

How to Protect Yourself

- Never give credit cards, social security numbers, bank account numbers or any other personal information to anyone promising a lottery prize.
- If you suspect a scam, hang up or press the delete button! Do not further engage with the scammer.
- Report the incident to the **Federal Trade Commission** at www.consumer.ftc.gov or the **Louisiana Attorney General's Consumer Protection Hotline** at 1-800-351-4889.

How the Louisiana Lottery Notifies Winners

The Louisiana Lottery does not know the names of prize winners until they claim their winning ticket. For this reason, the Lottery will NEVER contact game prize winners directly. Winners know that they've won from their ticket, NOT through an email, letter or phone call.

The one exception is second-chance drawings in which the player has provided their contact information as part of the entry process. In these instances, winners may be contacted by phone and/or mail by the Lottery, but will NEVER be required to pay anything in advance to collect their prize.

The Lottery's official prize claim form does request a social security number which is needed for prizes greater than \$600 to be reported for tax purposes.

Only the Louisiana Lottery is legally authorized to conduct lotteries in Louisiana. If you are ever in doubt about the authenticity of a lottery solicitation, you may contact us at info@louisianalottery.com.

Play it
Smart 



Don't Fall for
Prize Notification
Scams



louisianalottery.com



Using well-known brand names and promises of multimillion-dollar jackpots, prize notification scams steal millions each year from unsuspecting consumers. These notifications may arrive via the internet, email, texts, social media posts, phone calls or letters.

Don't become a victim. Learn to recognize the signs of a scam.

How They Work

Prize notification scams require the recipient to pay monies upfront as a condition of collecting the "prize." The recipient is instructed to wire funds or purchase and send prepaid money/gift cards to seemingly cover insurance, handling fees, taxes or other purported costs, which the recipient figures should be more than offset by the prize they hope to receive. **But the prize never arrives.**


Sometimes, this request is accompanied by a bogus paper check or financial instrument that proves worthless. However, by the time the victim realizes this, they have already sent their own money to the scammer. In addition to stealing money, prize notification scams may also involve identity theft.


Prize notification scams may use well-known business names or logos to appear legitimate. They may also contain special coupon or reference numbers to look official.


The bottom line is that if it seems too good to be true, it most likely is.


Tip-Off to the Rip-Off


So how can you tell if a prize notification is a scam? Here are basic red flags:


 **You are asked to make up-front payments of any kind to claim the prize.** Legitimate lotteries will deduct any withholdings, such as taxes owed by the winner, from the prize funds.

 **You haven't purchased a ticket for or actively entered the drawing in which the prize was won.** Legitimate lotteries pay prizes from funds collected through the sale of tickets. Ask yourself, where did the funds come from in order to pay this prize? Did I physically enter this drawing? Remember, there is no such thing as free money.

 **You are guaranteed that you will win a prize if you pay to join a pool.** Legitimate lotteries do not require that players join a pool in order to play, nor can they guarantee that your individual ticket will win a prize because true lottery drawings are conducted randomly.

 **You are asked to keep your "winnings" a secret.** This ploy is to keep you from sharing the information with family members who may help you recognize a scam.

 **You are asked to help someone else claim a prize in exchange for a portion of the prize.**

 **You are asked to communicate by phone, mail or email with an overseas entity.** Gambling across state lines through the internet, phone or mail is illegal for a reason – to protect U.S. consumers. Online gambling companies are not regulated and often sell their customer lists to others, including scammers.