ALERT!
Avoid Lottery Scams

Don’t be a victim.
Scam vs. Truth

**The Scam**
“<strong>You’ve won! All you need to do is pay a small processing fee and we will send you your check!”</strong>

**The Truth**
Legitimate lotteries never demand money up front to release your winnings.

**The Scam**
“If you cash my winning ticket, I’ll share the winning jackpot with you.”

**The Truth**
The con artist will take your money and leave you with a fake or worthless ticket.

**The Scam**
“Let’s call the Lottery right now. They’ll be able to tell us that this is a winning ticket.”

**The Truth**
The California Lottery never confirms over the phone that a draw game ticket is the winner. The “Lottery” person on the phone is part of the scam.
Email Scams
Email lottery scams are designed to look and sound official. Delete any emails you receive regarding unclaimed funds or prizes stating that you must call a designated representative who will ask you for your personal information and a processing fee in order to claim your prize. These emails can become very convincing, and if you do speak to a “representative,” they are even more convincing. This is a scam!

Telephone Scams
Telephone lottery scams have increased to epidemic levels in some states. There are dozens of variations of winner scams, but they usually have one thing in common: the supposed winner needs to send money before the prize can be released. Don’t fall for it!

View further examples of how lottery scam artists operate and what to avoid: CALOTTERY.COM/SCAMS
Foreign Lottery Scams

Federal law enforcement authorities are intercepting and destroying millions of foreign lottery mailings being sent into the U.S. by the truckload. Telemarketing scammers are also targeting the elderly with aggressive and clever sales techniques. Some victims have lost their life savings. Remember, it is ILLEGAL to play a foreign lottery in the United States.

Website Scams

Some criminals have gone so far as establishing websites to give their scams a more legitimate look. The ONLY website for the California Lottery is www.calottery.com. Never purchase lottery products via any website asking you to subscribe or divulge personal information. More and more crooks are also using Facebook to trick potential victims.
Letter/Fax Scams

Although far less common today, letter and fax-based lottery scams do exist. Never deposit a suspicious check you have received in the mail from a supposed lottery organization. The letter informs you of your winnings, instructs you to deposit the enclosed check, and wire a portion back to the sender as a fee before you can receive the balance. After wiring the fee, the victim is notified by their bank that the original check bounced and they are responsible for the entire amount.

HELPFUL TIPS

Ignore all emails, letters or phone calls from unknown individuals or entities soliciting money from you. Also ignore requests for personal or financial information.

To report a suspicious email, letter, phone call, fax or website, or to report criminal activity involving Lottery products, please call the California Lottery Security & Law Enforcement Division at 1-800-LOTTERY (1-800-568-8379). If you are a victim of consumer fraud, you can also call the California State Attorney General’s Public Inquiry Unit at 1-800-952-5225.
Always remember:

- The Lottery would **NEVER** charge you to get your prize.
- A Lottery official would **NEVER** personally contact you about winning a jackpot.
- A Lottery official would **NEVER** ask you for money up front.
- There’s **NO WAY** to win a lottery prize if you didn’t play a lottery game.

What you should know about playing California Lottery games:

- Buy lottery tickets only from authorized California Lottery retailers.
- Always sign the back of your ticket immediately after buying it.
- Retailers are not authorized to charge commission or cashing fees to redeem your prize.
- The only lottery that is legally authorized to operate in California is the California Lottery.
- Assigning or transferring a winning lottery prize before a ticket is claimed is prohibited.
Don’t Become a Target

Various scam artists have been attempting to impersonate California Lottery, Powerball® and Mega Millions® staff to steal people’s identities, credit card numbers, banking information and cash.

→ Never give your credit card, social security, passport or bank account numbers to anyone promising lottery cash prizes.

→ Be suspicious of “urgent” solicitations that suggest you will lose a prize if you don’t act immediately.

→ If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

A sk questions
L isten carefully
E ducate yourself
R efuse to be pressured
T ell the authorities
Need to report a scam?
If you think you’ve been the target of a lottery scam, notify your local law enforcement agency immediately and contact the California Lottery Security & Law Enforcement Division (SLED) to report the incident. You can also file reports with state and federal government agencies.

**Report Scams and Suspicious Activity**
California Lottery Security & Law Enforcement Division
916-822-8282
reportfraud@calottery.com

**Suspicious Lottery Email, Phone, or Mail Campaigns**
Federal Trade Commission
1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357)
www.ftc.gov

U.S. Postal Inspection Service
1-800-372-8347
www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov

**Internet Fraud Campaigns**
FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov

**Additional Information**
California State Attorney General’s Office
1-800-952-5225
oag.ca.gov/consumers