

# Player Protection



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The Louisiana Lottery's number one priority is ensuring the best possible playing experience for those who purchase our tickets. Toward that end, we invite you to put these player protection tips into practice!

**1. Sign the Back of Your Ticket Immediately After Purchasing.** Lottery tickets are bearer instruments, which means that the Lottery must pay the holder of a winning ticket presented for payment. Signing the back of the ticket is the single most important thing you can do to help protect yourself from theft and demonstrate ownership of the ticket. Any alteration to a winning ticket worth more than \$600 is cause for an immediate security investigation. Once a winning ticket has been paid, however, it is much more difficult to determine whether another individual was the rightful owner. By law, the Lottery can pay a winning ticket only once.

**2. Learn How to Play & Check Your Ticket After the Drawing.** The Lottery strongly encourages players to take the time to learn how a game is played before cashing a winning ticket. Players should learn the rules and winning combinations for the games they play in order to have an idea of how much they've won before presenting tickets for cashing. This information can be found on the Lottery's Web site, in the *All Games Guide* located in retailer play centers, and on scratch-off game tickets. Winning numbers can be found on the Lottery's Web site and on the Lottery's toll-free winning numbers hotline (800-735-5825). Winning numbers are also broadcast nightly on official Lottery television stations and can be printed from retailer ticket terminals.

**3. Ask for a Validation Receipt When Having Your Ticket Cashed.** Winning tickets worth \$600 or less can be paid by Lottery retailers. Players are encouraged to ask for a receipt confirming whether the ticket was a winner or the amount won, if ever they are in doubt. If a player is told his ticket is not a winner, he may request its return. There is no reason for a retailer to keep a nonwinning ticket.

**4. Report Any Concern Right Away.** To report a problem or concern with cashing a winning ticket, players should contact the Lottery immediately at [signitnow@louisianalottery.com](mailto:signitnow@louisianalottery.com) and include detailed information about their concern, including the name of the retailer, location, date and approximate time of day the incident occurred, as well as the game name and details about the ticket.

## Avoid Illegal Lottery Scams

Through e-mail, phone calls and postal mail, scammers use promises of big lottery prizes to lure individuals into sharing personal information or sending them large sums of money in advance. Here are red flags that a prize notification is a scam:

**1. The notification asks you to keep your "winnings" a secret.** This ploy is to keep you from sharing the information with family members who may help you realize that it's a scam.

**2. You haven't purchased a ticket for the particular game or entered the particular drawing in which the prize was won.** Every legitimate lottery business model requires the payment of prizes from funds collected through the sale of tickets. Even the IRS only issues refunds based on taxes already paid! 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.

**3. You are asked to make up-front payments of processing fees, taxes or insurance in order to collect the winnings.** This is the foundation upon which all scams are based. No legitimate lottery will ever require up-front payment of any kind from winners to claim a prize. Any withholdings, such as taxes, owed by the winner are deducted from the prize funds.

**4. 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. Also, legitimate lotteries cannot guarantee that your ticket will win a prize. Even if there was a way to "fix the system" in order to win, this would be illegal and you would be participating in a serious crime!

**5. You are asked to communicate by phone, mail or e-mail with an overseas entity in order to claim the prize.** Gambling across state lines through the Internet, phone or mail is illegal. Scam artists that set up shop overseas are more difficult to prosecute.

**With the exception of second-chance drawings, in which the player has written contact information on the back of a nonwinning ticket as entry into a drawing, the Lottery does NOT contact prize winners directly nor will they ever be required to pay anything up front to collect a prize.**