Scratchers® Thief

SACRAMENTO – The California Lottery is releasing a statement today, expressing appreciation for the outcome of a coordinated investigation involving the Camarillo Police Department Investigations Bureau, the Los Angeles Police Department, and investigators with the Lottery’s Security and Law Enforcement Division. Their joint efforts led to the identification and arrest of a suspect following a years-long burglary spree targeting California Lottery tickets.

“The California Lottery is committed to protecting the integrity of our games and our retail partners who sell them,” said Carolyn Becker, California Lottery spokesperson. “That integrity is central to our mission of raising supplemental funding for California public education—and that mission depends on public trust.

“Our law enforcement teams worked closely with local and state partners to identify and apprehend the suspect in this case. Their collective, thorough investigative work underscores our commitment to the security of our retailers and players, as well as their dedication to our mission.

“We are proud to stand with law enforcement in holding accountable those who attempt to undermine that trust. Our commitment to transparency, security, and integrity remains unwavering.”

Earlier this week, the Ventura County Sheriff’s Department announced that the District Attorney has filed charges against Raul Jr. Najera, described as the prime suspect behind a multi-county burglary spree targeting small businesses for California Lottery tickets — a crime wave stretching back years.

Between July 2024 and July 2025, the cities of Camarillo and Thousand Oaks were hit with five targeted burglaries. Small-business owners woke up to shattered glass, broken gates, and thousands of stolen scratchers.

The Sheriff’s Department said that, during this investigation, in August, Najera was caught by LAPD Investigators in Los Angeles committing a Lottery ticket burglary. He is currently in custody at the Los Angeles County Jail, and the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office



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is actively coordinating with LASO to facilitate his arrest and transfer to Ventura County, where he will face five felony burglary charges.

The California Lottery is thankful to all of the law enforcement investigators who supported this case.

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The mission of the California Lottery is to raise additional funding for public education, helping to supplement school budgets for K-12 as well as colleges and universities. **The California Lottery has raised more than \$48 billion for public schools** through the responsible sale of its games since 1985. Lottery funding for schools is largely discretionary, so administrators and educators can use Lottery money for instructional programs and services they may not otherwise afford. The California Lottery features eight [draw games](#) and dozens of new instant [Scratchers](#) games each year. More than 95% of California Lottery sales revenue goes back to the community in the form of prize payments, [retailer commissions and bonuses](#), and contributions to education. More information about who benefits can be found [here](#). As jackpots rise, the California Lottery would like to remind players that gambling should be fun. Borrowing money to play, spending above a person's budget, or using money intended for other purposes can ultimately lead to significant problems for players and their families. If a player recognizes that they have a gambling problem or if someone knows of someone who may have a problem, the Lottery recommends calling the California Problem Gambling Help Line at 1-800-GAMBLER.



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