



NYS Gaming Commission Issues Alert For Scams Involving Fake Lottery Prizes

The New York State Gaming Commission urges consumers to be alert to recent scams involving fake Lottery prizes.

In the scam, an individual is contacted by phone, email or letter from a company claiming to be the New York Lottery and claiming that the individual has won a prize.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Be alert to the following common scams:

Unclaimed Prize Scam: An individual receives a letter or email fraudulently using the New York Lottery name and logo, stating that the recipient has won an unclaimed prize. In order to “claim the prize,” the scam artist requests that the recipient call a designated “representative,” who then asks for personal information and a “processing fee.” However, the scam artist keeps any fee paid, and there is no prize forthcoming.

Fraudulent Check Scam: An individual receives a check from a supposed Lottery organization (often fraudulently displaying the New York Lottery logo). An accompanying letter states that the check represents a portion of Lottery winnings and instructs the recipient to deposit the check. The recipient is then asked to return a portion of the check’s balance back to the sender as a “fee” before receiving the remaining balance of the supposed winnings. After paying the “fee,” the victim then learns from their bank that the original check has bounced, and the victim receives no prize and loses the “fee” already paid.

The New York State Gaming Commission reminds consumers of the following:

- We do not notify YOU, you notify US. Unless you have a yearly mail-in subscription with the New York Lottery or entered a second-chance sweepstakes on the Lottery Web site, we have no idea of who our winners are until they come forward with a winning ticket.
- The New York Lottery never requires the payment of any money in order to claim a prize.

- No one should ever send any money to pay a “processing fee” or any other suggested fee in relation to claiming a prize.
- Do not deposit any check sent to you that is accompanied by a request that you send or wire money to cover processing or claiming fees.
- When you purchase a Lottery ticket at a Lottery retailer, the Lottery does not ask you for or collect any personal information.
- Lottery staff will always identify themselves by saying they are from the New York Lottery or New York State Gaming Commission -- not Powerball, Mega Millions, or any other game. All Lottery employees have email addresses ending with @gaming.ny.gov. If in doubt, email info@gaming.ny.gov with any questions.
- Federal law prohibits the sale or mailing of Lottery tickets across state lines. You must be within the State of New York to purchase a New York Lottery ticket or a subscription.

The New York State Gaming Commission urges consumers to report Lottery scams through one or more of the following measures:

- Contact the New York Lottery’s Security Unit at 518-388-3416.
- File a complaint with the New York State Attorney General's Office by calling the office’s Consumer Helpline at 1-800-771-7755 or by visiting www.ag.ny.gov.
- Contact the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/ or at 1-877-FTC-HELP.

About the New York Lottery

The New York Lottery continues to be North America’s largest and most profitable Lottery, contributing \$3.17 billion in fiscal year 2013-2014 to help support education in New York State. The Lottery’s contribution represents 15 percent of total state education aid to local school districts.

New York Lottery revenue is distributed to local school districts by the same statutory formula used to distribute other state aid to education. It takes into account both a school district’s size and its income level; larger, lower-income school districts receive proportionately larger shares of Lottery school funding.

About the New York State Gaming Commission

The New York State Gaming Commission regulates all aspects of gaming and gambling activity in the state, including horse racing and pari-mutuel wagering, class III Indian gaming, video lottery terminal facilities at race tracks, the state lottery and charitable gaming.

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